April 18, 2012

Members of Congress
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C.  20515

Dear Representative:

The undersigned are asking you to oppose any version of surface transportation legislation, such as HR 4348, that does not include the hazardous materials provisions contained in title IX, of HR 7.

Hazardous materials underpin our economy and are essential to our quality of life. We represent industries engaged in the production, distribution, and transportation of these materials. Collectively our member companies have operations in every state, have combined business revenues in excess of $1 trillion, employ millions of workers, and have an enviable record of hazardous materials transportation safety and security.

The hazardous materials provisions in HR 7 address a number of reforms that will improve safety and will eliminate mismanaged earmarks as well as unnecessary regulatory burdens. These reforms address long-standing issues such as DOT’s special permits and approvals program, the hazardous materials safety permit program, cargo tank wetlines, NTSB and CSB recommendations, state permitting and hazmat routing, user fees, hazmat training and handling requirements, and civil penalties. These provisions do not add to the cost of surface transportation programs.

Most of these provisions have no counterpart in S. 1813, the Senate version of this legislation. The House will be at a significant disadvantage advocating for these reforms if it goes to conference when neither the House nor the Senate bills contain policy on these matters. With no comparable provisions, these issues will not be within the scope of the conference.

We urge you to only vote for surface transportation legislation that includes these carefully crafted hazmat provisions. The House still has time to support a robust proposal that will provide the needed leverage to work with the Senate in conference to get a long-term extension of surface transportation programs with important policy changes that do not add to the cost of the legislation such as those in title IX.

Thank you for your prompt attention to our request.

Respectfully,

Agricultural Retailers Association
American Chemistry Council
American Coatings Association
American Pyrotechnics Association
Association of Hazmat Shippers, Inc.
The Chlorine Institute, Inc.
Compressed Gas Association
Council on Safe Transportation of Hazardous Articles
Dangerous Goods Advisory Council
The Fertilizer Institute
Gamma Industry Processing Alliance
Gases and Welding Distributors Association
Industrial Packaging Alliance of North America
Institute of Makers of Explosives
International Liquid Terminals Association
International Vessel Operators Dangerous Goods Association, Inc.
National Association of Chemical Distributors
The National Industrial Transportation League
National Private Truck Council
National Propane Gas Association
National Tank Truck Carriers, Inc.
Radiopharmaceutical Shippers & Carriers Conference
Railway Supply Institute, Inc.
PRBA-The Rechargeable Battery Association
Reusable Industrial Packaging Association
Sporting Arms & Ammunition Manufacturers’ Institute
Steel Shipping Container Institute
Transportation Intermediaries Association