

Rep. Brunner offered the following concurrent resolution:

House Concurrent Resolution No. 50.

A concurrent resolution to memorialize Congress to maintain the current thresholds for Metropolitan Planning Organizations in federal surface transportation authorization legislation.

Whereas, As Congress considers the next federal surface transportation authorization legislation, an important issue concerns how local governments participate in the implementation of federal transportation programs. A provision in the proposed bill to increase the threshold for the creation or continuation of metropolitan planning organizations (MPO) from areas with 50,000 in urbanized area population to areas with 200,000 in urbanized area population would eliminate smaller MPOs and local officials' involvement in planning for transportation. The current MPO population thresholds provide for an open and accessible transportation planning process that is based on involvement by communities and their local elected officials. This is a key mechanism for connecting federal transportation policies, priorities, and funding to the needs of communities and citizens; and

Whereas, The proposed new population thresholds would end a cooperative transportation planning process for many communities and reduce the amount of local involvement in transportation planning and spending decisions. It would eliminate approximately 60 percent of the nation's MPOs, including eight in Michigan. Eight states could lose all of their MPOs. The loss of hundreds of MPOs would remove thousands of local elected and appointed officials from the work of shaping their transportation system, the economic lifeblood of every community. MPOs play a valuable role in a process whereby all levels of government, transit, and road agencies, coordinate projects, communicate with each other, and set priorities for the maintenance and improvement of the overall transportation system; and

Whereas, Transportation infrastructure needs are not defined by community size or population level. Some small-population communities are affected by large scale transportation and planning issues, like proximity to major trucking and freight corridors. MPOs can provide a buffer between communities and state transportation bureaucracies, reorienting priorities back to the local level. They provide a crucial local component of a partnership with federal and state agencies for the delivery of a national transportation system for the twenty-first century; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That we memorialize Congress to maintain the current thresholds for Metropolitan Planning Organizations in federal surface transportation authorization legislation; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and the members of the Michigan congressional delegation.