

Associated Pennsylvania Constructors Supports Plan To Reduce Deficit; Strengthen U.S. Transportation Network

The following is attributable to Robert Latham, executive vice president of Associated Pennsylvania Constructors:

“On Dec. 1, the National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform released a comprehensive plan to address the nation’s runaway deficit and upgrade our critical transportation infrastructure. The commission’s transportation plan is fiscally responsible and builds on the long-established principle of ensuring that those who benefit from this system contribute to its upkeep through user fees.

“APC, as the trade association representing the vast majority of Pennsylvania’s highway construction industry, supports this proposal because it delivers critical resources that will create jobs and facilitate economic growth in our communities. According to a recent economic study, an adequately funded highway program would create more than 50,000 jobs in Pennsylvania alone.

“Moreover, it is clear from our ongoing research that a growing majority of Pennsylvanians are willing to invest their own money to relieve traffic congestion and improve safety in our transportation system.

“According to the American Society of Civil Engineers, 38 percent of Pennsylvania’s roads are rated fair or poor, and of Pennsylvania’s 22,280 bridges, 27 percent are considered structurally deficient and 17 percent are deemed functionally obsolete.

“Pennsylvania’s highway network ranks as fifth largest in the nation for the number of state-owned highways. Truck traffic on Pennsylvania’s 1,754 miles of interstate roads is more than double the national average, and many of the state’s roads are at or exceed their design capacity.

“TRIP, a national transportation research group, has calculated that driving on roads in need of repair costs Pennsylvania motorists \$341 per year in additional operating costs, and hundreds more in wasted time and fuel.

“The federal motor fuels tax generates revenues that are invested in highway and public transportation improvements. This tax, however, has not been adjusted since 1993 and has lost one-third of its purchasing power over the last 17 years.

“Our country needs Congress to focus on creating jobs and reducing the deficit. To help achieve these goals Pennsylvania needs a strong transportation system in order to rebuild our economy. The Commission’s proposal will provide job creation and deficit reduction while also rebuilding our crumbling transportation system to provide for long term U.S. competitiveness.

“The Commission’s plan makes the tough choices and identifies critical priorities that will help get our nation’s economic and fiscal house in order. We urge both of Pennsylvania’s U.S. Senators and 19 members of Congress to support this thoughtful proposal.”

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