



National Association County Engineers

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The Voice of County Road Officials

NACE UPDATE

The almost bi-weekly newsletter for Board members, Committee Chairs, and Members
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LaHood: Creative Thinking Needed to Fund Multiyear Bill

(AASHTO Journal)

U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood told attendees at an American Road & Transportation Builders Association conference that while the Highway Trust Fund is receiving insufficient revenue to fund necessary infrastructure improvements, increasing the gas tax is not the answer. He proposed a combination of three programs that the administration believes could help fill the revenue shortfall the reauthorization bill is facing: increased highway tolling, developing more public/private partnerships, and creating a national infrastructure bank.

"If you take the programs we have and begin to think of PPPs, you begin to think that there is a path to infrastructure improvement that doesn't include [raising] the gas tax," LaHood said.

LaHood spoke during ARTBA's Public/Private Partnerships Conference in Washington about the progress being made by U.S. DOT in preparing its principles for reauthorizing federal highway, bridge, and transit programs. The secretary also discussed what he views as alternatives for funding the reauthorization bill since a gas-tax increase above the current level of 18.4 cents per gallon is considered off the table.

"There is no dispute in Washington about what needs to be done," LaHood said. "We know what needs to be done. There's only one problem: trying to find \$500 billion."

That is the amount proposed last year by the House Highways & Transit Subcommittee. The multiyear reauthorization has not advanced in the full House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee, however, nor has it been considered by the Senate Environment & Public Works Committee. President Barack Obama in March signed into law the fifth short-term extension of the 2005 transportation authorization known as "SAFETEA-LU," which expired Sept. 30, 2009. The current extension expires at the end of this calendar year.

LaHood appeared Tuesday before the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee, where he reiterated the need to utilize tolls, PPPs, and a national infrastructure bank instead of boosting the gasoline and diesel taxes to offset some of the \$500 billion needed to fund the next multiyear reauthorization bill.

"We have 10% unemployment and people can hardly afford to pay for a gallon of gasoline," LaHood said, adding he couldn't imagine raising the gas tax anytime soon since so many families are presently struggling financially.

Rep. John Mica, R-Florida and ranking minority member of the committee, concurred with LaHood that the gas tax should not be raised. Mica expressed support for LaHood's plan to utilize other options to fund a new reauthorization bill.

"The next long-term reauthorization must consider a host of financing alternatives to help stabilize the Highway Trust Fund, which currently relies on the increasingly obsolete gas tax for funds," Mica said.

Funding for one of the administration's alternative transportation programs is already in jeopardy in Congress. Both the House and Senate appropriations committees last week refused to include a \$4 billion National Infrastructure Innovation & Financing Fund the administration requested in the Fiscal Year 2011 transportation appropriations bill. The fund would offer grants and leverage state and private-sector dollars to help fund transportation infrastructure improvements.

House Approves FY 2011 Transportation Spending Bill

The House on July 29 approved, by a vote of 251-167, the FY 2011 Department of Transportation funding bill (H.R. 5850) that includes a large 7.4 per cent increase in highway spending. Nearly \$80 billion is provided in transportation spending and another \$46.5 billion for the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The federal highway program is increased to \$45.182 billion, which is \$4 billion above the current year level. The transit formula program is funded at \$8.961 billion and the capital program at \$2 billion. Amtrak gets \$1.767 billion and high-speed rail an additional \$400 million. The Airport Improvement Program is funded at \$3.515 billion and Essential Air Service at \$196 million. The House action marks only the second regular appropriations bill approved by either chamber this year.

The Senate Appropriations Committee approved its bill on July 22 and it remains to be seen whether a final bill can get to the president by October 1, the beginning of fiscal year 2001. Contact: [Bob Fogel 202/942-4217](mailto:Bob.Fogel@DOT.gov)

Senate Passes Bill Containing \$2.2 Billion Reduction in Highway Contract Authority

The Senate passed a bill Thursday that would rescind \$2.2 billion in highway contract authority apportionments from balances held by state transportation departments. The House of Representatives has been called back into session early next week to approve the measure and send it to President Barack Obama. Read about it here:

<http://www.aashtojournal.org/Pages/080610rescissions.aspx>

ARTBA Tells Obama Multiyear Bill Needed By December

The American Road & Transportation Builders Association urged President Barack Obama in a letter to make a six-year surface transportation reauthorization bill a post-election legislative priority. Read about it here: <http://www.aashtojournal.org/Pages/080610artba.aspx>

White House supports transportation infrastructure bill

The Obama administration is getting behind a house bill that would allocate funding to infrastructure projects. H.R. 5850 would help ensure the country maintains a first-class infrastructure. "A modern, high-performance transportation infrastructure is critical to the long-term growth of the American economy," the Office of Management and Budget said in a statement. United Press International http://www.upi.com/Top_News/US/2010/07/28/OMB-urges-passage-of-infrastructure-bill/UPI-89031280348354/

THE NORTHWEST PAVEMENT MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION ANNUAL FALL CONFERENCE OCTOBER 26th thru OCTOBER 29th 2010 IN VANCOUVER WASHINGTON

WITH BUDGETS AND RESOURCES BEING REDUCED, IT IS NOW MORE IMPORTANT TO SEEK OUT NEW INFORMATION REGARDING INNOVATIVE COST EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES AND BE A PART OF A LARGE GROUP THAT CAN SHARE INFORMATION IMPORTANT TO US ALL.

The NWPMA Executive Board and conference committee is happy to announce that the 2010 conference will be held at the Heathman Lodge in Vancouver, Washington again this year. For reservations at the Heathman Lodge please visit their Web Site at

https://reservations.ihotelier.com/crs/g_reservation.cfm?groupID=429826&hotelID=6457 .

On Tuesday October 26th we will begin our conference with FOUR exciting ½ day classes on Pavement Design, Pavement Management, Pavement Preservation and Asset Management at no additional cost. The remaining conference days will be filled with presentations on funding, maintenance treatments, structural testing, pavement management software, construction techniques and round table discussions on innovative cost effective treatments for roadways. We have incorporated a flavor of the spring conference into the agenda because of its elimination after 20 years. This year we are offering a \$100.00 reduction in the registration fee (Regular registration is \$250.00) to attendees who register before September 1st 2010 and a \$50.00 reduction for registrations received before October 1st. The agenda, registration, vendor details and additional information is available online at <http://nwpma-online.org/>

Please mark your calendars and take advantage of the reduced registration fees. We are looking forward to your participation in this year's conference.

Hot off the presses, the summer edition of *Safety Compass* is here!

What is Safety Compass? An outreach source to share and provide the latest in program delivery, best practices, research, training, regulations and legislation designed to help improve and establish a more productive national and local safety program. The Safety Compass also provides resources for implementation, networking, applicable tools-more importantly; unify the overall highway safety community efforts and involvement. This and previous issues of the Safety Compass also available online at:

<http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/newsletter/safetycompass/2010/summer10/>.

EPA Announces Launching of Discussion Forum on NPDES Electronic Reporting Rulemaking

EPA has announced the launch of a discussion forum on the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Electronic Reporting Rule. In general terms, this rulemaking is looking at the information NPDES permittees are already submitting, and considering which of that information should be submitted electronically to the states and EPA. Through the discussion forum you can comment on a variety of topics related to electronic NPDES reporting.

The discussion forum can be found on a new public website at:

<http://www.regulations.gov/exchange/topic/npdes>

The discussion forum allows states and stakeholders - and any other interested party - to log-on to comment on the rule BEFORE it is even proposed. Traditionally, very few stakeholders get an opportunity to be heard until after a proposed rule has been published in the Federal Register. In this case, comments received through the discussion forum might have an impact on what is proposed. EPA believes this discussion forum will improve the transparency of the rule development process, and will allow an open dialog and exchange of information between EPA and all interested parties.

Federal Highway Administration Proposes Revision of Rules to Make Roadway Markings Brighter

To further improve roadway safety by making pavement markings brighter and easier to see, Federal Highway Administrator Victor Mendez has proposed to establish the first-ever standards for maintaining the reflectivity of centerlines, lane lines and edge lines on all roads used by the public. Full release and link to comments page: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/pressroom/fhwa1008.htm>

All NACE members are encouraged to review and comment on these proposed regulations which are due on August 20, 2010. Since these regulations propose significant requirements for county roads with regards to pavement markings with no funding identified we remain concerned that they constitute an unfunded mandate on local government. A future NACE action alert will be sent.

Listen to NACE Past President Chris Bauserman Discuss Critical Issues in the New Authorization of the Surface Transportation Program! Visit Our Local Roads Matter website!

Chris E. Bauserman, NACE Past President & County Engineer, Delaware County OH discusses the important issues associated with the next transportation authorization in this important PODCAST. To view his presentation visit the NACE Local Roads Matter Campaign site

<http://countyengineers...org/LRM/index.html> (click on Social Media Center).

FHWA "Success in Stewardship" August Newsletter Available for Viewing

The August issue of FHWA's "Successes in Stewardship" Newsletter is now available at: <http://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/strmlng/newsletters/aug10nl.asp>. FHWA is pleased to announce that this issue's feature story is: "FHWA's Livability Initiative Advances the Goals for Sustainable Communities."

90th TRB Annual Meeting, January 23-27, 2011

CALL FOR PAPERS

Low Volume Roads Committee Call for Papers

"Recycled Materials for Transportation Infrastructure"

<http://pressamp.trb.org/CallForPapers/CFPDetail.asp?cid=1209>

"Safety, Geometric Design and Traffic Issues Unique to Low-Volume Roads"

<http://pressamp.trb.org/CallForPapers/CFPDetail.asp?cid=1172>

The Crash Modification Factors Clearinghouse has released the first edition of its e-newsletter, CMF Update.

To view the Summer 2010 edition, please visit

http://www.cmfclearinghouse.org/enewsletter/001_summer2010.html

To subscribe to the e-newsletter, please visit http://www.cmfclearinghouse.org/newsletter_signup.cfm.

The Crash Modification Factors (CMF) Clearinghouse was established to provide transportation professionals with a regularly updated, online repository of CMFs, a mechanism for sharing newly developed CMFs, and educational information on the proper application of CMFs. The purpose of the CMF Clearinghouse is to compile all documented CMFs in a central location. The CMF Clearinghouse provides a searchable database that can be easily queried to identify CMFs to meet user's needs.

Meeting the Challenges of Today's Transportation Needs by Making Every Day Count

For the Nation's highway community, meeting the challenges of today's transportation needs while working more efficiently, sustainably, and cost effectively means going beyond innovation and ingenuity. It means making every day count. Rapid deployment of proven technology and solutions to speed up project delivery are at the heart of the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) new Every Day Counts (EDC) initiative.



"EDC is designed to identify and deploy innovation aimed at shortening project delivery, enhancing the safety of our roadways, and improving environmental sustainability," said FHWA Administrator Victor M. Mendez.

EDC will initially focus on getting promising new technologies into the marketplace faster and speeding the delivery of major highway projects. Administrator Mendez has asked FHWA Deputy Administrator Greg Nadeau to lead this initiative. Priority technologies featured are:

- *Warm Mix Asphalt*—Warm mix asphalt (WMA) technologies allow the producers of hot-mix asphalt pavement to lower the temperatures at which the material is mixed and placed on the road, which can result in significant cost savings and reduced greenhouse gas emissions. WMA projects have been constructed in more than 40 States to date.
- *Prefabricated Bridge Elements and Systems*—The use of prefabricated bridge elements and systems (PBES), ranging from superstructures or substructures to totally prefabricated bridges, offers both faster and safer bridge construction and better quality. PBES can also reduce costs and the environmental impact of projects.
- *Adaptive Signal Control Technology*—Adaptive signal control systems, such as Adaptive Control Software Lite (ACS-Lite), coordinate the control of traffic signals across a network by adjusting the lengths of green lights based on prevailing traffic conditions. These adjustments can improve travel time reliability, reduce congestion, and provide a smoother flow of traffic.
- *Safety Edge*—The Safety Edge technology provides a simple but extremely effective solution to reduce pavement edge-related crashes and help save lives. By shaping the edge of a pavement to

30 to 35 degrees, the Safety Edge helps eliminate the problem of vertical drop-off, enabling vehicles to return to the paved road smoothly and easily.

- *Geosynthetic Reinforced Soil (GRS)*—Instead of conventional bridge supported technology; GRS technology uses alternating layers of compacted fill and sheets of geotextile reinforcement to provide support for the bridge. The technology can reduce construction time and costs and also offers flexible design and the ease of using common equipment and readily available materials.

Along with new technologies, FHWA aims to make innovative contracting standard business practice by supporting the deployment of accelerated project delivery methods. The Construction Manager/General Contractor (CM/GC) is a project delivery method where the owner contracts with a construction manager to provide constructability, scheduling, and pricing information during the design process. CM/GC allows State departments of transportation to remain active in the design process while assigning risks to the parties most able to mitigate them. CM/GC occupies the middle ground between design-bid-build and design-build. The CM/GC method has the potential to lower project costs, accelerate project completion, and reduce change orders.

In the alternative Design-Build project delivery method, the design and construction phases of a project are combined into one contract. This can result in significant time and cost savings and also provides the contractor with increased flexibility to be innovative.

The EDC initiative will also provide innovative approaches to improving the delivery process for projects that require an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or other environmental document. The proposed initiatives will help State and local agencies speed project delivery by using the following time-saving practices:

- *Planning and Environmental Linkages*—This initiative will provide a tool to increase incorporation of planning documents and decisions into the environmental review process, minimizing duplication of effort, promoting environmental stewardship, and reducing delays in project implementation.
- *Legal Sufficiency Enhancements*—By consulting with FHWA environmental attorneys early in project planning and development, decision-makers can avoid problems later, saving time and money.
- *Expanding Use of Programmatic Agreements*—This initiative will identify and assist in the expansion of new and existing programmatic agreements to avoid, minimize, and mitigate project impacts.
- *Use of In-Lieu Fee and Mitigation Banking*—Expanded use of in-lieu fees and mitigation banking will create a more streamlined process to expedite project delivery.
- *Clarifying the Scope of Preliminary Design*—The initiative will identify the amount of design work allowable under current law prior to completion of documents required under the National Environmental Policy Act. FHWA will also develop guidance to provide consistency in applying this definition of preliminary design.
- *Flexibilities in Right of Way (ROW)*—FHWA will highlight opportunities to achieve project time savings by using ROW flexibilities already provided for in statutes and FHWA regulations.
- *Flexibility in Utility Accommodation and Relocation*—Existing flexibilities for accommodating and relocating utilities will be spotlighted, as well as techniques for fostering effective utility coordination during project development.
- *Enhanced Technical Assistance on Delayed EISs*—This initiative will provide additional FHWA technical assistance to identify major challenges on a few ongoing EIS projects and to implement solutions to resolve project delays where feasible.