Chairman DeFazio and Ranking Member Graves, thank you for holding this hearing addressing the impact that federal infrastructure policy can have on climate change. The American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association (ASLRRA) is a non-profit trade association representing 603 Class II and Class III railroads in the United States, Canada and Mexico as well as numerous suppliers and contractors to the short line and regional railroad industry. Short lines operate 47,500 route miles of track in 49 states, or approximately 29% of the national railroad network, touching in origination or termination one out of every five cars moving on the national railroad system, serving customers who otherwise would be cut off from the national railroad network.

While passenger and freight roadway vehicles account for 83% of total greenhouse gas emissions, freight rail accounts for only 2%. As Rep. LaMalfa noted during the hearing, freight rail moves one ton of freight 479 miles on one gallon of diesel fuel. Class II and Class III railroads alone moved 12,074,000 carloads of freight in 2015, equaling 34,778,000 truckloads. According to the Association of American Railroads, if 10% of the freight currently moved by truck was moved to rail, fuel savings would be more than 1.5 billion gallons per year. This is equivalent to removing 3.2 million cars from the highways during the same period.

Transporting goods by rail reduces natural fuel used, and reduces wear and tear, assisting the fuel efficiency of the motoring public.

Congress can facilitate shippers maximizing their use of freight rail in two ways:

- **Supporting the Short Line Tax Credit, also known as 45G.** For 12 years the short line tax credit has proven its worth. It has enhanced capital investment into short line railroads, it has significantly improved competitive rail service for shippers, it has helped improve railroad safety and it has been the difference between piecemeal and corridor improvements. Helping short lines continue to grow freight traffic through infrastructure improvements will deliver long term benefits to the environment.

- **Opposing any increase in truck size or length** is critical to keeping freight on the rails. It has been established both in actual practice, in those states that have allowed bigger trucks on state roads, and in many well-constructed diversion studies, that if truck lengths and weights are
increased, freight will be diverted from the rails onto the highways. This modal shift will contribute to climate change by inflicting more damage to pavement, reducing fuel efficiencies for cars and trucks that use the roads. Additional weights and axles needed to support that increased weights contributes to “rolling resistance,” which leads to more fuel consumption.

As Ranking Member Graves noted during the hearing, the freight rail industry is making progress in the area of climate change by implementing technologies to limit greenhouse gases, increase fuel efficiency and reduce its carbon footprint. We believe that policies supporting these efforts by the freight rail industry is one answer to address climate change.

ASLRA and our member railroads urge the committee to consider the impact that tax and truck size and weight policies can have on climate change and on the efforts that Class II and III railroads are already making to provide safe, reliable, and fuel-efficient transportation.