



**California State Association of Counties**

## **CSAC PRIORITIES FOR FAST ACT REAUTHORIZATION**

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**Approved by the CSAC Board of Directors September 5, 2019**

### **FAST Act Reauthorization Priority: Increase Federal Revenues for Transportation Infrastructure**

Without immediate bold action by Congress, the Highway Trust Fund will continue to face insolvency. Existing federal revenues continue to fall short of meeting the funding needs to bring our nation's surface transportation infrastructure into the next century. Our future economic prosperity, and our dedication to the health, safety, and welfare of the traveling public and all Americans, demands a significant reinvestment into the transportation network. **CSAC urges Congress to enhance revenues for investment in our national transportation infrastructure.**

The California State Association of Counties (CSAC) – the unified voice of California's 58 counties – believes that until the funding issue is addressed, we will not make significant progress in improving our critical transportation infrastructure. California has joined states around the country in taking action to address its transportation infrastructure funding needs. The landmark Road Repair and Accountability Act of 2017 provides over \$5 billion annually to fix local roads, state highways and bridges and invest in transit and active transportation. At the regional level, over 80% of California's residents live in a county where voters have approved a dedicated local transportation tax measure. Despite these significant investments, California still depends upon a strong federal partnership to meet our transportation infrastructure needs.

The demands on our infrastructure are relentless – Californians log 300 million vehicle miles traveled annually, more than the current system was ever intended for. Local agencies in California own over 12,000 bridges, of which 829 need to be replaced and 1,834 need rehabilitation. At the same time, federal sources of revenue are declining due to necessary improvements in fuel economy and electric vehicle technology. In order to address pressing environmental concerns ranging from air quality and climate change to impacts on our water resources and energy demands, the nation must continue its work to advance technological improvements in fuel economy, alternative vehicles such as zero emissions vehicles, and reduce the amount people must drive to access work, school, home, services, and recreation. These challenges will only exacerbate our current funding dilemma.

CSAC's policy supports a variety of new revenues sources, including exploring ways to reduce costs. Failing to address the severe funding issue within the next reauthorization effort will only negatively impact the condition of our system, our economy, our environment, and the overall quality of life for Americans. Increased revenue is our utmost priority for FAST Act reauthorization.

Once Congress addresses the funding issue, CSAC submits the following additional policy and programmatic priorities for consideration by Congress.

### **FAST Act Reauthorization Priority: Restore the Highway Bridge Program**

- Provide dedicated revenue for on-system highway bridge projects, either by creating a set-aside similar to the off-system highway bridge set-aside or restoring the Highway Bridge Program as a core program.
- Increase dedicated funding for preventative maintenance on, and replacement of, bridges. This is a critical safety issue.

### **FAST Act Reauthorization Priority: Emergency Relief Projects**

- Provide relief for local agencies impacted by disasters by extending the statutory limit for emergency relief projects under the Federal Highways Administration to six years with the possibility of additional one-year extensions for just cause.

### **FAST Act Reauthorization Priority: Focus on Safety**

- Increase funding for safety infrastructure projects on the existing transportation system.
- Programs/projects must be aimed at reducing the greatest number of fatalities regardless of ownership of the system.
- Ensure the rural road system, where fatality rates are the highest, retains dedicated funding.
- Promote and increase funding for bicycle and pedestrian safety projects and programs.

### **Fast Act Reauthorization Priority: Fix-it-First**

- Provide increased funding for maintenance and preservation of the existing system. Reinvesting in the system now prevents exponentially higher costs down the road.

### **FAST Act Reauthorization Priority: Streamlining Project Delivery & Environmental Review**

- Support streamlining of federal regulations to facilitate more expeditious project delivery.
- Ensure that federal project oversight is commensurate to the amount of federal funding.
- Extend the at-risk project pre-agreement authority available for transit projects to highway projects for non-construction activities and for construction activities once environmental review is complete.

### **FAST Act Reauthorization Priority: Increase Flexibility to Meet State, Regional, and Local Needs**

- Maximize the use and flexibility of federal funds by not requiring minimum federal matches.
- Eliminate the need to program multiple phases for small projects.
- Eliminate need for TIP programming for air quality neutral projects.

### **FAST Act Reauthorization Priority: Assistance for Data Collection**

- Provide funding, training, tools, and uniform standards for the collection of roadway and traffic data specifically for the local and rural roadways, including assistance and funding for data collection required by federal performance management rules.
- Provide assistance for data collection, and determining and quantifying GHG emissions, and other important data for addressing climate change in long-range transportation plans.

**FAST Act Reauthorization Priority: Improve Environmental Stewardship & Address Climate Change**

- Provide financial incentives to States that adopt and set greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reductions targets and programs to accomplish those targets.
- Provide incentives in current programs and/or provide new funding sources for climate change neutral or friendly transportation projects and programs.
- Provide financial incentives for rural sustainability.
- Provide financial support for regional and countywide planning processes that integrate transportation and land use planning to reduce GHG emissions.
- Provide funding for retrofitting equipment and for alternate fuel infrastructure.

**FAST Act Reauthorization Priority: Maintain Funding for Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP)**

- Maintain funding for the FLAP for projects that provide access to, are adjacent to, or are located within Federal Lands.

For more information regarding these priorities and principles, please contact:

Joe Krahn, Paragon Government Relations, (202) 898-1444

Chris Lee, California State Association of Counties, (916) 650-8180