

July 9, 2015

The Honorable Tom Rice
United States House of Representatives
233 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Rice:

The American Society of Civil Engineers supports your legislation, H.R. 2971, “The Highway Trust Fund Certainty Act”, which would address the current funding shortfall of the federal surface transportation program. The legislation would raise the federal motor fuels tax by approximately 10 cents per gallon and index the rate to inflation, addressing the current Highway Trust Fund (HTF) annual shortfall and providing slight program growth in the near-term. ASCE supports raising the motor fuels tax and indexing it to inflation, as your bill does, and while this funding level is a good start towards growing the HTF, additional federal revenues will still be required to meet our nation’s long-term surface transportation infrastructure needs.

The legislation recognizes the value of utilizing highway user-fees to pay for surface transportation, and provides states and localities with long-term planning certainty in order to deliver much needed projects. The bill underscores, yet again, that there is a growing appetite in Congress on both sides of the aisle for a deficit-neutral, user-pays funding solution for the HTF. We commend your leadership on this important issue.

ASCE’s 2013 Report Card for America’s Infrastructure, a comprehensive assessment of the nation’s infrastructure across 16 sectors, found that America’s cumulative GPA for infrastructure stands at a D+. The infrastructure investment deficit in surface transportation at all levels of government is nearing \$50 billion annually, which is compounded by the cost to motorists and businesses due to aging and inefficient infrastructure. According to ASCE’s Failure to Act economic study, the nation’s deteriorating surface transportation will cost the U.S. economy more than 876,000 jobs, and suppress the growth of the country’s GDP by \$897 billion in 2020.

Congress should provide our nation with the funding certainty and resources necessary to make additional investments in our surface transportation system. This will result in increased economic growth and productivity, and a higher quality of life for all Americans. Thank you for your leadership on improving America’s infrastructure.

Sincerely,



Robert D. Stevens, Ph.D., P.E., F.ASCE
President
American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE)