April 3, 2014

The Honorable Jim Beall, Chair
Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Subcommittee 2
Resources, Environmental Protection, Energy and Transportation
State Capitol Building, Room 5019
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Richard Bloom, Chair
Assembly Budget Subcommittee 3, Resources and Transportation
State Capitol Building, Room 6026
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Cap-and-Trade Expenditure Plan – Allocation to Active Transportation Program

Dear Chairman Beall and Chairman Bloom:

We, the undersigned organizations, write to respectfully ask you to recommend a direct allocation of $50 million of Cap-and-Trade revenue to the Active Transportation Program in the 2014-15 Budget. We request that in addition to the investment in sustainable communities implementation that would combine active transportation improvements with affordable housing development and transit investment, a separate allocation of at least $50 million be made to the Active Transportation Program.

Walking and biking have doubled since 2000 to more than 18 percent of all trips, yet the Active Transportation Program (ATP) is funded at merely $129 million, or less than one percent of the state’s transportation budget. This is nowhere near sufficient to meet California’s goals for greenhouse gas emission reductions expected to come from shifting trips to walking and biking. Active transportation investments can achieve the most cost-effective greenhouse gas emissions reductions over the project life-cycle. They can also compound the emissions reduction benefits of transit and transit-oriented development by making the first- and last-mile of a transit-based trip more attractive as a walking or bicycling trip and reducing additional vehicle-miles traveled. Finally, active transportation benefits

extend beyond transportation by creating more jobs per dollar expended, supporting the local economy, helping disadvantaged neighborhoods, improving public health, and increasing public safety.

The ATP also prioritizes funding for the health and safety of children traveling to school – the future generation of travelers in California – by dedicating a portion of funding for Safe Routes to School projects. Senate Bill 99 was deliberately crafted through the collaboration of legislative staff, administrative staff, and stakeholders as a venue for Cap-and-Trade investment, by reflecting the requirements of SB 535 for 25 percent of Cap-and-Trade investment to benefit disadvantaged communities and requiring use of the Office of Health Hazards Assessment CalEnviroscreen tool for defining disadvantaged communities. We appreciate the significant contribution of the Budget Subcommittees in their efforts to refine the concept for the ATP and to being responsive to stakeholder concerns throughout the drafting of this landmark bill.

The undersigned organizations have continued to support the California Transportation Commission and Caltrans since the passage of SB 99 in developing the ATP guidelines and application and by conducting outreach to communities to ensure they have the knowledge and resources to apply for funding. With the program development stage complete, the ATP is ready to invest in infrastructure on the ground and in education and encouragement programs for schools and communities that will reduce vehicle-miles traveled and greenhouse gas emissions. Caltrans released the first call for applications for ATP grants on March 21 and anticipates 700 or more applications from communities statewide, which are expected to far exceed current funding levels.

It is absolutely critical to the success of the Cap-and-Trade program and to the goals of the state that the first significant distribution of cap-and-trade revenues to climate-related projects includes a substantial allocation to the Active Transportation Program. The Active Transportation Program can invest in projects on the ground this year that will contribute to reducing emissions before 2020. In recognition of the great demand for walking and bicycling investments in communities across California, we urge you to dedicate at least $50 million in Cap-and-Trade revenue to the Active Transportation Program in the 2014-15 Budget.

Thank you for your consideration. Please contact Jeanie Ward-Waller with the Safe Routes to School National Partnership (jeanie@saferoutespartnership.org) with any questions.

Sincerely,

Dave Snyder
Executive Director
California Bicycle Coalition

Joshua Stark
State Policy Director
TransForm

Sarah de Guia
Director of Government Affairs
California Pan-Ethnic Health Network

Laura Cohen
Western Region Director
Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

Jeanie Ward-Waller

Wendy Alfsen
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