



Transportation Is Your Business
Join us in Washington to
Cut Red Tape, Reform Federal Programs, and Keep Federal Funds Flowing

The deterioration of the nation's transportation system jeopardizes our safety, threatens our quality of life, undermines the economy, and harms the environment. It is time to strategically plan and invest in America's highways and public transportation systems to keep the traveling public safe, bolster the economy, and create jobs.

What the U.S. Chamber is Advocating For

On September 30, 2009, the nation's core surface transportation programs (SAFETEA-LU) will expire. Congress must reform the federal programs to ensure dollars are maximized in the nation's best interest while emphasizing performance management and accountability. The existing programs and funding levels are not adequately supporting national needs. **The U.S. Chamber has made the following recommendations to Congress:**

Programmatic Reform- Federal programs should be reorganized and consolidated around specific, overarching national objectives such as modernization and maintenance, safety, freight mobility, urban mobility, rural connectivity and energy use and the environment to ensure that planning is more comprehensive and projects reflect the federal role.

Accountability- Project approval and funding should be linked to economic benefits and performance-based outcomes.

Research and Development: Investments should be made in research, development, and application of improved technologies and processes.

Speeding project delivery: The federal government must shorten the time it takes to complete environmental reviews and must support other measures to speed project delivery once projects clear environmental review.

Private Investment and Financing- The federal government should encourage project financing and delivery approaches that attract private investment.

Eliminating Wasteful Spending: Earmarks should be limited if they are not related to transportation infrastructure, do not address federal transportation policy goals, or have little or no national benefit.

Federal Resources

Unfortunately, much like many of our state and local communities around the country, we find the federal surface transportation programs in a dire budgetary situation. In June 2009 the



Obama Administration forecast that that the Highway Trust Fund (HTF) will become insolvent before the end of fiscal year 2009, necessitating either a general fund transfer or program cuts. While this problem will likely necessitate a short-term fix, it is by no means a short-term problem.

Highway Trust Fund revenue projections for 2010 and beyond show that if Congress does not act to increase the revenues flowing into the HTF, **the level of investment by the federal government into highways and public transportation spending will have to decrease significantly.**

Unfortunately, there aren't many options to address this problem. Congress can either:

- Roll back existing programs commensurate with reduced funding levels;
- Offset additional spending with non-transportation related tax increases;
- Borrow, leaving these problems for the next generation; or
- Increase user fees to support existing needs.

We want you to be aware that the U.S. Chamber would support an increase in user fees if Congress advances a reauthorization bill that realistically achieves the key reforms outlined above. We hope you will adopt these messages when you join us in Washington, but if that is not possible, we hope you will encourage your members of Congress to leave all options on the table to address current and future highway and transit needs.