

NACE Federal Priorities



ACTION NEEDED:

We urge Members of Congress to support county transportation and infrastructure priorities as they consider new surface transportation reauthorization legislation.

BACKGROUND:

Counties play a critical role in the nation's transportation system, owning 46 percent of all public roads (compared to the 32 percent of public roads owned by cities and townships, 19 percent by states, and 3 percent by the federal government) and 38 percent of the nation's bridge inventory, and are involved with a third of the nation's transit systems and airports that connect residents, communities and businesses.

As Congressional leaders outline priorities to include in a new highway reauthorization, we urge them to include and enhance sustainable funding programs for rural and urban based construction and maintenance projects, while supporting alternative revenue sources for highways and transit, harbors and airports. Additionally, regulatory reform that addresses a streamlined permit approval process must also be considered.

NACE believes that counties should be recognized as major owners of transportation infrastructure in any new highway reauthorization and considered by Congress. Furthermore, federal funding levels and local authority should adequately reflect the county role in the nation's transportation system. NACE believes that a user-pay approach should continue to be the cornerstone of federal transportation funding.

New, dedicated federal funding must be part of any new surface transportation reauthorization with direct funding opportunities available to local governments. As the largest owner of road and bridge infrastructure, counties cannot always depend on state entities to allocate appropriate resources to local projects.

- **Ensure long-term solvency of the highway trust fund:** In order to maintain a robust infrastructure network, the Highway Trust Fund must remain solvent. NACE advocates for an "all tools in the toolbox" approach to accomplishing this, including increased usage of user-fees for infrastructure.
- **Streamlining of the federal permit process:** NACE supports a streamlining of the federal permitting process, which can help reduce project delays resulting from duplicative reviews and procedures, without the erosion of environmental protections. These reforms also improve public safety, allowing repairs and improvement to disaster-affected infrastructure to be completed quicker.

QUICK FACTS

- **Owning more roads and bridges than any other government entity, counties play a critical role in our nation's transportation system.**
- **Counties own and maintain 46% of all public roads and maintain 38% of all public bridges**