



POLICY RESOLUTION PR - 01 – 17

**MID AMERICA STATE DOTs CALL FOR ENACTMENT OF THE
ADMINISTRATION’S POLICY PRINCIPLES AND PROPOSALS FOR
TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE**

WHEREAS, the Mid America Association of State Transportation Officials (MAASTO), is a nonprofit, nonpartisan association that seeks to foster the development, operation, and maintenance of an integrated and balanced multimodal transportation system that serves its diverse ten-state region (Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, and Wisconsin); and,

WHEREAS, the Nation’s transportation system provides vital contributions to the economy; serves a crucial role to improve connectivity; and moves people, goods, services efficiently from sprawling metropolises to rural farmlands and small towns and onward throughout the global economy; and,

WHEREAS, years of federal involvement in environmental stewardship, stemming from layers of NEPA requirements, has created a patchwork of inconsistent, onerous, and redundant federal policies, rules and regulations; and the disjointed coordination amongst multiple federal agencies, each with varying mandates and interpretations of federal rules and regulations, which imposes unnecessary delays and impedes the expedient delivery of transportation projects; and,

WHEREAS, State DOTs have growing unmet infrastructure needs that can be mitigated by additional federal resources; and decades of insufficient investment in infrastructure has cultivated a transportation system that struggles to meet demands, replete with crumbling infrastructure across all modes that include, but are not limited to, roads, bridges, transit systems, rail systems and port/ waterborne infrastructure; and,

WHEREAS, there is a continuing concern that the federal Highway Trust Fund (HTF) is again facing insolvency; that since FFY 2008 and through the FAST Act, nearly \$144 billion has been/ will be transferred (largely from general funds) to the HTF to maintain the fund’s solvency; that the Congressional Budget Office recently projected that an additional transfer of roughly \$120 billion will be needed (at current highway/ transit baseline spending levels) to fund a six-year surface transportation bill beginning in FFY 2021; and



WHEREAS, now is the time for the Administration and Congressional leaders to re-envision and re-invigorate the nation’s transportation agenda to focus on meaningful outcomes that are grounded in common-sense solutions; to identify and secure adequate, dedicated and sustainable funding, above and beyond innovative financing options; to encourage fruitful partnerships between public and private entities; to minimize prescriptive federal transportation requirements and expedite the delivery of transportation projects at state and local levels;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the collective states of MAASTO urge the U.S. Congress, Federal/ State/ Local officials, transportation stakeholders, and policy leaders

- To embrace and endorse the general tenets of the Administration’s infrastructure initiative that seeks long-term reforms on how infrastructure projects are regulated, funded, delivered and maintained; and,
- To embrace and endorse the Administration’s four key principles for infrastructure initiative, such as to:
 - **Make Targeted Federal Investments.** That federal funds (over and above regular formula dollars) target high priority areas and projects with long-term, transformational regional and national benefits;
 - **Encourage Self-Help.** That State and Local governments that assume the responsibility and initiate their own efforts to fund infrastructure projects be rewarded through federal funding initiatives;
 - **Align Infrastructure Investment with Entities Best Suited to Provide Sustained and Efficient Investment.** That some federally provided services may be delivered more efficiently via other entities, including the private sector; and that some underused, federally owned capital assets may be put to better use than they are currently;
 - **Leverage the Private Sector.** That Public-Private-Partnerships (P3s) be recognized as an important “tool in the toolbox” to further stretch public resources in the delivery of important infrastructure projects, from LED lighting to major infrastructure expansion; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that MAASTO states jointly urge and support:

- A Rural America Infrastructure Program be created and funded over and above existing formula programs to focus on connecting rural communities to national and global markets, as well as jobs, health care facilities, and educational institutions; targeting essential rural areas that remain critical to the nation’s economic success via the production and movement of goods such as in agriculture, forestry, energy, manufacturing, fishing and mining;



- Expansion of the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) program from the General Revenue Fund to aid in leveraging and financing large-scale projects; as well as to Lift the Cap on Private Activity Bonds (PAB) / Expanding Eligibility to Other Non-Federal Public Infrastructure in order to complement TIFIA and P3s;
- To Incentivize Innovative Approaches to Congestion Mitigation, safety and other related efforts through the utilization/ deployment of advanced technologies;
- The Liberalization of Tolling Policies and the Allowance of Private Investment in Rest Areas as two areas where there is strong support for the federal government to ease restrictions and increase flexibility by allowing states the “option” to toll existing Interstate capacity where it is feasible and makes sense; and to allow the privatization of rest areas so that they can be adequately maintained and serviced while coordinating with existing partners who currently support rest area maintenance;
- To Encourage the Use of Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Contributed/ Advanced Funding Authorities so that USACE agreements can maximize innovative approaches with non-federal sponsors;
- Environmental Review and Permitting Process Enhancements, which include but are not limited to: improving environmental performance through efficiencies and pilot programs; accountability of projects through tracking and measuring; navigating the federal bureaucracy via “one federal decision;” curbing unnecessary approvals by permitting States/Local officials control where appropriate; and pursuing judicial reforms by lessening needless litigation; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the States of MAASTO urge for timely enactment of a supplemental infrastructure initiative to remedy the aforementioned core statements of concern, which include but are not limited to: addressing the backlog of needs across all transportation modes; elevating and reinvigorating the nation’s transportation infrastructure to improve system performance, increase safety and mobility in rural and urban areas, and improve connectivity to key resources throughout our nation; remedying the immediate shortfalls in transportation funding while simultaneously seeking to identify dedicated and sustainable long-term funding solutions for the future of the Highway Trust Fund and all modes of transportation; eliminating and/ or reducing unnecessary rules and regulations that delay projects and increase costs; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this resolution be forwarded to the MAASTO Board of Directors, and that a suitable copy of this resolution be presented to the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), each MAASTO Department of Transportation, to the Chairmen and Ranking member of the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works, the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation, The Senate Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs, the Senate Committee on Finance, the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the House Committee on Ways and Means.