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**Statewide coalition sounds warning about Ohio's lack of funding
for deteriorating roads, bridges**

Growing statewide coalition of business, local government and transportation industry leaders launch effort to educate Ohioans on looming transportation funding shortfall

Columbus, OH – Sharply reduced funding for vital improvements to Ohio's deteriorating roads and bridges presents a major economic and transportation problem according to a statewide coalition advocating for adequate infrastructure spending.

Local government officials, transportation industry stakeholders, local chambers of commerce, and others have formed a broad-based coalition, [Fix Our Roads Ohio](http://www.FixOurRoadsOhio.com) (FOR Ohio), aimed at educating Ohio citizens and policymakers on the critical needs of Ohio's transportation infrastructure. The group is advocating for funding solutions that will provide long term, smart investment in Ohio's transportation future.

The coalition began circulating a case statement entitled [*A Moment of Truth: Ohio's Transportation Funding Problem and How to Solve It.*](#)

"The facts are overwhelming and disturbing," said Dean Ringle, executive director of the County Engineers Association of Ohio. "Without decisive action by state policymakers, this problem will become a crisis that will cripple our economy. Reduced roadway construction will trigger worker layoffs. Businesses dependent upon trucking will be hurt by inadequate roads and bad bridges. Delays and congestion cost money, and that affects everyone."

The Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) is scheduled to spend \$1.7 billion on its capital program in FY 2020, down from a high of \$2.4 billion in FY 2014. This decrease is due in large part to the expiration of Ohio's Turnpike Bond program at the end of this fiscal year (June 30, 2019), and represents a 29 percent decrease in capital spending from FY 2014.

Ohio's transportation needs are crucial and significant. The state:

- Has the nation's second largest inventory of bridges.
- Has the nation's fourth largest interstate highway system.
- Has the third highest freight volume in the country.

According to available documents, ODOT's projected biennial budget for FY 2020/21 contains practically no money for major new construction projects. Furthermore, ODOT has already pushed back or delayed nearly 20 important bridge and paving projects around the state. The alarming drop in funding proposed for FY 2020 promises to add further delays to bridges and roadways that local and state officials have determined to be in need of improvement.

According to a recent report by TRIP, a national transportation research group, 30 percent of Ohio's major roads are in poor or mediocre condition. The FHWA National Bridge Inventory, which compiles data for bridges spanning more than 20 feet, rates 1,653 of Ohio's bridges as structurally deficient, meaning there is significant deterioration of the bridge deck, supports, or other major components.

The funding shortfall is not limited to the state-maintained transportation system. The County Engineers Association of Ohio has reported that only 40 percent of the funds needed to bring aging roads to current standards, replace or repair all eligible bridges, pave county roads on a 10-year cycle, and perform ongoing maintenance, are currently available to perform this work. This deficiency in funding leads to a continuing downward spiral of deteriorating roadway and bridge conditions.

“Traffic delays and transportation funding deficits will hurt our residents and slow our economic progress,” said Keary McCarthy, executive director of the Ohio Mayors Alliance. “Ohio and its local communities cannot afford to fall further behind other states who are investing in their infrastructure. We have to come together to address this very serious challenge facing our state.”

Beyond these critical existing needs, the future of transportation contemplates advanced technology such as autonomous vehicles and smart mobility. Ohio has been a leader in the development of this technology. However at current funding levels, Ohio can’t even maintain its existing system, and is ill-prepared to be a leader in constructing necessary infrastructure improvements for future needs.

FOR Ohio’s case statement offers a short list of policy options that could be considered by the Ohio General Assembly and new Administration. Options include phasing in increases to Ohio’s Motor Fuel User Fee (gas tax), levying an annual fee on electric-powered vehicles, studying future funding alternatives in light of evolving technology, and identifying a dedicated funding source to better support public transit.

As state lawmakers work to shape policy, FOR Ohio will draw on the breadth of its membership to educate Ohioans about this looming crisis and work with state leaders to identify a funding solution that represents a reliable, long term investment in Ohio’s transportation future.

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Fix Our Roads Ohio Coalition

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Ohio Municipal League
County Commissioners Association of Ohio
County Engineers Association of Ohio
Ohio Township Association
Ohio Mayors Alliance
Northeast Ohio Mayors and City Managers Association
Cuyahoga County Mayors and City Managers Association
Central Ohio Mayors and Managers Association
Ohio Rural Economic Development Alliance
Ohio Public Transit Association

BUSINESS

Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber
Columbus Chamber of Commerce
Greater Cleveland Partnership
Greater Akron Chamber of Commerce
Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce
Toledo Regional Chamber of Commerce
Youngstown/Warren Regional Chamber of Commerce
Ohio Hotel and Lodging Association
AAA Clubs of Ohio
Dayton Area Logistics Association

www.FixOurRoadsOhio.com

Ohio Restaurant Association
Ohio Manufacturers' Association

TRANSPORTATION

American Council of Engineering Companies of Ohio
Flexible Pavements of Ohio
Ohio Trucking Association
Ohio Aggregates and Industrial Minerals Association
Ohio Contractors Association
Transportation Advocacy Group of Northwest Ohio
Ohio Association of Movers
Ohio Prestressers Association

REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCILS

Ohio Association of Regional Councils
Akron Metropolitan Area Transportation Study (AMATS)
Belomar Regional Council and Interstate Planning Commission
Brooke-Hancock Jefferson Metropolitan Planning Commission
Buckeye Hills Regional Council
Clark County-Springfield Transportation Coordinating Committee
Eastgate Regional Council of Governments
Erie County Regional Planning Commission
KYOVA Interstate Planning Commission
Licking County Planning Commission; Licking County Area Transportation Study
Lima-Allen County Regional Planning Commission
Logan-Union Champaign Regional Planning Commission
Maumee Valley Planning Organization
Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission (MVRPC)
Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC)
Mid-Ohio Valley Regional Council
Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA)
Northeast Ohio Four-County Regional Planning & Development Organization
Ohio Mid-Eastern Governments Association
Ohio Valley Regional Development Commission
Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments (OKI)
Richland County Regional Planning Commission
Stark County Regional Planning Commission
Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments (TMACOG)
Wood-Washington-Wirt Interstate Planning Commission