

Tauscher Backs Bill to Reduce Public Transit Fares for Commuters Pinched at the Pump

Washington, DC - Today, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 6052, The Saving Energy through Public Transportation Act. The bill provides \$1.7 billion in mass transit grants over two years to reduce fares for public transit use. By doing this consumers are presented with a cost-effective alternative to \$4 per gallon gasoline. These funds could also be used to expand transit services and for operating costs. The funds will be distributed under current local transit formulas.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
CONTACT: Kevin Lawlor, 202/225-1880

June 26, 2008

www.house.gov/tauscher

Rep. Ellen Tauscher
Backs Bill to Reduce Public Transit Fares for Commuters Pinched at the Pump

Authors provision to increase van-pooling services
conserving over five-hundred million gallons of fuel per year

Washington, DC - Today, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 6052, The Saving Energy through Public Transportation Act. The bill provides \$1.7 billion in mass transit grants over two years to reduce fares for public transit use. By doing this consumers are presented with a cost-effective alternative to \$4 per gallon gasoline. These funds could also be used to expand transit services and for operating costs. The funds will be distributed under current local transit formulas.

"I am proud to support a bill that takes steps in the right direction toward lowering energy dependence and cutting commute and travel costs. By providing greater access to public transportation we will reduce the demand for oil, and doing so, lower the price of gasoline. With increased use of public transit we do our part to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and strengthen the economy by removing congestion from our already crowded roads," said Rep. Ellen Tauscher, the Senior Northern Californian on the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

Public transportation provides an affordable alternative to

driving, saving the average household \$6,251 every year, and reduces dangerous carbon dioxide emissions by more than 4,800 pounds per year per person, and yet nearly half (46 percent) of the population has no access to public transit.

Also included in the bill is a provision offered by Rep. Tauscher to make it easier for employers and communities to offer van pool services by leveraging their investment with federal transit funds. The "Capital Cost of Contracting" pilot program can lower the cost of joining a vanpool and increase services nation-wide. It is estimated that full adoption of this program could triple vanpooling across the nation and conserve over five-hundred million gallons of fuel per year greatly reducing gas emissions.

Lynn Osborn, Program Manager for 511 Contra Costa, a comprehensive transportation demand management program which promotes alternatives to single occupant vehicles, said of Rep. Tauscher's provision, "Congresswoman Tauscher has always taken into consideration the best interests of commuters. Her efforts to include provisions in this legislation that will expand commuting options, exemplify the leadership she has shown in finding practical and long term solutions to rising fuel prices, and we are very grateful for her assistance."

"The high cost of gas is something that affects families individually, but solutions need to come from community partnerships that provide the resources to get people out of their cars and into more cost and eco-friendly modes of transportation," said Rep. Tauscher

###