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REGIONAL WHIP

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

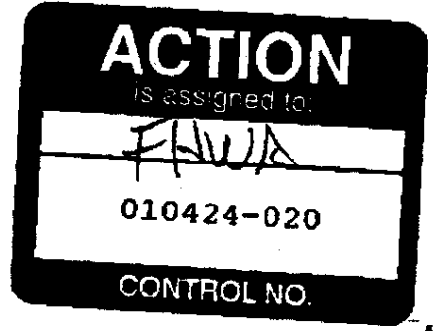
April 20, 2001

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The Honorable Norman Y. Mineta
Secretary
United States Department of Transportation
400 7th St., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590



Dear Secretary Mineta:

I applaud the position that you have taken in recent weeks to measure the success of your efforts in intelligent transportation systems by the amount of deployment that you facilitate. I know that you are interested in promoting public-private partnerships to provide the public with ITS systems that save lives and reduce congestion. Therefore, I urge you to work with existing tools that have been provided to USDOT and quickly award task orders to build out a national, interoperable traveler information system as provided under section 5117(b)(3) of TEA-21.

I was the author of the amendment that became this program. In my request for the program in 1997, I wrote Chairman Shuster that this program would create a public private partnership that would improve the existing ITS infrastructure with new technology standardization and central network monitoring. I envisioned it as a single, national commercially viable ITS system that would inherently provide national compatibility among areas. I am enclosing a copy of the 1997 letter to document for you the fact that the intent from the beginning has been to create such a system. Fragmenting this program into a series of separate procurements would destroy the national program.

I had the opportunity recently to tour the facilities of the contract team that won the original competitive procurement in 1999. As required by the contract, they have successfully deployed an operational traveler information system in two cities that I believe meets the legislative intent of section 5117(b)(3). The statutory provision expressly contemplated a system providing information in over 40 metropolitan areas. Congress provided funding for the third and fourth cities in the original legislation and provided funding for 25 more cities in section 378 of the USDOT 2001 appropriations act. It is time for the Department to use its authority under the Information Technology Omnibus Procurement process to award the next task order to the existing team and get on with this deployment. I believe that you have no other responsible option when you read together the original provision and its legislative history, the original contract award that contemplated a follow-on program, and section 378 of the Appropriations Act. The Department should not change the rules after the private sector partner has demonstrated the proof of concept and raised over \$50 million from investors.

I hope that the Department, coupled with your familiarity with the legislative process, now has what it needs to move forward with this procurement under the same terms and conditions as the initial phase. To delay further or to change the rules would only reduce the ability to provide telematics solutions to travelers in new cars that will be available next year. I will call you within the next several days to see if you have any other questions that I can help you resolve.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Borski', written in a cursive style.

ROBERT A. BORSKI
Member of Congress