



NATIONAL STONE, SAND  
& GRAVEL ASSOCIATION

July 26, 2021

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Chairwoman  
House Committee on Appropriations  
H-307, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger  
Ranking Member  
House Committee on Appropriations  
1036 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Granger:

On behalf of the 400 members of the National Stone, Sand & Gravel Association (NSSGA), I am writing to share our views on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 Appropriations bills being considered by the House of Representatives. NSSGA appreciates the work of the Committee and all members of the House to responsibly fund the government and address our pressing infrastructure needs before September 30.

NSSGA represents aggregates producers and those who manufacture equipment and services that support the construction industry. Our members are essential to the work of this country, and we represent more than 90 percent of the crushed stone and 70 percent of the sand and gravel consumed annually in the United States. Our members employ more than 100,000 hard-working men and women in high earning jobs and are responsible for the essential raw materials found in every home, building, road, bridge and public works project.

It is no secret our nation's infrastructure is faltering, and we praise the Committee's work year over year to ensure robust discretionary funding is provided to key agencies that invest in our roads, airports, waterways and other important infrastructure programs. NSSGA thanks the Committee for their work to advance measures that continues this longstanding precedent, including:

- \$200 million increase for National Infrastructure Investments (RAISE/TIGER/BUILD) grants to support new highway and bridge projects;
- \$61.9 billion for the Federal Highway Administration for formula programs funded from the Highway Trust Fund that improve the safety and long-term viability of our nation's highway systems;
- Continued discretionary funding for the Airport Improvement Program;
- \$2.5 billion for Capital Investment Grants, to construct more transit routes;
- Increased funding for Construction, Operations and Maintenance, and Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund projects in the Army Corp of Engineers to help modernize our waterways;
- \$907 million, an increase of \$165 million for critical broadband infrastructure; and
- \$1.45 billion for rural water and waste program loans, and over \$716 million in water and waste grants for clean and reliable drinking water systems.



We would also like to thank the Committee and all members of the House who worked to restore community-directed funding that will bring thousands of needed infrastructure projects to fruition. Article 1 is clear, Congress has authority over federal spending and the directed funding under this bill will help ease bureaucratic delays, improve our communities, and create jobs.

NSSGA commends the Committee for including language in the FY 2022 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies (THUD) appropriations bill that provides direction to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to proceed with material neutral funding decisions. NSSGA has always supported Congress' longstanding work to promote research and development of building solutions that advances the performance, sustainability, reliability of the building materials. It is imperative that critical research dollars are not limited to one specific building material, allowing all materials to compete on a level playing field. NSSGA also praises the Committee's work to promote greater coordination between FHWA and the U.S. Geologic Survey (USGS) to ensure our communities have sustainable access to aggregates resource. These partnerships will be critical in reducing construction costs and mitigating environmental impacts, as we work to source needed construction materials to improve our roads, bridges and all public works.

Further, across the aggregates and related construction industries, employers are facing a historic and widening skills gap. With over 9 million job openings, it is imperative Congress work to provide solutions that increase training and career growth opportunities. We thank the Committee for increasing funding by providing \$2.2 billion for Career, Technical and Adult Education (CTE) under the FY 2022 Labor, Health and Human Services and Related Agencies (LHHS) Appropriations bill. Programs funded by CTE will help ensure a new generation of skilled employees are available to join our industries to contribute to the growth and success of our nation.

NSSGA thanks the Committees for providing a \$15 million increase in funding for the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) in the FY 2022 LHHS bill. NSSGA works closely with NIOSH to enhance worker safety and health in the aggregates industry. NIOSH has collaborated with NSSGA during the pandemic to improve strategies that prevent the spread of COVID-19 and encourage employees in the industry to get vaccinated.

The FY 22 LHHS bill also includes an increase in funding for the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA). We appreciate the Committee's commitment to promoting mine safety and health as NSSGA partners with MSHA to achieve its important mission. As Congress works through the appropriations process, it is important that increased funding be provided to MSHA's Directorate of Educational Policy and Development (EPD). EPD is essential to promoting mine safety through better training and compliance assistance.

***As the full House of Representatives works to advance the FY 2022 spending measures through the chamber, NSSGA urges adoption of the following amendments:***

NSSGA support's Rep. Pete Stauber's [Amendment](#) to of the FY 2022 Interior, Environment and Related Agencies (Interior) Appropriations bill that would strike section 435. This extremely broad rider would prohibit mining activities over a large area of Northern Minnesota, severely impacting the ability to develop critical infrastructure and eliminate a crucial economic sector that supply's high paying jobs across rural communities. If enacted, a Section 435 would curtail future aggregates operations in existing quarries within the Rainy River Watershed and the Superior National Forest. Such a blanket prohibition would severely diminish the ability for rural communities in this area to access key resources that are necessary for building roads, bridges, schools, hospitals, homes and businesses and other important projects that are critical to communities and the environment.



NSSGA supports [amendments](#) offered by Rep. Jim Hagedorn to the FY 2022 Interior Appropriations bill and the FY 2022 Energy and Water and Related Agencies (E&W) Appropriations bill ensures the Navigable Waters Protection Rule remains intact, providing needed certainty to aggregates producers and permits for large infrastructure projects. NSSGA's aggregate producers need clear rules to provide aggregates necessary for vital infrastructure projects. Aggregates operators need clean water to operate and are good stewards of our water resources. Revisions and delays to the NWPR will only increase uncertainty and costs which will impact our ability to supply materials needed for infrastructure improvements. NSSGA appreciates the engagement of all the members of Congress who supported amendments that prioritize common sense federal regulations of our nation's water bodies.

NSSGA supports Rep. August Pflueger's [amendment](#) to the FY 2022 Interior bill that ensures the Department of Interior continues to support responsible production of oil and gas on federal lands. NSSGA members, including industrial sand producers, are proud to supply the materials necessary for producing and delivering all forms of energy to every community. We are concerned with the impact of moratoriums and delays surrounding the ability to obtain new oil and gas leases. It is imperative the Department continues to allow for the responsible production as federal lands accounts for 24 percent of oil and 12 percent of natural gas produced in the U.S and is key to our energy independence and security. NSSGA also calls on Congress to support Rep. Michael Burgess's [amendment](#) to the FY 2022 Interior bill that ensures the continue operation and development of infrastructure needed to transport and deliver energy to American homes, schools, and businesses. NSSGA is opposed to new requirements and delays that unnecessarily prohibit the development of responsible new infrastructure, like pipelines, rail, processing and refining facilities and other energy critical infrastructure that is essential to the livelihoods of all Americans. We believe a transition to a cleaner energy future must come through innovation, not elimination.

NSSGA appreciates the hard work of every member of Congress to address the many challenges facing our nation through the annual spending process. House action to advance the FY 2022 appropriations bills is key step to reaching bipartisan consensus on government funding and avoiding a harmful government shutdown.

Sincerely,



Michael W. Johnson  
President and CEO  
National Stone, Sand & Gravel Association

CC: Members of the House of Representatives

