



Office of the President & CEO

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May 6, 2021

The Honorable Peter DeFazio
Chairman
House Committee on Transportation and
Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frank J. Pallone
Chairman
House Committee on Energy and
Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
2107 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Samuel B. Graves
Ranking Member
House Committee on Transportation and
Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
1135 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Ranking Member
House Committee on Energy and
Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
1035 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman DeFazio, Chairman Pallone, Ranking Member Graves and Ranking Member Rodgers:

The U.S. aluminum industry knows that a significant federal investment to modernize our nation's infrastructure will create jobs, boost economic growth and save lives. Further, we know that aluminum will be a critical building material in this new infrastructure. As manufacturers who rely on efficient transportation and a reliable infrastructure, the U.S. aluminum industry strongly supports your efforts to increase public and private infrastructure funding – including those measures that will increase operational efficiencies and prioritize sustainability.

The Aluminum Association represents U.S. aluminum producers and jobs across the industry value chain, from primary production to value-added products to recycling, as well as suppliers to the industry. As you consider a legislative package to invest in infrastructure improvement opportunities, remember aluminum's lightweight, corrosion resistance and infinitely recyclable properties make it ideal to contribute to an infrastructure-focused recovery.

Aluminum is fundamental to American manufacturing, supporting aerospace, transportation, construction, infrastructure and many other segments of the U.S. economy. It is designated by the U.S. Geological Survey as a critical mineral and has been [recognized](#) by the Departments of Commerce and Defense as "vital" to national security and a core part of the [Critical Manufacturing Sector](#).

As you move forward to craft a transformative infrastructure package, I urge you to enact the following proposals that will pay dividends to the nation for years to come.

- **Fund and Support Recycling**: The Association recommends that Congress establish and fund programs that support recycling improvements. The recently re-introduced bipartisan *Realizing the Economic Opportunities and Values of Expanding Recycling (RECOVER) Act* provides a framework for that support, and the Association recommends inclusion of its concepts into a comprehensive legislative package.
- **Electrical Grid Modernization and Electric Vehicle Infrastructure**: With a better conductivity-to-weight ratio than copper, aluminum has been used for wiring power grids, including high-voltage long distance power transmission lines and local power distribution systems. Aluminum is also a key material within renewable energy projects, like solar panels. We are glad to see the Department of Energy prioritize new funding for investments in the electrical grid, and we urge Congress to fund further modernization. The aging patchwork system of power generating plants, transmission and distribution lines and substations will need extensive upgrades to meet the growing demand for sustainably produced electricity. Further, our nation's aging infrastructure remains unresponsive to the growing electric vehicle market. We encourage you to fund programs that would support deployment of vehicle charging infrastructure and support states that are incorporating electric vehicles into their energy plan.
- **Public Transportation Building Construction**: Aluminum is used extensively as a building material in large public transportation building projects, combining high strength to weight ratio, corrosion resistance, durability and desirable thermal properties. Making sustainable investments in transportation infrastructure will increase capacity while reducing carbon pollution. We recommend that Congress create a new Airport and Airway Investment Program focused on investing in modernization projects that enhance airport and airspace capacity and invest in public transit facilities.
- **Ensure New Bridges are Built to Last**: Too many bridges in the U.S. are in dire need of rehabilitation or replacement. Aluminum alloys allow for reduced maintenance and a greater service lifespan for a cheaper cost over the entire life cycle of a bridge, and aluminum decking also represents the future of bridge rehabilitation. Aluminum decks also offer an attractive means of increasing bridge load ratings by reducing the dead load of the bridge itself. Such solutions can be installed at much lower cost and reduced traffic downtime. We urge Congress to encourage states to consider a bridge's life cycle cost in their procurement processes and ensure new bridge projects are designed for a modern transportation system with a comprehensive evaluation.
- **Increase Maximum Truck Weight Limits**: Manufacturers can better contribute to the economy when goods and services flow efficiently through the nation's transportation network. Lifting the interstate highway weight limits for trucks would alleviate the freight capacity and driver shortages and highway congestion while maintaining high safety standards. We urge Congress to allow states to increase truck weight limits on Interstate System highways within their borders to 91,000 pounds as long as those trucks are equipped with an additional sixth axle.

- **Promote a Resilient Supply Chain:** The U.S. government recognizes aluminum among a handful of materials critical to U.S. economic and national security. To that end, Congress and the Administration should adopt a coordinated federal strategy that would support innovation and invest in the long-term stability of primary aluminum production, fund the deployment of technology to increase U.S. production of high purity aluminum and facilitate crucial supply chain partnerships. This might include grants or forgivable loans for capital investment in next generation, low carbon aluminum production.

We believe these proposals represent sustainable and bipartisan stimulus opportunities that will contribute to a long-term economic recovery. The U.S. aluminum industry urges you to prioritize these policies as infrastructure funding advances through Congress.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Tom Dobbins".

Tom Dobbins
President & CEO
The Aluminum Association