

## **Rep. Peters Introduces Legislation to Build More Housing Near Transit**

On September 12, 2019, Rep. Scott Peters (CA-52) introduced the bipartisan Build More Housing Near Transit Act, legislation that would change the rating criteria for the Federal Transit Administration's New Starts program, which funds transit projects like commuter rail, light rail, and bus rapid transit through the Capital Investment Grants (CIG) Program. The bill requires housing feasibility assessments to determine how and where housing units could be built near new transit stops. The bill also prioritizes local commitment to change land use policies to accommodate market-rate and affordable housing.

According to the National Low Income Housing Coalition, the United States has a shortage of 7.2 million affordable homes, and 8.1 million Americans spend more than half of their income on housing. In California, there is a shortage of 1.1 million homes for extremely low-income renters. The Build More Housing Near Transit Act aims to facilitate the construction of more housing, increase transit ridership, and maximize federal investments. It will also have the effect of slowing the rate of climate change because research has shown that building housing near transit lines has huge potential to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. In San Diego, the Mid-Coast Trolley receives full funding from a New Starts CIG grant agreement.

The bill is cosponsored by Representatives Cathy McMorris Rodgers (WA-05), Denny Heck (WA-10), Donald Payne, Jr. (NJ-10), Katie Hill (CA-25), and Mike Gallagher (WI-08).

**"We have a housing crisis in San Diego and the federal government has done little to address the magnitude of the problem. Part of the problem is people struggle to find affordable housing and are often forced to live far from work, or they can't find housing near transit-served areas. Our bill will maximize federal investment in transit and increase housing options for families across the country. On top of that, we can protect our environment by increasing transit ridership and getting more cars off the road,"** said Rep. Peters.

**"Federal investment in public transit - and by extension FTA New Starts Capital Investments Grant program - is designed to 'help shape as well as serve urban growth,' but unfortunately these investments often do not align with their important goals,"** said Mike Kingsella, Up for Growth Action Executive Director. **"The Build More Housing Near Transit Act would ensure that limited federal transit dollars are used not only to finance important transit projects, but also enable additional transit-served housing for more Americans. The enhanced criteria for New Starts evaluations proposed by this legislation would mean more homes, using less land, with fewer cars on the road. We thank Representatives Peters and McMorris Rodgers for their visionary leadership in identifying innovative federal solutions to the housing shortage and affordability crisis."**

**“The federal government has an enormous opportunity to leverage transit funding to ensure that new homes can be catalyzed by the public's transportation investment. This bill can help address our affordability and climate goals by allowing more people to live near transit,”** said Colin Parent, Circulate San Diego Executive Director and General Counsel.

**“The United States is in a housing affordability crisis. The Build More Housing Near Transit Act is the type of innovative policy that will help the country meet its transportation infrastructure, housing affordability, and environmental policy goals. By encouraging early coordination of land use and transportation, this legislation will help drive too-scarce federal transit funding into projects that will provide maximum local and regional benefits. I thank Rep. Peters for his leadership on housing affordability,”** said Kurt Christiansen, President of the American Planning Association.

**“I commend Congressman Peters for introducing this bill to help ease the housing availability crisis,”** said Hasan Ikhmeta, Executive Director of the San Diego Association of Governments. **“The Build More Housing Near Transit Act will help local jurisdictions understand how important it is to pair federally-funded transit projects with transit oriented development to ensure a variety of housing options for future generations”**

The Build More Transit Near Housing Act is endorsed by the American Planning Association, Circulate San Diego, Enterprise Community Partners, Habitat for Humanity, the Housing Advisory Group, Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), the Mortgage Bankers Association, the National Apartment Association, the National Association of Home Builders, the National Housing Trust, the National Leased Housing Association, the National Multifamily Housing Council, Prosperity Now, the Regional Plan Association, and Up for Growth Action.

*Congressman Peters serves the 52nd District of California, which covers much of central San Diego County including Poway, Coronado, and large portions of the City of San Diego. He is a member of the House Energy & Commerce and Budget Committees. The Congressman is a former environmental attorney, City Council President, and Port Commission Chairman.*

## **Reps. Peters, Gaetz Introduce Bill to Slow Climate Change, Reduce Super Pollutants**

On September 6, 2019, Rep. Scott Peters (CA-52) and Rep. Matt Gaetz (FL-01) announced the introduction of the bipartisan Super Pollutants Act, which aims to slow climate change by regulating black carbon, hydrofluorocarbons, and methane—some of the most potent greenhouse gases. These short-lived climate pollutants, also called super pollutants, are significantly more potent than carbon dioxide.

The Super Pollutants Act also seeks to preserve current standards on methane pollution from oil and gas production. The bill strengthens standards for global methane emissions, codifies methane emission standards for new sources of methane, and regulates emissions at existing oil and gas operations if voluntary industry efforts do not decrease methane emissions by 40 percent below 2012 levels.

The bill creates a task force of experts from the Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Commerce, Department of Energy, and Department of State to create an action plan to reduce super pollutants based on policy recommendations provided by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, U.S. Climate Alliance, the Interagency Strategy to Reduce Methane Emissions, the Council on Climate Preparedness and Resilience, and the Clean Cooking Alliance. The Super Pollutants Act also coordinates international efforts to reduce super pollutants by requiring federal agencies to provide technical assistance to other nations looking to curb their super pollutants.

The bill is based on research by Dr. Veerabhadran Ramanathan of UC San Diego and former student Dr. Yangyang Xu and policy research by Durwood Zaelke and David Victor that found aggressively cutting super pollutants now could avoid 1.5 degrees of warming by the end of the century. Additional research demonstrates that curbing super pollutants could reduce sea level rise 18 percent by 2050 and 24 percent by the end of the century, according to studies cited in an Institute for Governance & Sustainable Development report.

### **Bills Cosponsored**

## **Animals**

On 9/11/19, Rep. Scott Peters (CA-52) cosponsored Rep. Fitzpatrick's H.R. 1002, the Welfare of Our Friends (WOOF) Act of 2019, which prohibits issuing licenses to people connected with dog dealers who had licenses revoked.

## **Education**

On 9/12/2019, Rep. Scott Peters (CA-52) cosponsored H.R. 943, the Never Again Education Act, which would create a Holocaust Education Assistance Program fund to provide grants to teachers and schools to improve their Holocaust education training.

## **Government Reform, Fix Congress, Elections**

On 9/11/2019, Rep. Scott Peters (CA-52) cosponsored H.R. 2135, the Preventing Adversaries Internationally from Disbursing Advertising Dollars (PAID AD) Act, which would make it illegal for foreign entities to purchase political ads about candidates or significant legislative issues to influence elections.