

Tauscher, House Passes Legislation to Reimburse Caltrans for Cost of Public Transportation and "511" Services Related to MacArthur Maze Collapse

Washington, DC - Today, the House passed legislation to reimburse Caltrans for costs associated with providing public transportation and "511" traveler information services as a result of the MacArthur Maze collapse.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Language mirrors Rep. Ellen Tauscher's Emergency Commuter Relief Act to reimburse for Maze Collapse as well as future disasters

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This particular section of the bill mirrors the Emergency Commuter Relief Act (H.R. 2783), which Rep. Tauscher introduced in June to make mass transportation and traveler information services provided in the wake of all qualified highway emergencies eligible for federal reimbursement. The inability of states to be reimbursed for these transit costs severely limits the ways in which states and regions can respond to these types of disasters.

"The Maze closure this past April did not have the significant impact on traffic and congestion that was originally anticipated because, in record numbers, people in and around the Bay Area got out of their cars and onto mass transportation. Passage of this legislation rewards Caltrans, BART, AC Transit and the other Bay Area transit operators for their prompt response and encourages others to do the same in similar unfortunate circumstances. Giving this money back to California is a step in the right direction," said Rep. Tauscher, the senior Northern Californian on the House Transportation Committee.

The passage of this provision is part of HR 3248, the SAFETEA LU Technical Corrections bill. The legislation allows the Secretary of Transportation to use funds from the Emergency Relief Program to reimburse Caltrans, something that before now was prohibited.

The legislation will move on to the Senate and from there await the President's signature.