

February 1, 2012

**Representative**

Transportation and Infrastructure Committee  
Washington, DC

Dear **Representative**:

I am writing to ask you to contact House T&I Committee Chair John Mica to eliminate the repeal of the National Scenic Byway Program under the proposed 5-year Surface Transportation Bill presented Tuesday, that abolishes the Program. With a national effort to implement new efforts to attract international visitors and create jobs, **we cannot put at risk a proven tool like the system of 150 All-American Roads and National Scenic Byways.**

The National Scenic Byways Program has been a success and exhibits characteristics which are very appropriate for contemporary transportation strategies. The program emphasizes good road design and integration of transportation into corridor-wide natural resource and economic development efforts. The Illinois River Road National Scenic Byway, as well as the other federally designated roadways across the U.S., have been an integral part in developing and strengthening the economies of our country's rural and metropolitan communities.

Byways are extremely important today as an international tourism marketing tool and will become even more important with the advent of the Corporation for Travel Promotion/Brand USA efforts to regain our lost share of international travel and create jobs. Claims of international significance for our byways are indeed substantiated. The new organization set up to market the US to international visitors, Brand USA, has a chart showing its marketing plan. One of the four experience pillars Brand USA is targeting is the Great Outdoors – and Byways are prominently listed along with National Parks. In fact to a considerable extent, Byways fit into all four pillars. We have \$200 million available to attract visitors and create jobs through this initiative – Abolishment of the proven and successful National Scenic Byways Program would take away one of the prime marketing assets for countless communities and regions.

Abolishing the National Scenic Byway Program would be devastating to our **Byway, our state** and the entire country. Our Byways have done incredible work and made great strides to impact tourism, economic development and transportation under the National Scenic Byway Program. Byways across the country have leveraged the National Scenic Byway Program designation to obtain funds from other federal, state and local funding resources to make a significant impact on American transportation, our visitor-based economy, on community livability and protection of our natural resources – just to name a few.

**I urge you to act quickly on behalf of our country's Byways. Please call Chairman Mica and insist he eliminate the repeal of the National Scenic Byway Program.**

Regards,

**Name**