

House Transportation Hearing
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Clarion, Pennsylvania



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I would like to thank the members of the House Transportation and Policy Committees for allowing me to testify at this hearing. My name is Tom Hunt and I am the Senior Sales Manager in western Pennsylvania for Cemex, a worldwide producer of cement, ready-mix concrete and aggregates. With me today is Dr. Mark Snyder, who is the Vice-President of the Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Concrete Pavement Association. My company is also represented on the Board of Directors of the Association.

Cemex, an Energy Star Partner, today employs approximately 70 local men and women at our cement terminals located in Wampum and Neville Island and at a concrete products plant in Pittsburgh.

The American Society of Civil Engineers recently graded Pennsylvania at a D minus for roads. Unemployment in the highway construction industry is significantly higher than for the rest of society. Our economy is stumbling and we continue to lose some of our brightest college graduates as they move to other states where jobs and opportunities are more plentiful. We cannot continue down this path.

For long-term, sustained growth in our economy, we first need to put our highway infrastructure and Pennsylvania workers back on the road to recovery. We need legislation that provides a long-term solution to the transportation funding crisis. The Transportation Construction Industries and the Keystone Coalition estimate that Pennsylvania needs a \$4.8 billion annual transportation infrastructure program to address unmet infrastructure needs. Members of the cement, concrete and highway construction industries support this level of funding, as well as the development of a reasonable, reliable plan for achieving this funding for the long-term.

What can we accomplish with a long-term funding solution to funding of our infrastructure?

We can get away from short-term "band-aid" fixes and include a mix of medium-term and long-term fixes as part of our approaches to asset and pavement management. Pennsylvania is currently constructing, with stimulus funds, its first medium thickness concrete overlay of an existing asphalt pavement. This medium-term solution is but one alternative approach to the conventional short-term fixes generally used.

With a long-term funding solution, we can also make a commitment to long-term infrastructure solutions. The Transportation Advisory Committee stated that closing the funding gap will allow pavements to be improved on a 50-year cycle with appropriate interim treatments. We recognize that this is a big step in the right direction. But why limit ourselves to 50-year cycles for pavements with interim treatments, especially when we hear talk about 75- and 100-year bridges? Why connect those long-life bridges with pavements that are designed with significantly shorter lives? For this reason and others, there are states that have developed and implemented high-performance paving specifications that are intended to result in pavements that last for 60 years or longer with minimal maintenance and rehabilitation. These states have found that it often costs less than 10 percent more initially to double the life of the pavement. This is the kind of investment that we can undertake with a long-term funding solution. This long-term approach to the infrastructure management will help Pennsylvania reduce annual highway expenditures, and it will help reduce the number and frequency of work zones along with work zone-related accidents and fatalities. Long-term sustainable solutions to the infrastructure will help us make the best use of our natural resources.

With a long-term solution to the transportation funding crisis and a commitment to invest in long-life infrastructure projects, people will be put back to work immediately, and the resulting improvements in transportation efficiency and reduced congestion will pay dividends to Pennsylvania's economy for generations to come.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify. I would be happy to answer any of your questions.

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