TAXPAYERS PROTECTION ALLIANCE

August 4, 2021

U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator,

On behalf of the millions of taxpayers and consumers we represent, the Taxpayers Protection Alliance (TPA) asks members of the Senate to vote in the manner prescribed below on amendments to H.R. 3684, the infrastructure package. Given the size and scope of this legislation, changes made during the amendment process will have far-reaching implications for taxpayers and the nation.

TPA recommends a **YES** vote on the following amendments:

- S. Amdt. 2153 – Introduced by Sen. Joni Ernst (R-Iowa), this amendment would implement needed transparency. It would require grantees to state publicly how much of their projects are assisted with federal funds.
- S. Amdt. 2154 – Introduced by Sen. Joni Ernst (R-Iowa), this amendment would ensure the federal government adheres to its budget. It would prevent rail projects from receiving new assistance if they go at least $1 billion over their projected costs.
- S. Amdt. 2155 – Introduced by Sen. John Cornyn (R-Texas), this amendment would allow states to use unused COVID relief funds for infrastructure projects. This will end up saving taxpayers money and be an efficient use of funds that have not yet been spent, instead of spending more.
- S. Amdt. 2159 – Introduced by Sen. Roger Wicker (R-Miss.), this amendment would prohibit rate regulations for broadband services. Price controls of any sort are bad policy. Federal agencies should instead allow the market to innovate to drive down costs. Rate regulation only discourages investment.
- S. Amdt. 2215 – Introduced by Sen. John Thune (R-S.D.), this amendment makes 350 MHz of spectrum available for auction. Liberating spectrum for private use has been one of the most important tools in creating revolutionary innovation in the broadband space.
- S. Amdts. 2249-2253, 2267 – Introduced by Sen. Mike Lee (R-Utah), these amendments would streamline taxpayer-funded infrastructure projects. They would decrease costs and mitigate the regulatory burden of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).
- S. Amdt. 2256 & 2272 – Introduced by Sen. Mike Lee (R-Utah), these amendments repeal the Davis-Bacon Act. Davis-Bacon requires contractors to pay a "prevailing wage" to workers. In essence, it is a giveaway to labor unions and increases personnel funding on these taxpayer-funded projects by 22 percent. This costs taxpayers $13 billion annually. The second amendment would eliminate any further "prevailing wage" language from the bill.
- S. Amdt. 2265 – Introduced by Sen. Mike Lee (R-Utah), this amendment would require an audit of spectrum allocated to the Department of Defense (DoD). DoD routinely hoards spectrum, inhibiting private sector innovation. This audit would give the public a needed view of the extent of the issue.

TAXPAYERS PROTECTION ALLIANCE

- S. Amdt. 2266 – Introduced by Sen. Mike Lee (R-Utah), this amendment would repeal "Buy American" regulations in the bill text. These protectionist measures harm U.S. trustworthiness abroad, hurt businesses who rely on foreign made products not readily available in the U.S., and cost taxpayer dollars when applied to federal projects.
- S. Amdt. 2289 – Introduced by Sen. John Barasso (R-Wy.), this amendment repeals the electric vehicle tax credit. This tax credit has been a subsidy for the affluent and has not spurred the uptake of electric vehicles in any meaningful sense. It is past time to let it expire.
- S. Amdt. 2498 – Introduced by Sens. Ron Wyden (D-Ore.), Pat Toomey (R-Pa.), and Cynthia Lummis (R-Wy.), this amendment would lift some of the regulatory burden off of cryptocurrencies. The bill, as drafted, implemented unnecessarily stringent reporting requirements that would apply to actors unable to comply. This amendment makes needed fixes to the language of the underlying bill.

TPA recommends a **NO** vote on the following amendments:

- S. Amdt. 2127 – Introduced by Sen. Roger Wicker (R-Miss.), this amendment would give tens of billions to shipyards for the Navy and Coast Guard. This funding is based on the previously introduced SHIPYARD Act, which has a high potential for waste. Such an amendment should be considered on its own merits, not wrapped into a supposed "must-pass" package.
- S. Amdt. 2151 – Introduced by Sen. Roger Wicker (R-Miss.), this amendment appropriates $5 billion in spending for internet and public television. However, there are no spending cuts to offset this new appropriation.
- S. Amdt. 2170 – Introduced by Sen. Jack Reed (D-R.I.), this amendment would increase education funding by $100 billion with no offsets. It also runs the risk of rewarding districts that continue harmful lockdowns of their school districts.
- S. Amdt. 2193 – Introduced by Sen. Joni Ernst (R-Iowa), this amendment would fund "unfunded priorities" for the Coast Guard. Unfunded priorities are a wasteful budgeting tool that should be discontinued. This funding issue should be addressed elsewhere.
- S. Amdts. 2208, 2239, 2151, 2167, 2168 – Introduced by Sens. Kirsten Gillibrand (D-N.Y), Ron Wyden (D-Ore.), Roger Wicker (R-Miss.), Alex Padlla (D-Calif.), and Raphael Warnock (D-Ga.) respectively, these amendments would increase the total spending in the bill by a combined $39.2 billion with no offsets.

For the reasons stated above – and many more – TPA urges your consideration of these amendments to H.R. 3684, the infrastructure bill. On behalf of those we represent, we hope more taxpayer protections will make their way into the package and that waste, fraud, and abuse will be kept out of the legislation. We are happy to answer any questions about our positions on these amendments as needed.

Sincerely,

David Williams
President