



April 16, 2010

Hon. James L. Oberstar
Chair, Transportation and
Infrastructure Committee
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Hon. Jerry F. Costello
Chair, Aviation Subcommittee
Transportation and Infrastructure Committee

Hon. John L. Mica
Ranking Member, Transportation and
Infrastructure Committee
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Hon. Thomas E. Petri
Ranking Member, Aviation Subcommittee
Transportation and Infrastructure Committee

Dear Representatives Oberstar, Mica, Costello and Petri:

Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety (Advocates) strongly supports H.R. 4714, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) Reauthorization Act of 2010. The bill appropriately strengthens both the mission, as well as the resources of the NTSB in order to implement the new responsibilities that H.R. 4714 assigns to agency investigations and reports on motor vehicle, aviation, maritime, and pipeline safety issues. Advocates fully endorses the increased funding provided each year through Fiscal Year 2014, as well as the addition of necessary staff to carry out these important requirements. Any efforts to reduce either the overall funding or the 477 full-time-equivalent positions supported by the authorization levels in this legislation should be opposed.

This legislation substantially expands the investigative and reporting responsibilities of NTSB in several critical ways. The bill directs NTSB to investigate, when necessary, not only accidents, but also other incidents that impact transportation safety. This will allow NTSB to dramatically increase the acquisition of data to determine how highway, aviation, maritime, and pipeline safety can be enhanced based on an analysis of “near-misses” and other key incident characteristics.

Furthermore, Advocates supports other major improvements in the bill including the provisions that will now allow NTSB to indicate the multiple major causes of accidents and incidents instead of restricting its findings to only a single cause. This change will enhance and expand the analyses and conclusions produced by NTSB investigations and safety studies.

As an organization dedicated to reducing motor vehicle and motor carrier crashes, deaths and injuries, we strongly support the recent emphasis by NTSB on surface transportation safety issues. Investigations and recommendations on bridge failures, truck and motorcoach safety, transit incidents and driver behavior and safety have greatly contributed to public awareness and resulted in critical agency and legislative actions.

This bill deserves to be enacted so that the work of NTSB can continue and successfully meet future transportation safety challenges that affect our country. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Jacqueline S. Gillan
Vice President