ENGINEERING A 21ST CENTURY INFRASTRUCTURE AGENDA

ACEC and its members call on the U.S. Congress to quickly enact a bold national infrastructure strategy that significantly increases investment in existing core federal infrastructure programs to bring our facilities to a state of good repair and modernize our systems for a growing economy and changing population.

Key Points:

- 44% of major roads in poor or mediocre condition.
- 23% of bridges structurally deficient or functionally obsolete.
- $600 in vehicle damage and $960 annually in congestion costs for the average driver.
- 144,000 hours of lock shutdowns on U.S. waterways due to maintenance and unexpected delays.
- $271 billion needed to maintain and improve wastewater and stormwater treatment systems over the next twenty years; $472.6 billion is needed for drinking water projects.
- FAA forecasts a 50% increase in airline passengers between 2017-2038.
- Every infrastructure dollar delivers nearly $4 in economic activity – a 4:1 benefit ratio.
- $1 billion invested in water infrastructure creates 23,000 jobs.
- Modernized transportation, water, energy, and communications networks will reduce carbon emissions, mitigate the impact of climate change, and foster environmental health.

Action Items:

- Raise revenues to restore solvency to the Highway Trust Fund, and support continued development of alternative funding mechanisms such as mileage-based user fees.
- Cosponsor HR 1497 to reauthorize and expand the Clean Water Act SRF program.
- Cosponsor the Public Buildings Renewal Act (HR 1251/S 932), to create $5 billion in private activity bonds for schools, courthouses, libraries, law enforcement facilities, and universities.
- Lift the cap on Passenger Facility Charges (PFCs); boost Airport Improvement Program funding.
- Incentivize private investment through TIFIA, WIFIA, RRIF, and Private Activity Bonds.
- Oppose policies that restrict the ability of State DOTs to contract with local firms.
- Streamline regulations for efficient project delivery while ensuring environmental performance and public interest protections.
The Highway Trust Fund (HTF), was established by Congress in 1956 to invest in our Nation’s highways, roads, and bridges. It is funded to this day through a user fee assessed on every gallon of gasoline or diesel fuel you buy. Every time you fill up your tank, you help pay for the roads you’re using.

Today, federal funding through the HTF provides roughly 51% of the money for all new road and bridge projects in the United States. Designed to only be spent on infrastructure.

The current user fees were set in 1993 and haven’t been increased since. They are not indexed for inflation.

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The Congressional Budget Office projects that outlays from the Highway Trust Fund will exceed trust fund reserves by a cumulative $123 billion for the highway account and by $46 billion for the mass transit account by 2029. If no action is taken, the Congressional Budget Office estimates that both accounts of the Highway Trust Fund (Highways and Mass Transit) will go insolvent in FY2021. First, the Mass Transit Account will go broke, followed by the Highways Account.

If another bill simply extends the FAST Act for six years (FY2021 to 2026), it would cost $95 billion just to bail out the Fund and return each account to a zero balance.

A 15 cent increase in the Federal user fees would ensure the Fund’s solvency and bring it in line with inflation.

More than 30 states have already taken action to address their own user fee increases to fund infrastructure improvements in their state.

It is time for Congress to follow the states’ lead and act to ensure the Fund’s solvency.