



November 17, 2015

The Honorable Bill Shuster  
The Honorable Peter DeFazio  
Transportation and Infrastructure Committee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable James Inhofe  
The Honorable Barbara Boxer  
Environment and Public Works Committee  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Shuster, Chairman Inhofe and Ranking Members DeFazio and Boxer and Members of the Conference Committee,

On behalf of our member utilities, we urge you to retain language included in both the House and Senate surface transportation reauthorization bills creating a working group to improve permitting and route designation for vehicles involved in emergency response and recovery.

We commend your inclusion of Section 32401 of the Senate bill, Section 5504 of the House bill, and House report language specifically mentioning utility vehicles.

Understanding how essential electricity is to the nation's well-being and the economy, utilities work hard to restore power as quickly as possible when it is disrupted. Too often, though, that restoration process is unnecessarily delayed when trucks transporting equipment needed to get power restored are held up at state borders waiting for permits. We believe this working group, if enacted, can lead to needed changes that will expedite the delivery of utility infrastructure equipment following declared emergencies.

We look forward to working with you to advance this sensible proposal and ensure that it remains in the final conference report of the surface transportation reauthorization.

Sincerely,

Susan N. Kelly  
CEO & President  
APPA

Thomas R. Kuhn  
President  
EEI

Jeffrey Connor  
Interim CEO  
NRECA

cc: Members of the Conference Committee