

PENNSYLVANIA HOUSE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE HEARINGS

**Written Testimony
Friday, June 18, 2010
Gateway High School
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Written Testimony Submitted by:

Richard J. Barcaskey
Executive Director
Constructors Association of Western Pennsylvania
1201 Banksville Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15216



CAWP TESTIMONY: PA TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
RICHARD J. BARCASKEY
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The Constructors Association of Western Pennsylvania (CAWP) is a trade association representing over 200 heavy and highway construction and construction-related companies operating in the thirty-three counties of western Pennsylvania. CAWP contractors are engaged in the construction of the region's highways, bridges, tunnels, airport runways, dams, waste treatment facilities, site preparation and utilities installation. CAWP supports the efforts made by the Keystone Transportation Funding Coalition, which has developed a vision of a 21st Century transportation program in order to provide a better quality of life, safer roads, local tax relief, and economic development through good paying construction jobs.

The Association commends chairmen Markosek and Geist and members of the House Transportation Committee for holding these hearings around the Commonwealth to bring attention to the nearly \$3.5 billion a year the state needs to maintain Pennsylvania's existing highway, bridge and public transit systems. The Commonwealth is facing a crisis brought on by its aging and crumbling highways and bridges.

This very real crisis is the result of many factors, but most notably the sheer size and age of Pennsylvania's transportation infrastructure. The importance of our state's transportation system to the state's economy cannot be ignored, and the investment in our roads and bridges is not only important in order to maintain safety and to improve economic competitiveness, it is a core function and responsibility of our state government. Short-term fixes will no longer work. What is needed is a real, comprehensive and long-term funding plan. Such a plan includes the following:

- Increase the user fee on gasoline.
- Adjust the ceiling of the Oil Franchise Tax to reflect the current wholesale price for Oil with a provision for future inflation.

- Gradually shift the Pennsylvania State Police Budget to the General Fund
- Increase vehicle registration fees
- Explore tolling plans on several interstates throughout Pennsylvania, with provisions that would minimize the impact on local residents and ensure tolling revenue will be used to improve these specific corridors

In conclusion, the Association and its members understand that increases for badly needed transportation investments are unpopular with the legislature and the public because they ultimately require an increase in user fees and/or registration fees. Unfortunately, we must all recognize that our freedom to travel our highways and cross over our many bridges is not free. It requires a significant investment that not only ensures our mobility, but keeps our roads and bridges safe and properly maintained for our families. Thank you.