

INTRODUCTION

Everyday America moves along its surface transportation infrastructure system which includes highways, roads, rail lines and mass transit. However, the Federal Government for years has postponed needed investment to build the next generation infrastructure system and repair existing systems.

According the congressionally created National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study commission in 2007 surface transportation system is “one of the engineering marvels of the modern world. This network of highways, transit routes, railroads, and waterways moves massive numbers of people and goods, and was key to the Nation’s economic superiority in the late Twentieth Century. Today’s surface transportation network is diverse and decentralized, spread out over the vast geography of the United States.”

[| Commission website *Final Report*, p.online | 12/01/2007 | Accessed 08-12-09 ~ http://transportationfortomorrow.org/final_report/ !DJC]

Thus, I stand Resolved: That the United States Federal Government should substantially reform domestic transportation infrastructure.

I will first explain inherency, the status quo, before moving onto the harms of the status quo, my plan for action, and the solvency or why that plan will work to address the harms.

Contention 1 - INHERENCY

A. No national transportation plan since 1956

Smith 2009

[Scott | Kansas City Star *\$500 billion plan to upgrade U.S. transportation hits federal pothole*, p.online | 07/13/2009 | Accessed 08-05-09 ~ <http://www.kansascity.com/business/story/1322647.html> !DJC]

We find ourselves in this predicament because we have not had a national transportation plan since the interstate highway system was launched in 1956. Unless we enact a new plan on a national scale, the globalization of trade and commerce will focus on the East Coast and West Coast, leaving Kansas City on the sidelines.

B. Reforms needed to transform surface transportation funding

Giglio and Chieppo 2009

[Joseph M. ; Charles | Boston Globe *High-tech highway funding*, p.online | 07/22/2009 | Accessed 08-12-09 ~ http://www.boston.com/bostonglobe/editorial_opinion/oped/articles/2009/07/22/high_tech_highway_funding/ !DJC]

Additional reforms are needed to transform surface transportation funding. Exploding budget deficits and debt projections will compromise the administration's ability to deliver on promises to reverse years of under-investment in infrastructure, but the federal government should at least maximize state and local officials' flexibility to work with private-sector partners to solve growing mobility and congestion problems.

C. Surface Transportation Act not in the administration's plans

Smith 2009

[Scott | Kansas City Star *\$500 billion plan to upgrade U.S. transportation hits federal pothole*, p.online | 07/13/2009 | Accessed 08-05-09 ~ <http://www.kansascity.com/business/story/1322647.html> !DJC]

Unfortunately, Oberstar's bill [Surface Transportation Act] has collided with a proposal put forth by Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood. The secretary wants Congress to pass an 18-month highway authorization bill that would put off a comprehensive, long-term solution and instead perpetuate a piecemeal mix of half-measures and temporary remedies for our nation's transportation woes.

Contention 2 – HARMS

A. Decaying transportation infrastructure costs half a trillion dollars

Smith 2009

[Scott | Kansas City Star *\$500 billion plan to upgrade U.S. transportation hits federal pothole*, p.online | 07/13/2009 | Accessed 08-05-09 ~ <http://www.kansascity.com/business/story/1322647.html> !DJC]

Congestion costs our cities and towns more than \$78 billion a year in lost productivity.
•Underinvestment in highway infrastructure added \$412 billion to the shipping costs of U.S. companies between 2004 and 2008.

B. Transportation accidents kill over 40,000 people a year

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE 2009

[| House of Representatives *THE SURFACE TRANSPORTATION AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2009*, p.online | 06/18/2009 | Accessed 08-12-09 ~ <http://transportation.house.gov/Media/file/Highways/HPP/Surface%20Transportation%20Blueprint%20Executive%20Summary.pdf> !DJC]

The societal and economic toll of transportation accidents is staggering. Each year, 42,500 people are killed and 2.5 million people are seriously injured in more than six million motor vehicle crashes. Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for people of every age from three to 34. Every hour, 150 children (under the age of 19) are treated in emergency rooms for crash-related injuries. Each year, the economic cost of motor vehicle crashes to the U.S. economy is \$289 billion. In addition, crashes involving large trucks and buses remain a significant safety concern. In 2007, more than 5,100 people were killed and 101,000 were injured in more than 400,000 motor 2 vehicle crashes involving large trucks and buses. The average cost of a fatal crash involving a large truck is more than \$3.6 million.

Contention 3 - PLAN

To reform the domestic transportation infrastructure the United States Federal Government should immediately pass the Surface Transportation Authorization Act of 2009. Funding and enforcement will be through normal means.

Contention 4 – SOLVENCY

A. STA Act would transform our antiquated transportation system and create 6 million jobs

Smith 2009

[Scott | Kansas City Star *\$500 billion plan to upgrade U.S. transportation hits federal pothole*, p.online | 07/13/2009 | Accessed 08-05-09 ~ <http://www.kansascity.com/business/story/1322647.html> !DJC]

U.S. Rep. James Oberstar, a Minnesota Democrat and chairman of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, addressed these huge needs by introducing the Surface Transportation Authorization Act of 2009. Oberstar proposes spending \$500 billion over the next six years to transform our antiquated system into the reliable, sophisticated network we need to safely and efficiently move people and goods. The legislation would provide approximately:

- \$337 billion for highway construction, including at least \$100 billion to begin long-awaited repairs to our national highway system and bridges.
- \$100 billion for mass transit, including \$12 billion for repairs.
- \$50 billion to fund 11 high-speed rail corridors linking major metropolitan areas.

The total investment would create or sustain about 6 million family-wage jobs

B. STA Act restructures Department of Transportation (DOT) to better achieve results

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE 2009

[| House of Representatives *THE SURFACE TRANSPORTATION AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2009*,
p.online | 06/18/2009 | Accessed 08-12-09 ~
<http://transportation.house.gov/Media/file/Highways/HPP/Surface%20Transportation%20Blueprint%20Executive%20Summary.pdf> !DJC]

The next surface transportation authorization must affirm the nation's commitment to building and operating an intermodal surface transportation network that can meet the demands of the 21st Century. The Surface Transportation Authorization Act creates a performance-based framework, designed to achieve results with transparency, accountability, and oversight to ensure that goals are met. This Act restructures DOT to implement more effectively the goals and objectives of the Federal surface transportation programs, improve the delivery of critical surface transportation projects, facilitate the utilization of all modal options to address needs, and provide taxpayers with a better, more measurable return on their investment in the nation's infrastructure.

C. STA act will give us first-class transportation system

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE 2009

[| House of Representatives *THE SURFACE TRANSPORTATION AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2009*, p.online | 06/18/2009 | Accessed 08-12-09 ~ <http://transportation.house.gov/Media/file/Highways/HPP/Surface%20Transportation%20Blueprint%20Executive%20Summary.pdf> !DJC]

Under existing transportation policy, the Federal highway, highway safety, and transit programs would be funded at a total level of \$326 billion over the next six years. This level is not adequate to meet the needs of the system. We believe that a six-year investment of \$450 billion is necessary. With the transformational reforms that we are making, the Surface Transportation Authorization Act will help give us the first-class transportation system that the nation will need in the decades to come. This level of investment is necessary to begin reducing roadway fatalities and injuries, improving mobility and access, eliminating freight bottlenecks, mitigating the impacts of our surface transportation system on the environment, and providing greater modal choice for all travelers.

D. Surface Transportation System key

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE 2009

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<http://transportation.house.gov/Media/file/Highways/HPP/Surface%20Transportation%20Blueprint%20Executive%20Summary.pdf> !DJC]

America's surface transportation network is essential to the quality of life of our citizens and the productivity of the nation's economy. This expansive, national network provides all Americans – from those living in the largest cities to the smallest towns – with extraordinary freedom of mobility and unprecedented opportunity.

E. Now time to act

National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study Commission 2007

[| Commission website *Final Report*, p.online | 12/01/2007 | Accessed 08-12-09 ~
http://transportationfortomorrow.org/final_report/ !DJC]

The surface transportation system of the United States is at a crossroads. The future of our Nation's well-being, vitality, and global economic leadership is at stake. We must take significant, decisive action now to create and sustain the pre-eminent surface transportation system in the world.