

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Matsui Statement on the Surface Transportation Extension Act**

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – Today, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 4348, the Surface Transportation Extension Act of 2012, which reauthorizes federal highway, transit and other surface transportation programs through September 30, 2014. This bill is a proven job creator, makes reforms by consolidating transportation programs, and leverages federal resources to expand public-private partnerships in transportation. The bill does not include anti-environmental language that authorizes the Keystone pipeline or hinders the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) authority to regulate coal ash.

This legislation also included language similar to the Stop the Rate Hike Act of 2012, a bill cosponsored by Congresswoman Matsui that will keep interest rates on federally subsidized loans at 3.4 percent for another year. This rate was set to double on July 1st.

And finally, it also reauthorizes a five-year extension of the National Flood Insurance Program.

Congresswoman Doris Matsui (D-CA) released the following statement:

“I am pleased that an agreement was reached to reauthorize federal transportation programs. It has been far too long since a comprehensive transportation bill was passed, and this agreement gives businesses and state and local governments the certainty they deserve to move forward on much-needed transportation projects. While I believe that the bill could have gone much further in promoting transportation alternatives such as pedestrian walkways and bicycle paths, it is ultimately a compromise that will create jobs and make necessary improvements and

investments in our nation's aging infrastructure.

Furthermore, as the economy continues to rebound, we must ensure that college graduates' student loan debt never creates an insurmountable barrier to college access, financial stability, and responsibility. I am relieved that an agreement was reached on this issue that will prevent the student loan interest rate from doubling for over 7 million students."

The Surface Transportation Extension Act passed the House of Representatives by a 373-52 vote.

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