

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 15, 2016

Anthony Foxx
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Gregory Nadeau
Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Foxx and Administrator Nadeau:

We respectfully write to urge you to overturn the 2007 Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) guidance memorandum permitting States' Departments of Transportation (DOT) to authorize electronically changeable commercial message billboards, commonly called digital billboards, to operate on private property located along the federal highway system. A copy of the memorandum is included with this letter. It is our belief that this memorandum contradicts precedents set by federal and state agreements signed pursuant to section 131(d) of the 1965 Highway Beautification Act, which prohibits such billboards. Moreover, this decision has put the safety of drivers at risk, and should be reversed.

Safety studies have raised serious concerns about the impact of these billboards. We are especially troubled by a 2015 study of billboard locations in Alabama and Florida showing an increase in car crashes near the digital billboard sites. The authors of the study found that "the presence of digital billboards increased the overall crash rates in areas of billboard influence compared to control areas downstream of the digital billboard locations. The increase was 25% in Florida and 29% in Alabama." The predominant crash types that were overrepresented at digital billboard locations were rear-end and sideswipe collisions, both typical of driver distraction.

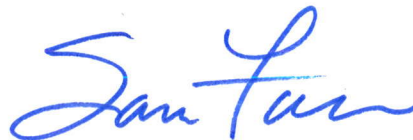
We understand that there is a legal challenge to the 2007 memo that could be decided by the D.C. Court of Appeals soon. Regardless of the outcome of that legal challenge, we are asking that, for safety reasons, you reconsider the position taken in the memo and implement the pre-2007 position of prohibiting digital billboards.

We agree that highway safety should be our utmost concern. Because of this, we strongly urge you to reconsider your position and reverse the action taken in the 2007 memo. For your convenience, we are also enclosing a compendium of safety studies reported by the Veridian Group that includes the 2015 study citing issues in Alabama and Florida.

Sincerely,



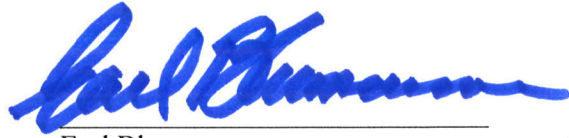
David N. Cicilline
Member of Congress



Sam Farr
Member of Congress



Ted Poe
Member of Congress



Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress