



March 13, 2019

Dear Members of Congress:

On behalf of our organizations and the millions of American individuals, families, and business owners they represent, we urge you to focus on comprehensive reforms to prioritize, streamline, and innovate the financing and regulation of our nation's infrastructure projects before considering any increases to the federal gas tax.

Congress has an opportunity this year to institute major reforms to our federal infrastructure funding system that would improve outcomes, target spending toward critical projects, and streamline much needed maintenance and construction projects. A more modern and efficient infrastructure will allow people and goods to move where needed, both safely and economically, contributing to an effective and well-functioning system of free enterprise.

These reforms can be achieved by focusing on three core principles: 1) **spending smarter on projects of true national priority**, 2) **reforming outdated and costly regulations**, and 3) **protecting Americans from any new burdens**.

Infrastructure spending at the federal level has expanded in recent decades well beyond its proper scope. This expansion has sent federal dollars away from our nation's core roads and bridges and left federal infrastructure accounts, such as the Highway Trust Fund, seemingly underfunded. But, as with most government programs, what may appear to be a funding problem is actually a spending problem.

Americans may be surprised to know that as much as **28 percent** of funds from the Highway Trust Fund, which is funded by the federal gas tax, is diverted to non-road projects like ferry boats, local transit, bike and pedestrian paths, and historic preservation. Still more taxpayer dollars are wasted on inflated costs due to outdated regulatory burdens, a complex and sluggish permitting system, and overly restrictive labor requirements.

Instead of asking Americans to pay more to fill up their gas tank, buy common essentials, and put food on the table for their families, lawmakers should prioritize specific key reforms that will improve our nation's infrastructure:

- Preserve federal infrastructure dollars for targeted construction projects of a national priority;
- Unleash private investment in infrastructure assets;
- Return power and responsibility to the states wherever possible;
- Overhaul the regulatory and permitting system to improve outcomes and efficiency; and
- Eliminate costly and unfair labor restrictions.

We look forward to working with every member of Congress willing to stand up for taxpayers and fight for commonsense infrastructure reforms that will help create and maintain a modern and innovative infrastructure system critical to economic growth and improving the lives of all Americans.

Sincerely,

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