

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1804

April 4, 2017

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
H-305 The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mario Diaz-Balart
Chairman
Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing
and Urban Development
Appropriations
2358A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington D.C., 20515

The Honorable David Price
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing
and Urban Development
Appropriations
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington D.C., 20515

Dear Chairman Frelinghuysen and Diaz-Balart and Ranking Members Lowey and Price,

I appreciate the opportunity to submit requests for funding as you consider priorities for the fiscal year of 2018. I ask for your continued support of our nation's infrastructure and transportation priorities and share my support of providing adequate formula funding for the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, specifically grant opportunities and the FASTLANE program, to aid in the preservation of our nation and the 4th Congressional District of Louisiana.

It is critically important that funding for the FASTLANE Program be appropriated at the authorized amount of \$900M for FY18. This funding will be used to improve safety, connectivity, resiliency and reduce highway congestion. I would also ask that the Committee continue to support adequate formula funding for the FAST Act.

In the 4th Congressional District of Louisiana, there are 3,403 bridges and a total of over 20,000 miles of local and interstate roadway. Our statewide plan identifies at least 13 category A through D megaprojects. Given the realities of needing to maintain a fiscally balanced budget, I am aware that every infrastructure project cannot be met. Despite this fact, I'd like to provide some specific examples of infrastructure and highway projects in my district that are critical for improving national security and growing the local economy.

- First, funding for the final portion of I-49 is needed. The 3.6 miles of proposed new highway will intersect Shreveport in order to connect I-49 at the I-20 interchange with I-49 North near the I-220 interchange. This will add a seamless and helpful connection for

a highway that extends from Canada to New Orleans.

- A second example is the interstate project of I-69. As named by the U.S. DOT as one of the six “Corridors of the Future,” construction of I-69 is critically important to provide exponential resources to the Port of Shreveport-Bossier, Barksdale Air Force Base and a much-needed loop around the urban area of Shreveport and Bossier City.
- A third example of a project that would greatly benefit from these programs is interstate widening efforts for I-49 and I-20 in the 4th Congressional District. The I-20 corridor is congested with vehicle traffic at several points with conditions expected to worsen in the coming years.
- Bossier Parish is one of the fastest growing areas of our state. This rapid growth has caused severe traffic congestion, especially on Highway 3 (Benton Road) and Highway 3105 (Airline Drive). The increased congestion threatens future development in the area, and we must act now to ensure that new growth does not hinder further progress.
- Lastly, I would like to mention the Barksdale Air Force Base (BAFB) Gate Project. Barksdale AFB is a key national security asset located in Bossier Parish that does not have sufficient, direct access to the interstate system an issue which is a hindrance to a national Air Force priority. The state of Louisiana is advancing a project to fix this, supporting the Department of Defense’s investment in our national security and in Louisiana. This project will improve base security and connect a new public road extending from the I-20 at the I-220 interchange to a new gate at Barksdale Air Force Base, moving the commercial vehicle inspection station away from aircraft approach. According to the Air Force this transportation project will remove a current national security risk, and add in necessary Force Protection components for a future Weapons Storage and Maintenance Facility, as well as alleviate traffic congestion and delay.

In addition to these new capacity projects, costs to maintain the existing transportation system continue to grow. Providing the needed resources to the FAST Act and competitive grant opportunities like the FASTLANE program will address long-standing challenges and serve as an economic generator to help build protections for Louisiana, Texas, Arkansas and the surrounding states.

I am grateful for your commitment to work with the Senate to create a final FY18 appropriations bill that meets our transportation shortcomings. The infrastructure needs I have raised today are of great importance to the future stability of my district and the economic strength of not only Louisiana, but our nation as a whole.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mike Johnson", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mike Johnson
LA-04