

Testimony Provided to the House Transportation Committee
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The transportation funding crisis is real and evident in Cumberland County. The best proof of the crisis can be found in the draft of the 2035 Harrisburg Area Transportation Study Long Range Transportation Plan (HATS LRTP). As part of HATS, Cumberland County joins our neighbors in Dauphin and Perry Counties to plan for the transportation needs of our 3-county area. The HATS LRTP outlines \$4.5 billion of transportation needs and projects only \$2 billion over that same time period. Through the LRTP planning process, our region has done its homework. The need is there and the funding is not.

The transportation funding crisis is also felt at the local level and the funding needs for county and municipality infrastructure must be duly considered with the needs at the regional and state level. In particular, Cumberland County, like most of the other counties in the state, owns and maintains a stock of bridges, the only transportation infrastructure under direct control of the county. Cumberland County currently owns 28 bridges, 35% of which are structurally deficient and 68% of which are functionally obsolete. Nine of the bridges were built in the 1800s. Fourteen of our bridges have a sufficiency rating of under 50, thereby making them eligible for replacement.

In 2009 Cumberland County completed a capital improvements plan that charted a path to address our most pressing bridge needs. That report recommended the replacement of 8 bridges in the next 10 years at a cost of \$27 million to insure the mobility and safety of the traveling public. The Liquid Fuels Tax Fund is the primary funding mechanism that counties use to maintain and replace their bridge stock. Cumberland County receives \$350,000 - \$400,000 per year to maintain and replace all 28 of its bridges. The insufficient funding allows us to only address the most pressing maintenance and replacement needs.

Therefore, county bridges need to be considered as part of any proposed transportation funding package. In addition to the amount of funding, the equitable distribution of funding also needs to be addressed. The current Liquid Fuels Tax Fund distribution is based upon 1927-1929 gasoline consumption rates. The county distribution formula for the Liquid Fuels Tax Fund needs to be updated and directly related the number and condition of a county's bridge stock. While it may be unlikely to address the entirety of county bridge funding needs, equitable distribution of the available funding is achievable and long overdue.

Without reliable funding, transportation projects in our county will be delayed or discontinued, thereby levying stark mobility, and economic impacts on our county and surrounding region. Cumberland County has enjoyed growth in the face of statewide and national decline. Projected increases in households (26%) and employment (38%) place increasing demands on our transportation system (HATS 2035 LRTP Draft, May 2010, Part 1, Page 2). From a mobility standpoint, we need investment in our transportation system that is commensurate with future growth.

From an economic standpoint, transportation projects and the transportation industry are vital to the Cumberland County and regional economy. First, the economy will benefit from the actual construction of highway, bridge, and transit projects. The recent Transportation Advisory Committee Transportation Funding Study, noted that 30,000 jobs are created for every \$1 billion invested in transportation projects (Pennsylvania Transportation Advisory Committee, Transportation Funding Study, May 2010, Executive Summary, Page 3). We must invest in our transportation system and in turn the 135,000 jobs that would be created by addressing the \$4.5 billion in identified regional transportation needs over the next 25 years.

Second, the transportation infrastructure of our county and region supports the larger transportation and warehousing industry. The transportation and warehousing industry is the 3rd largest employer in the county by sector and is responsible for over 12,000 family sustaining jobs (Center for Workforce Information and Analysis, 2010). Retaining these businesses and attracting others in the sector depends upon the maintenance and expansion of our transportation system.

In closing, much like the problem, the solution is evident...we need more money for our transportation system. Existing revenue sources and savings from budget cuts are not able to fill the gap. We need new and expanded sources of revenue. Every Pennsylvanian's livelihood depends upon our transportation system. Thus we must all share the costs of expanding and maintaining it. We need our elected officials to take immediate action, action that admittedly will be unpopular, to rectify this situation. Concurrently the dire situation that we are in and the consequences of inaction need to be clearly communicated to every Pennsylvanian. An informed constituency should view increases in transportation funding increases as an investment in our future and not as another example of government spending gone awry.