



COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

April 14th, 2026

The Honorable Michael Bennet
261 Russell Senate Building
Washington DC 20510
Email: Delaney_Deskin@bennet.senate.gov

The Honorable John Hickenlooper
Hart Senate Building, Suite SH-316
120 Constitution Ave, NE
Washington, DC 20510
Email: janeth_stancle@hickenlooper.senate.gov

The Honorable Jeff Hurd
1641 Longworth House Office
Washington, DC 20515
Email: Riley.Scott@mail.house.gov

RE: Including BASICS act in Surface Transportation Authorization

Dear Representative Hurd, Senators Bennet and Hickenlooper:

On behalf of the Pitkin County Board of County Commissioners, I write to express our strong support for preserving the longstanding, state-administered, federally supported, formula-based transportation program, while also urging Congress to include the Bridges and Safety Infrastructure for Community Success (BASICS) Act (H.R. 7437) in the upcoming Surface Transportation Reauthorization.

Pitkin County strongly supports maintaining the current federal transportation framework, which has efficiently delivered critical safety and mobility projects across the nation. State departments of transportation currently direct approximately 85 percent of federal highway formula funding, with local governments directing the remaining 15 percent. State-owned roadways and bridges carry roughly 70 percent and 90 percent of nationwide traffic, respectively, and state DOTs play an essential role in systemwide planning, multimodal coordination, and rapid response during emergencies such as wildfires, floods, and other disruptions—conditions that are highly relevant in our region.

At the same time, counties like Pitkin County are indispensable partners in delivering transportation infrastructure at the local level. Nationwide, counties own 44 percent of public road miles and 38 percent of bridges, and these assets are vital to connecting communities and supporting regional economies. Despite these responsibilities, local governments often face challenges accessing federal formula funding, receiving less than 15 percent overall, while also navigating rising construction costs, capacity constraints, and complex federal requirements.

In a rural, high-cost community like Pitkin County, these challenges are particularly pronounced. Our local transportation network—including county-maintained roads and bridges—plays a critical role in ensuring safe mobility for residents, workforce commuters, and millions of annual visitors. Ensuring reliable access to federal formula funding is essential to maintaining and improving these assets.

We believe the BASICS Act provides a thoughtful and balanced framework to strengthen the existing federal transportation program while improving access for counties and other local governments. Importantly, this legislation recognizes that counties and states are partners—not competitors—in delivering infrastructure.

The BASICS Act would:

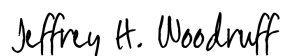
- Increase the direct share of federal formula transportation funding flowing to counties and local governments to closer to 25 percent, ensuring a more equitable alignment with local ownership and responsibilities;
- Provide counties with access to additional formula programs, including critical funding for bridges and safety infrastructure;
- Reduce barriers that make it difficult for rural and smaller counties to access and deliver federally funded projects, improving efficiency and project delivery timelines; and
- Strengthen coordination between state and local governments to ensure investments are delivered effectively and without delay.

We also recognize the importance of ensuring that federal transportation investments are deployed efficiently and without delay. The current state-led model provides the structure and expertise necessary to deliver projects at scale, and we do not support changes that would fragment this system or result in funding sitting idle. However, Pitkin County opposes any surface transportation reauthorization that simply locks in the existing 85/15 funding split without meaningfully improving counties' access to federal formula dollars. A balanced approach must preserve the strengths of the current system while addressing the clear and growing needs of local governments—particularly in rural communities like ours.

As Congress develops the next surface transportation reauthorization bill, we respectfully urge you to support inclusion of the BASICS Act (H.R. 7437) in the base text, while reaffirming a strong state-led, formula-based program that also ensures counties have greater access to critical funding. A robust, well-balanced bill that grows overall investment and strengthens intergovernmental partnerships will best serve communities like Pitkin County and the nation as a whole.

Thank you for your leadership and consideration of this important issue.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey H. Woodruff

Pitkin County Board of County Commissioners, Board Chair