



AMERICAN COUNCIL OF ENGINEERING COMPANIES

NEWS RELEASE

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ACEC Says NTSB I-35 Bridge Report Underscores Need For Additional Infrastructure Investment

WASHINGTON – In response to today’s public hearing of the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) on the collapse of the I-35W bridge in Minneapolis, the nation’s engineering industry renews its call for major new investment in America’s infrastructure.

“The NTSB report ought to be viewed in the larger context of our under-investment in the nation’s critical infrastructure,” said ACEC President and CEO David A. Raymond.

“The simple fact remains that we need more resources to tackle the tremendous backlog of bridge projects across the nation. One in every four bridges requires major structural improvements or expanded capacity.”

According to the 2006 U.S. DOT Conditions and Performance Report, \$65 billion should be invested immediately to address bridge deficiencies. Current spending from all levels of government falls far short of meeting those needs, Raymond said. “Sufficient funding must be made available to rebuild and maintain these structures that are so vital to the safety and economy of our nation.”

In testimony before Congress and in correspondence with lawmakers, ACEC has called for a risk-based strategy for inspecting, repairing and replacing deficient bridges. The Council has urged the U.S. Department of Transportation to work with states to assure priority consideration for bridge maintenance and repair based on safety, serviceability, cost-effectiveness and demand.

Many of ACEC’s recommendations have been included in legislation drafted by Rep. James Oberstar (D-MN), the chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. Oberstar’s bill, HR 3999, has cleared the House of Representatives, but awaits final approval in the Senate.

The American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC) is the oldest and largest business association of America’s engineering industry, representing approximately 5,700 independent engineering companies throughout the United States engaged in the development of America’s transportation, energy, environmental, industrial, and other public and private facilities. Founded in 1909 and headquartered in Washington, D.C., ACEC is a national federation of 51 state and regional organizations.