



Rep. Tom Emmer on the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act

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****REP. TOM EMMER:**

** Hi, Congressman Tom Emmer here. Every day I hear from constituents about the importance that transportation has in their daily lives, roads and bridges. This week Congress finally came together and passed the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act, also known as the FAST Act, which is a five-year transportation reauthorization bill. While this bill is far from perfect, it has a series of important reforms, reforms that will empower Minnesota, prioritizing funding for projects like Interstate 94 and U.S. Highway 10. It will reduce the power of unelected Washington bureaucrats, it will streamline burdensome environmental reviews, and it will set transportation priorities through the year 2020. This bill also starts to give authority to local communities. While we have a long way to go, this could and should be the beginning of a renaissance of federalism when it comes to transportation. Currently, of the revenues that we send to Washington, D.C. from Minnesota, our state loses nearly 30 cents of every dollar. That's our money and it should stay right here in Minnesota. The FAST Act works toward that goal. The legislation we passed this week returns money to Minnesota to invest in freight corridors like Interstate 94 and it converts one of the largest federal aid highway programs into a surface transportation block grant program. Instead of Washington dictating what we should be doing with our money, this will allow Minnesotans to decide what's best for Minnesota. I've been working on our transportation issues since I arrived here in Congress. We've been working to get federal dollars to projects like U.S. Highway 10 through Anoka County and we've been working to hold the Met Council accountable and return decision making to cities and counties rather than to central planners. When it comes to transportation, the formula is simple. Whether in Washington, D.C. or St. Paul or at the city and county level, we must enact policies and provide funding that reduces congestion, enhances economic development, increases mobility and keeps Minnesotans moving. This week we move toward each one of these goals. But again, this should just be the beginning. We must continue to work to put Minnesotans in charge of our transportation investments. Recently I spoke at the opening of the newly expanded Interstate Highway 94 and a new FedEx location that opened in Rogers. That event highlighted the importance of transportation funding. Public investment in transportation encourages private investment in our communities and drives our economic growth. Minnesota's economy relies on trade, commerce and the ability of businesses to move their products to local and international markets. We need to continue to empower our states and local authorities to make decisions about our important and necessary transportation infrastructure. If you ever have any questions on transportation or any other issue, please don't hesitate to reach out to me or one of our offices. Just visit emmer.house.gov for more information. Thanks and have a great day.

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