June 1, 2011

Dear Chairman Inouye, Ranking Member Cochran, Subcommittee Chair Murray, and Subcommittee Ranking Member Collins:

As Congress considers the fiscal year 2012 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies appropriations, we, the undersigned group of concerned organizations, urge you to support the programs that help communities across America rebuild their local economies and improve their fiscal stability.

We urge you to support the Partnership for Sustainable Communities and related grant programs in the fiscal year 2012 T-HUD Appropriations Bill. The Partnership for Sustainable Communities helps community leaders get the most out of each federal or state dollar invested in their neighborhoods. These programs make federal investments go even further by helping local leaders leverage private sector investment, save money in municipal budgets, and help families with housing and transportation costs – all while creating jobs.

Specifically, we support continued funding for the Department of Housing and Urban Development’s Sustainable Communities Initiative, which provides Regional Planning Grants and Community Challenge Grants. These grants help communities streamline regulatory barriers and make strategic investments with limited taxpayer dollars. Additionally, we support continued funding for the Department of Transportation’s Transportation Investments Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant program, which strengthens the economy, creates jobs, reduces gridlock, and provides safe, low-cost transportation choices for our citizens.

We acknowledge that this year’s budget decisions are difficult and that Congress needs to cut wasteful spending, but the Partnership for Sustainable Communities helps the federal government work more efficiently and effectively. The Partnership is a vital opportunity to effectively coordinate and leverage federal programs for the greatest long-term benefit to our communities. Cutting these programs would be a shortsighted solution to the budget shortfall, and one that would stunt the economic growth of regions that could benefit from these programs.

We urge you to support the Partnership for Sustainable Communities in the FY2012 T-HUD Appropriations bill.

For more information about Smart Growth America and the undersigned group of concerned organizations, please contact Katy Hartnett at (202) 207-3355 ext. 125 or khartnett@smartgrowthamerica.org.

Sincerely,

Alliance for Bicycling and Walking
Amalgamated Transit Union