

June 13, 2013

# ACEC/PA

AMERICAN COUNCIL OF ENGINEERING COMPANIES  
*of Pennsylvania*

## Testimony of ACEC/PA

Good morning; Mr. Chairman, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee; thank you for the opportunity of providing testimony at these hearings.

My name is David Lowdermilk. I am the President of the American Council of Engineering Companies of Pennsylvania and Vice President of the Pennsylvania based engineering consulting firm Pennoni Associates Inc. where I lead our Transportation discipline.

ACEC/PA represents over 125 consulting engineering companies... in Pennsylvania.

ACEC/PA represents over 10,000 employees and their families that live and work ... in Pennsylvania.

The members of ACEC/PA are the engineers who perform the design and inspection of the Commonwealth's transportation infrastructure - state roads and bridges; county and municipal roads and bridges. We do this work alongside our state, county, and municipal partners.

As engineering professionals we are charged with, and take seriously, the safety of the traveling public and we are profoundly concerned with the current lack of funding to address Pennsylvania's immediate infrastructure needs.

However, as we sit here today, we are actually discussing an infrastructure funding scenario that has been proposed by Governor Corbett and a funding bill that has passed out of the Senate by an overwhelming bi-partisan vote.

- The key points of the Governor's bill focus on a \$1.8B increase in funding over current levels that comes predominantly from uncapping the oil company franchise tax over five years. PennDOT Secretary Schoch has educated most members of the PA Legislature on the projects in their Districts that can be accomplished through his Decade of Investment discussions and documentation.
- SB1 increases the funding level to an additional \$2.5B over current levels, which also includes uncapping the oil company franchise tax. However SB 1 proposes to be fully implemented over three years, as compared to the Governor's five. Secretary Schoch's Decade of Investment documentation also includes additional projects that will be included over and above those included with the Governor's plan if the funding level of SB1 is maintained by the House.

- Statistics show that the increased funding as outlined by Governor Corbett's plan will cost the typical Pennsylvania driver an additional \$2.50 per week. Further increasing the funding to the level outlined in SB1 will add an additional 50 cents per week for a total of \$3.00 per week.
- On May 29<sup>th</sup>, a report, titled *By The Numbers*, was released by TRIP, a national and unbiased non-profit transportation research group. The report analyzed road and bridge conditions, traffic congestion, economic development, highway safety, and transportation funding in Pennsylvania to calculate the cost to motorists of driving on congested or deteriorating roadways. It was determined through this analysis that the cost of poor roadway and bridge conditions cost Pennsylvania motorists between \$25 per week in rural areas and \$35 per week in more urbanized areas.
- It is clear that improving Pennsylvania's infrastructure through additional funding will cost Pennsylvania drivers less money in the long term. It is also clear that a small weekly increase of 50 cents per week will permit Secretary Schoch and PennDOT to increase the infrastructure improvements in the Decade of Investment by more than \$700M.

It has been the position of ACEC/PA that we endorse a long-term, multi-modal and sustainable funding solution. Both of these funding scenarios meet that need. We encourage the House to act on the Bill that is in front of you. Voting to increase infrastructure funding will permit us to improve the safety and congestion on our Pennsylvania roadways and bridges. This funding package also addresses transit funding. If the funding level outlined in SB1 is carried through the House we will be able to do more and do it faster, which are both essential elements when we are talking about improving safety and reducing congestion.

Pennsylvania finds itself in a precarious position where we are hallowing-out the talent and the resources to maintain our infrastructure. Ohio recently passed a \$7.6 billion transportation funding package. New York State's Tappan Zee bridge reconstruction is a single \$5 billion project. New Jersey is receiving federal aid for Hurricane Sandy recovery. Maryland passed a 2-cent per gallon sales tax on gasoline to boost their infrastructure investment. Virginia passed a \$2 billion transportation funding bill into law. All of our talent and resources are going to where the work is and where the work is going to be. Unfortunately, this is not happening in Pennsylvania. We have an opportunity before us today, to turn this around and to keep our people working in Pennsylvania.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, I would like to take this opportunity to underscore and reinforce the offer that ACEC/PA has made to many of you, our legislators, to assist you in any way possible to achieve our mutual goals.

We are close to a funding solution. We have a window of opportunity to get funding done before recess. Let us demonstrate leadership now, and ask ourselves why not now?

Thank you allowing me the opportunity of speaking with you today.