

## RESOLUTION

Encouraging reauthorization of the Federal Surface Transportation Act once a comprehensive infrastructure plan is developed emphasizing "fix-it-first" highway programs, multimodal choices including high speed rail, and equitable, livable and sustainable community development.

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WHEREAS, the SAFETEA-LU Act or Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Act: A Legacy for Users of 2003 has expired and is functioning in terms of short term extensions since September, 2009.

WHEREAS, though an extension of portions of the Surface Transportation Act through this year alleviates complications for the 2010 construction season, unclear, long term funding availability is a problem. State and local agencies indicate that extensions prevent adequate planning for longer term road, highway, bridge, and mass transit projects. Re-authorization for funding of a multi-year Surface Transportation Act including a Comprehensive Infrastructure Plan is crucial to American economic growth, energy independence, and national competitiveness.

### Comprehensive Infrastructure Plan

WHEREAS, our competitor nations have proven the importance of implementing a state-of-the-art, seamlessly integrated infrastructure systems and are realizing gains from their investments. Decades of highway focused transportation funding in the United States have fostered unintended "slash and burn" land development strategies, energy dependency, and an infrastructure needing a strategic approach to improvement.

WHEREAS, a comprehensive approach to infrastructure will bring America back in balance by:

- Emphasizing a "Fix-It-First" highway program
- Supporting modal choices and multi-modal opportunities including high speed rail that seamlessly link air, land and sea transportation routes
- Improving the "livability" of communities through sustainable development "Fix-It-First" Highway Programs

WHEREAS, in Ohio alone, forty one percent of roads were rated in poor or fair condition (2009) with costs of necessary improvements geometrically increasing with continued delays. Thirteen percent of bridges were determined structurally deficient (2008), some of which are beyond rehabilitation and must be replaced.

WHEREAS, these conditions are responsible for thirty percent of highway accident fatalities, many more non-fatal accidents, and extra vehicle repair costs averaging \$275 per motorist per year.

WHEREAS, new construction programs must be considered only when endowed with sustainable operational solutions. Expansion programs to mitigate traffic congestion must be considered with other forms of transportation solutions. Re-Authorization must apportion funding to address existing infrastructure repair, rehabilitation, and replacement as the highest priority.

## **Multi Modal Choices Including High Speed Rail**

**WHEREAS, Americans need transportation choices other than highway expansion to avoid congested freeways and costly fossil fuel emissions air travel.**

**WHEREAS, continued U.S. highway expenditures toward traffic congestion solutions no longer equate to support for the American economy through U.S. carmakers and U.S. oil production activity. Only 52% of new cars purchased in the “cash for clunker” program were American made. U.S. oil field production supports only one third of American crude oil consumption.**

**WHEREAS, auto & truck dependency contribute to 40% of air pollution, financial costs to our industries, environmental degradation, poor land management, and increased healthcare costs.**

**WHEREAS, reduction in American reliance on fossil fuel fosters energy independence and contributes to climate change solutions.**

**WHEREAS, high speed rail is better suited for travel between 150 and 550 than both car and air. Being timely, increases the labor market around their stations, supports urban core redevelopment and reduces environmental degradation.**

**WHEREAS, more than a half century of federal highway and airport priority funding to the detriment of rail and other public transit modes has created serious economic, environmental, and social problems. It will take long term and significant investment in state of the art public transit to counteract the unintended results of imbalanced funding.**

## **Equitable, Livable and Sustainable Communities through Multiple Transportation Options**

**WHEREAS, transportation options put dollars back into family budgets.**

**WHEREAS, with access to transit hubs, Americans spend only 9 percent of their household budgets on transportation. However, reliance solely on vehicular transportation increases household transportation budgets to 19 percent, making transportation the second largest cost to families behind their dwellings.**

**WHEREAS, multiple transportation options improves quality of life.**

**WHEREAS, the federal Departments of Transportation, Housing & Urban Development, and Environmental Protection Agency have developed a Sustainable Communities initiative based on six “Livability Principles”. This initiative recognizes the importance of transportation in community development, protecting our rural environment, and facilitating social equity.**

**WHEREAS, the United States needs to make a major commitment to building walkable, transit-oriented communities and to expand transit options both within and between cities, improved and more efficient bus service, bicycle lanes and services, and inter-city and regional rail, all linked together so it is easy and affordable to ride transit.**

**AND WHEREAS, multiple transportation options contribute to livable communities that support economic competitiveness and social equity.**

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners of Cuyahoga County, Ohio, that the Board of Cuyahoga County Commissioners encourages the re-authorization of the Federal Surface Transportation Act once a comprehensive infrastructure plan is developed emphasizing “fix-it-first” highway programs, multimodal choices including high speed rail, and equitable, livable and sustainable community development.**

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the Board be, and she is, hereby instructed to transmit a copy of this resolution to U.S. Ohio Senators George Voinovich and Sherrod Brown, U.S. Ohio House Representatives Dennis Kucinich, Steven LaTourette, Betty Sutton, and Marcia Fudge, Ohio Governor Ted Strickland, and the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency.**

**On Motion of Commissioner Dimora, seconded by Commissioner Hagan, the foregoing resolution was duly adopted.**

**Ayes: Dimora, Hagan, Jones.**

**Nays: None.**

**Resolution Adopted.**

**Jeanne M. Schmotzer,  
Clerk of the Board**

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