

**House Transportation Hearing Testimony**

**June 10, 2010**

**Lackawanna/Luzerne MPO**

**Presented By: Nancy Snee, MPO Coordinator, Luzerne County Planning Commission; Vice-Chair of MPO Technical Committee**

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- **Do you believe that our public transportation and state highway/bridge systems are in a financial crisis?**

Yes. Federal and state taxing policies have not kept pace with increasing road and bridge construction costs. The Surface Transportation Act has never been funded to the level that will meet everyone's needs. No one likes to pay more taxes or fees, but there is no way around the fact that we need more funding just to maintain the existing transportation system.

- **How has Pennsylvania's deficient infrastructure, directly or indirectly, impacted your ability to improve transportation in your region?**

The majority of funding has to go toward system preservation projects which leaves little funding for any other type of projects. In our new bi-county (Luzerne and Lackawanna) Comprehensive/Long Range Transportation Plan, we are advocating for multi-modal transportation systems, such as Bus Rapid Transit and Light Rail, but it will probably be decades before there will be sufficient funding to even think about implementing those systems.

- **Is inaction acceptable?**

Inaction is never acceptable. Inaction will lead to an on-going trend of deteriorating roads and bridges, and never allow us to address the economic development/job creation projects that benefit the community at large.

*Actions that should be considered to increase transportation funding:*

Increase vehicle registration and license fees; consider sliding scale of registration fees based on weight of the vehicle, since weight is one of the factors that affects the rate of road deterioration

**Consolidate PENNDOT and the Turnpike Commission**

- **If inaction is not acceptable, what level of additional funding is necessary for the improvements you are advocating?**

We need \$122 million/year just to maintain the existing transportation system. In the new TIP, we will get an average of \$56 million/year. That amount would need to be more than

DATE 6-7-10  
 BY J. MC  
 CHK'D D.J.O.  
 DATE \_\_\_\_\_

CECO ASSOCIATES, INC.  
 P.O. BOX 995  
 SCRANTON, PENNSYLVANIA 18501

SH. NO. 1 OF 2  
 JOB NO. Lack, County  
STRUCT. DEF. BRIDGES  
(FOR REPLAC 'MT.)

"**COST ESTIMATE**"

Priority Rank No. # STRUCTURE (for RECONSTR.) - BASED ON SP. FT.	* CONSTR. Cost	RIGHT of WAY ACQUISITION	ENG. Cost	* INSP. SERV'S. 15% of	TOTAL Cost
#1 HOASIC BORO. BR. No. 2 (114' SPAN X 45' DECK WIDTH)	\$2,408,500. <sup>00</sup>	\$50,000. <sup>00</sup>	\$500,000. <sup>00</sup>	\$361,275. <sup>00</sup>	\$3,319,775. <sup>00</sup>
#2 JERRYMAN BORO. BR. No. 4 (26' SPAN X 49' DK. WIDTH)	\$673,300. <sup>00</sup>	\$50,000. <sup>00</sup>	\$500,000. <sup>00</sup>	\$100,995. <sup>00</sup>	\$1,324,295. <sup>00</sup>
#3 ARCHBOLD BORO. BR. No. 3 (27' SPAN X 26' DK. WIDTH)	\$415,900. <sup>00</sup>	\$50,000. <sup>00</sup>	\$500,000. <sup>00</sup>	\$62,385. <sup>00</sup>	\$1,028,285. <sup>00</sup>
#4 LADLUME TWP. BR. No. 2 (44' SPAN X 28' DK. WIDTH)	\$654,400. <sup>00</sup>	\$50,000. <sup>00</sup>	\$500,000. <sup>00</sup>	\$98,160. <sup>00</sup>	\$1,302,560. <sup>00</sup>
#5 CLIFTON TWP. BR. No. 7 (41' SPAN X 25' DK. WIDTH)	\$561,250. <sup>00</sup>	\$50,000. <sup>00</sup>	\$500,000. <sup>00</sup>	\$84,188. <sup>00</sup>	\$1,195,438. <sup>00</sup>
SUB - \$8,170,353. <sup>00</sup> TOTAL					

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 BY A.J.S  
 CHK'D D.J.O.  
 DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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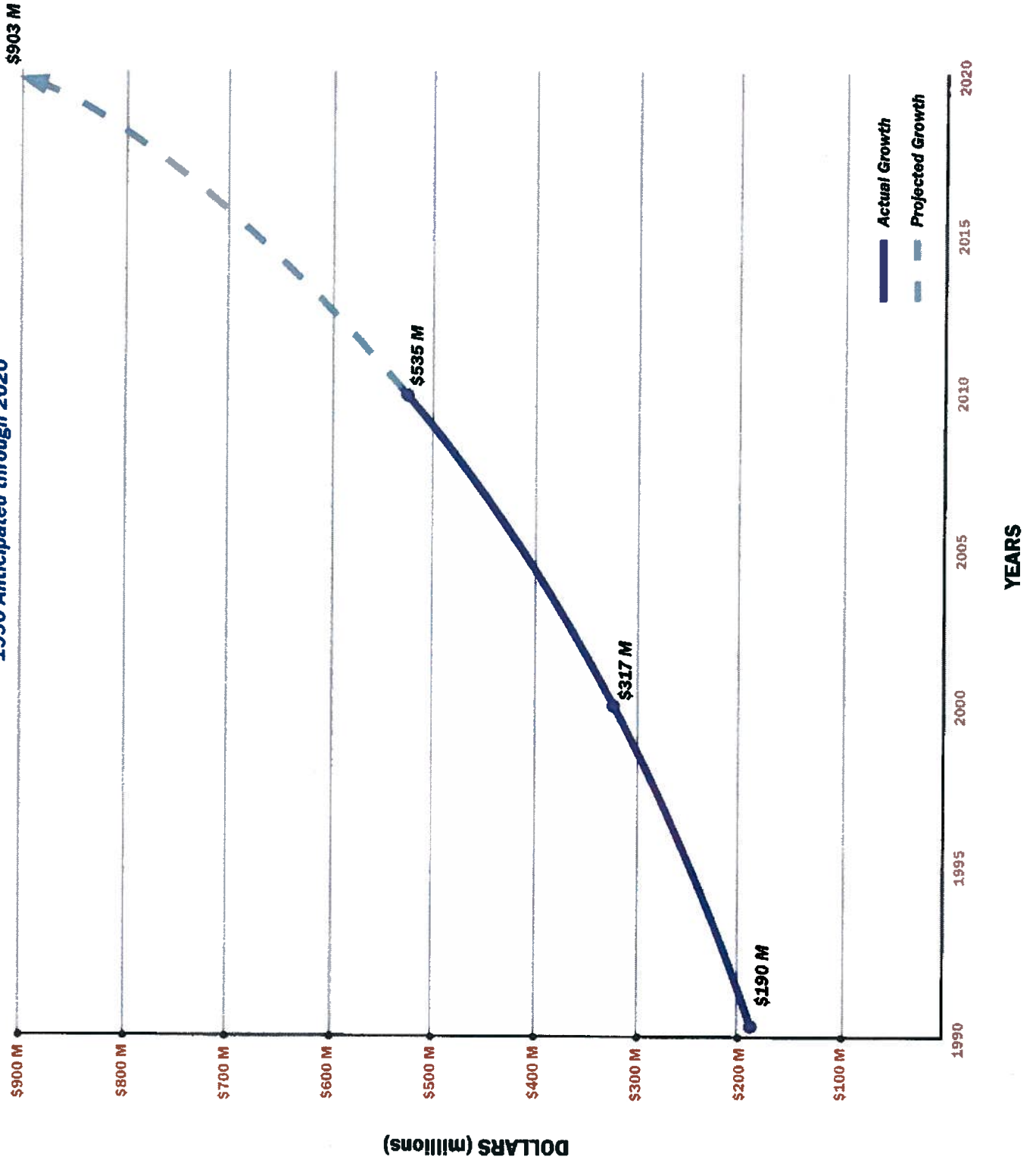
SH. NO. 2 OF 2  
 JOB NO. LACK. COUNTY  
STRUCT. DEF. BRIDGES  
 (FOR REPLAC'NT.)

"**COST ESTIMATE**"

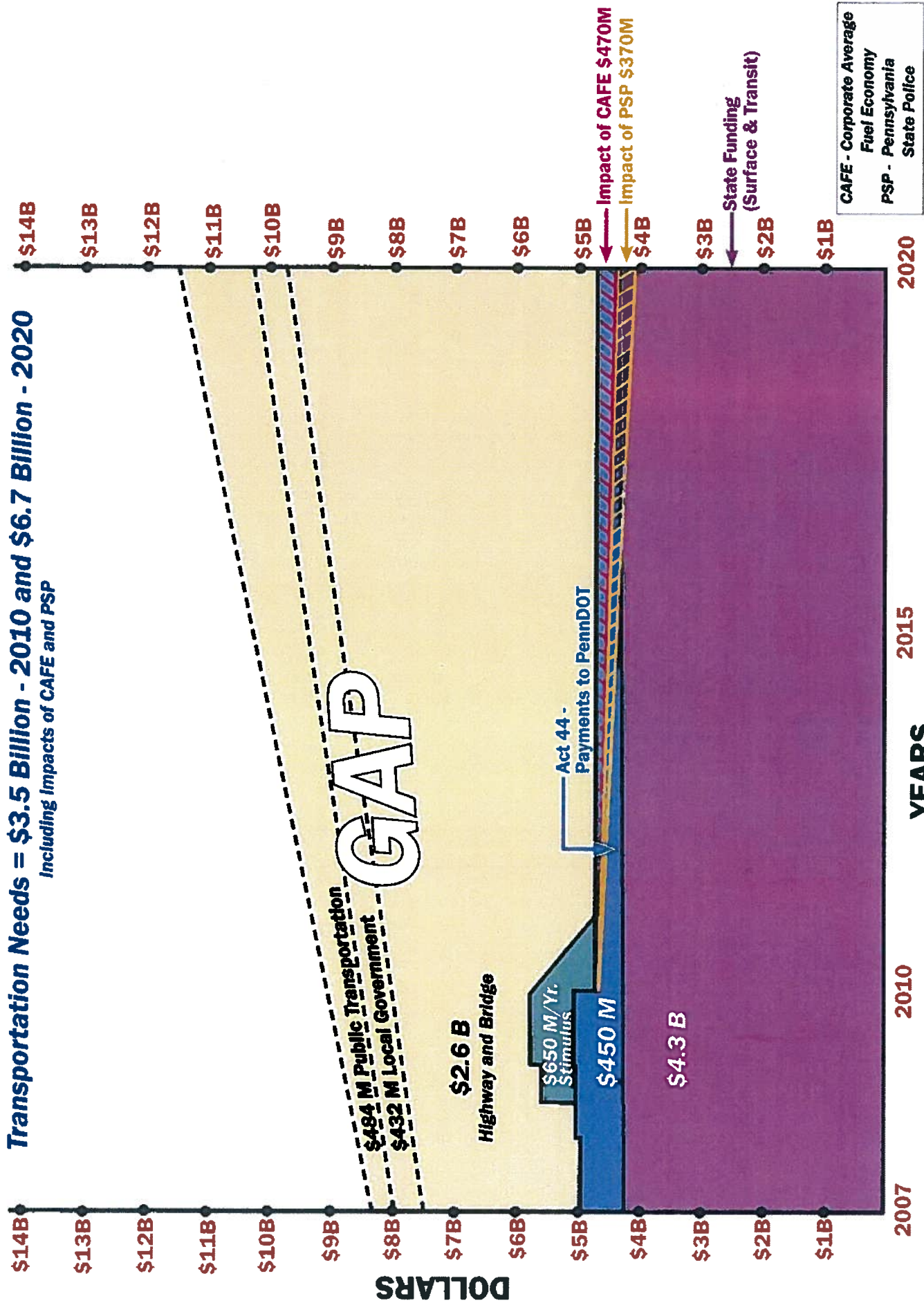
Priority Rank No. & STRUCTURE (FOR RECONSTR.) -BASED ON SQ. FT.	* CONSTR. COST	RIGHT OF WAY ACQUIS'TN.	ENG. COST	* INSP. SERV'S. 15% of	TOTAL COST
#6 COVINGTON TWP. BR. No. 2 (28' SPAN x 25' DK. WIDTH)	\$415,000. <sup>00</sup>	\$50,000. <sup>00</sup>	\$500,000. <sup>00</sup>	\$62,250. <sup>00</sup>	\$1,027,250. <sup>00</sup>
#7 CLIFTON TWP. BR. No. 1 (50' SPAN x 25' DK. WIDTH)	\$662,500. <sup>00</sup>	\$50,000. <sup>00</sup>	\$500,000. <sup>00</sup>	\$99,375. <sup>00</sup>	\$1,311,875. <sup>00</sup>
#8 CLIFTON TWP. BR. No. 4 (2 SPAN @ 63' EA. x 25' DK. WIDTH)	\$1,517,500. <sup>00</sup>	\$50,000. <sup>00</sup>	\$500,000. <sup>00</sup>	\$227,625. <sup>00</sup>	\$2,295,125. <sup>00</sup>
#9 JEFFERSON TWP. BR. No. 4 (33' SPAN x 25' DK. WIDTH)	\$471,250. <sup>00</sup>	\$50,000. <sup>00</sup>	\$500,000. <sup>00</sup>	\$70,688. <sup>00</sup>	\$1,091,938. <sup>00</sup>
#12 CLIFTON TWP. BR. No. 8 (72' SPAN x 25' DK. WIDTH)	\$910,000. <sup>00</sup>	\$50,000. <sup>00</sup>	\$500,000. <sup>00</sup>	\$136,500. <sup>00</sup>	\$1,596,500. <sup>00</sup>

SUB-TOTAL - \$7,322,688.<sup>00</sup>  
 SUB-TOTAL SH. 1 - \$8,170,353.<sup>00</sup>  
**(TOTAL) \$15,493,041.<sup>00</sup>**

**State Police Motor License Fund  
1990 Anticipated through 2020**



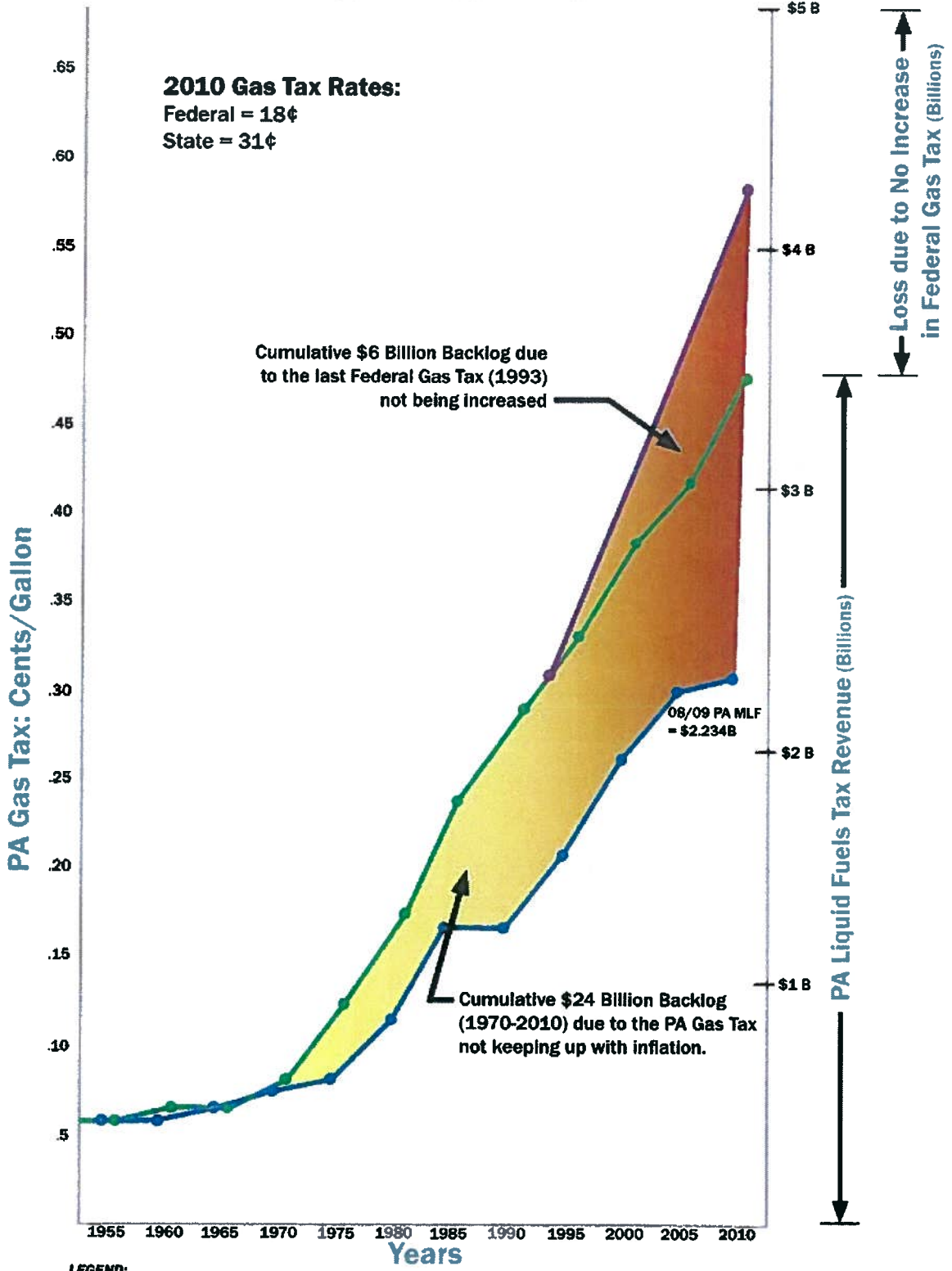
**Transportation Needs = \$3.5 Billion - 2010 and \$6.7 Billion - 2020**  
 Including Impacts of CAFE and PSP



CAFE - Corporate Average Fuel Economy  
 PSP - Pennsylvania State Police

Notes: State funding is funds available for surface and transit improvements  
 Source On Needs: State Transportation Advisory Committee - 2010

## Highway and Bridge Backlog Due to Decreasing Real Investment in the Gas Tax (State and Federal)



**LEGEND:**

- - Actual PA Gas Tax (cents/gallon)
- - 1955 PA Gas Tax adjusted for inflation (CPI)
- - 1993 Federal Tax Index to Inflation (approximate)

**Note:** Motor License Fund includes gas & diesel  
 - For Fiscal Year 2010/2011, the Liquid Fuels Tax will be approximately 2/3 of the Motor License Fund Revenue.

During the 1950's and 60's, Pennsylvania made a strategic investment in the roadway system, particularly the Interstates. As shown on the graph, starting in the early 1970's, the gas tax was not adjusted to match inflation, resulting in a cumulative \$24 billion backlog today, from the gas tax alone. If we also consider that the federal gas tax was not increased since 1993 the backlog would increase by at least \$6 billion to a total cumulative backlog of \$30 billion today. A very small portion of this backlog has recently been offset by Act 44, the accelerated bridge program, and the temporary ARRA (stimulus) program.

**The need for a higher level of investment has been driven by:**

- The increase in the number of registered vehicles
- The increase in the vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and the resulting congestion
- The increase in the truck VMT and truck weights in our "Keystone State"
- Increased environmental sensitivity
- Increased cost of right-of-way
- The explosion in structurally deficient bridges
- The Interstate System reaching its 50 year design life
- Increasing demands on our secondary road system from development and Marcellus shale drilling
- Natural disasters, particularly flooding
- The dramatic recent increase in construction inflation, other than the recent recession.