

Testimony of

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(PMTA)

To

House Transportation Committee

Chairman, Joseph F. Markosek  
Minority Chairman, Rick Geist

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Derry Township Municipal Building

On

Improving Pennsylvania's Transportation System

Good morning. My name is Jim Runk, President & CEO of the Pennsylvania Motor Truck Association, headquartered in Camp Hill, Pennsylvania. PMTA is the only Statewide trade association representing the trucking industry. Our membership, which numbers approximately 2100, includes large dry van carriers, bulk tank operators, heavy specialized carriers and dump truck operators. Pennsylvania's trucking industry is the fourth largest in the Commonwealth, employing approximately 365,000 people, or 1 out of every 14 workers.

Chairman Markosek and Chairman Geist, on behalf of PMTA and the trucking industry, I'd like to thank you and your Committee for providing me the opportunity to present our testimony on improving Pennsylvania's transportation system.

There is a critical need for all citizens of the Commonwealth to have a safe and efficient transportation system. It is unacceptable and irresponsible not to take action now. We have to decide on a fair, equitable and sustainable funding source for our roads and bridges. Our industry relies on safe, well maintained roads, bridges, and highways to deliver products and services to over 86% of the Commonwealth's communities whose residents depend on us to help them preserve their superb standard of living.

While those of us in the transportation industry agree that our bridges and road system appears to be wearing out, I believe the general public is becoming more aware of the desperate situation we face.

Being part of the recent Transportation Funding Study Task Force, our industry is acutely aware of the disrepair of our infrastructure system. All travelers now face an aging system that in many cases is crumbling and knotted with delays. Those delays cost the trucking industry millions of dollars a year with wasted man-hours and late or even missed deliveries.

Deficient infrastructure directly impacts the way our industry does business. As I stated previously, we serve over 86% of all populated communities that depend on trucks for delivering everything they eat, wear and use. If bridges are weight limited, additional routes must be found. The resulting hours of circuitous routing and more miles driven at an average of just six miles per gallon place a tremendous burden on fleets and increase the costs for delivery.

The lack of funding to reconstruct roads on a cyclical basis will lead to more and bigger problems. Over time, the roads that were sealed and repaired rather than resurfaced will deteriorate. Congestion will continue to increase, costing the average Pennsylvania motorist double over the next 20 years. That cost is passed on to businesses. System wide safety issues would not be addressed; more lives could be lost on Pennsylvania highways each year.

Our industry applauds the Governor for calling a joint session of the House and Senate to discuss this important issue. The recently released Transportation Funding Study says that more than \$3 billion annually in highway and transit needs is currently unfunded. Our industry believes it is necessary to provide immediate funding, because we need it now. Available immediate funding sources, that are fair, equitable, and easy to collect, include lifting the artificial cap on the wholesale cost of fuel, increasing fuel taxes and/or some combination of other revenue generators.

We must however, create long-term strategies to ensure sustainable funding. However, until that occurs, the trucking industry believes all Pennsylvanians have the responsibility to help improve the Commonwealth's transportation system by paying their fair share.

Mr. Chairman, PMTA and the trucking industry look forward to working with the Legislature and the Administration to come up with a reasonable highway funding solution that is fair and impartial for all the Commonwealth's citizens.

Thank you again for the opportunity to speak today.