



March 1, 2012

The Honorable Harry Reid  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
S-221, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20510

**RE: Support Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) (S. 1813)**

Dear Majority Leader Reid:

On behalf of the National Retail Federation (NRF), I am writing to you today to express our support for the “*Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century*” (MAP-21) (S. 1813) which is currently being debated on the Senate floor. Our neglected transportation system has created bottlenecks and inefficiencies in the supply chain that stifle U.S. companies’ ability to grow and create jobs that are so badly needed in today’s economy. We urge Congress to act quickly to pass this important legislation before the current short-term extension ends in March.

Retailers are among the nation’s largest shippers, moving hundreds of billions of dollars worth of merchandise through the nation’s ports, railroads and highways each year. The condition of the transportation system and its ability to handle cargo quickly and efficiently are vital to retailers’ businesses. MAP-21 is critical to ensuring that the essential highway programs needed to ensure U.S. competitiveness are able to continue. The bill provides for needed reforms and consolidation of highway programs while continuing current funding levels.

Most importantly, the bill calls for the development of a national freight policy which is critically needed. A national freight policy will help to ensure that we are able to reduce current bottlenecks and choke points which impact the ability to move cargo seamlessly and without delay throughout the U.S.

As the world’s largest retail trade association and the voice of retail worldwide, NRF represents retailers of all types and sizes from the United States and more than 45 countries abroad including department stores, specialty, apparel, discount, online, independent, grocery and chain restaurants, among others. Retailers operate more than 3.5 million U.S. establishments that support one in four U.S. jobs – 42 million working Americans. Contributing \$2.5 trillion to annual GDP, retail is a daily barometer for the nation’s economy. NRF’s Retail Means Jobs campaign emphasizes the economic importance of retail and encourages policymakers to support a Jobs, Innovation and Consumer Value Agenda aimed at boosting economic growth and job creation.

Everyone agrees that there is a critical need for Congress to pass this important legislation. We cannot continue down a path of short term extensions that provide less and less certainty to the highway programs. Congress must act now to provide certainty and to allow U.S. companies to remain competitive on a global basis.

We strongly urge you to support quick passage of S. 1813. If you have any questions, please contact Jonathan Gold, Vice President, Supply Chain and Customs Policy ([goldj@nrf.com](mailto:goldj@nrf.com)).

Sincerely,

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