

## **ASHE-HARRISBURG FEDERAL PROGRAM POSITIONS**

1. There needs to be a federal presence in transportation to insure safe and efficient movement of people and goods throughout the country. The federal role should be focused on those facilities vital to interstate commerce, safety, research and technology, facilitating knowledge creation and transfer, and other actions designed to enhance the country's ability to compete in a global economy. A national target for safety improvement and fatality reduction should be established with each state updating their own strategic safety plan and establishing their own goals.
2. All revenues generated from transportation user fees should be reserved for use for transportation purposes. Should Congress deem the USDOT an efficient vehicle to promote other interests (not directly related to the movement of people and goods), then the funding for these programs should come from other, non-user fee sources.
3. Since the federal gas tax was last increased in 1993, inflation has eroded over 50% of the buying power of this static, 18.4 cents per gallon for gasoline and 24.4 cents for diesel fuel, tax. Revenue sources need to be indexed to maintain more of their buying power over time.
4. Projections indicate that non-petroleum based energy sources will in the future power a growing portion of the vehicle fleet. This shift from petroleum based fuel will further erode the current gasoline/diesel usage based revenue structure. Congress is to be commended for the establishment of Study Commissions to evaluate long term transportation needs and funding structures, and mechanisms, including innovative financing. Actions should be taken to broaden the revenue base for transportation funding in keeping with the findings of these study groups. The federal restrictions on tolling existing Interstates and expressways should be greatly relaxed, with the states retaining the revenue. The Federal government must also increase the investment in transportation and restore at least the historic 45% Federal share in highway capital funding and limit earmarks to no more than 5% of the program.
5. Support the development of a strategic freight plan built on the previous USDOT efforts and ARTBA's proposed Critical Commerce Corridors.
6. Current projections indicate that the revenue stream to the federal highway trust fund will not be adequate to fund current spending levels. Congress needs to take immediate action to insure dependable funding to the transportation industry. Uncertainty and/or shortfalls in future revenues will cause disruption in the multi-year project development process and ultimately result in reduced project delivery, more congestion, increased vehicle crashes and a reduction in the number of jobs supported by the federal-aid highway program.
7. Federal environmental, air quality, and planning regulations should be streamlined and made concurrent/consistent to the maximum extent possible. Sustainability and climate change impacts need to become an integral part of transportation policies and programs. The provision of safe, efficient mobility with minimum overall environmental

impacts and streamlined project delivery should be made a goal for all federal agencies.

8. It is believed that the state's and their local government partners, through the federally mandated cooperative planning processes, are in the best position to assign project priorities and make decisions on how to allocate scarce resources, based on rigorous asset management principles, to various project categories within each state. Federal programs should be focused in areas that are of true federal interest, and be structured in broad program areas where states and local governments have the maximum flexibility to match the available federal funds to the most pressing needs within their jurisdiction. States and local governments should be encouraged to set performance goals and measure and report their progress towards attainment.

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