

Friends in high places

A visit to Congress on behalf of cyclists has the potential to feel like an exercise in futility; for whatever reason, leadership in the House of Representatives decided to specifically target all-things-cycling for elimination from federal funding on the grounds that it's frivolous. Frivolous?



Representative Jackie Speier with Gary Fisher at the DC Bicycle Summit lobbying event. Jackie has been a supporter of cycling from Day 1.

Tell that to car-bound commuter stuck in traffic because it's not possible to build enough roads and parking lots in a city and still have a place to live.

Tell that to downtown stores and restaurants that can't stay in business because the lack of space has driven rents through the roof.

Tell that to a new generation that may become fat & lazy because it's not safe for kids to ride or walk to school, so they're driven everywhere.

Tell that to anyone paying nearly \$5/gallon for gas because our need for fuel has driven up the cost.

Tell that to a cyclist who's been injured by a car because the roads aren't built to accommodate all users.

Fortunately, the two Representatives local to Chain Reaction, Jackie Speier and Anna Eshoo, get it. And fortunately, when the House leadership (Representatives Boehner and Mica) decided that cycling infrastructure and Safe Routes to Schools programs were frivolous, thousands of people responded. We heard that the kickback from cyclists was far beyond anything Boehner and Mica were prepared for and, as a result, there will likely be a 3-month extension of the current highway funding bill, keeping our programs intact. During that 3 months, the House and Senate will be getting together to hammer out a bill acceptable to both, and it is hopeful that, while we'll share our burden of the current financial situation, we won't be completely gutted as things originally appeared.

To all of our customers who responded to an earlier email request for help (by calling or emailing your representative), all 800 cycling advocates who worked "The Hill" in DC on March 22nd, thank you. We have proved ourselves capable of a good fight, and that alone is worth a lot of value when fighting for our rights to the road and our desire to make our communities friendlier to all who live there. The battle is not over, but with the help of the cycling community, we will prevail. --Mike--