



The Transportation Development Association of Wisconsin is a statewide nonprofit organization that advocates building and maintaining an efficient, reliable and interconnected transportation system that addresses our state's needs for safe mobility and economic growth.

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Senate Compromise on Stimulus Bill

Over the weekend, Senate Democrats reached a compromise with a small group of Republican Senators (Susan Collins and Olympia Snowe from Maine and Arlen Specter of Pennsylvania) on the economic stimulus bill (S. 1). The three Republicans have come on board in exchange for \$108 billion in cost reductions. Even after the cost reductions, the estimated cost of the bill is \$838 billion, slightly more than the House version (\$819 billion). The Senate is expected to vote on the bill early in the week.

Attempts to increase the amount of infrastructure spending in the Senate version were stalled when the Senate shut off the amendment process as part of the compromise. Other amendments are theoretically possible but would require the unanimous consent of all 100 senators.

The House passed its version of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act by a strictly partly-line vote at the end of January. Once the Senate version is passed, differences between the two bills will have to be reconciled in a conference committee and the conference report passed by both houses.

Comparison of Transportation Provisions

<i>In billions</i>	<u>Senate</u>	<u>House</u>
Highway/Bridges	\$27	\$30
Transit	\$8.4	\$12
Airports	\$1.3	\$3.0

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Executive Perspective

By Craig Thompson, TDA Executive Director

Stimulus Package Only a First Step

The passage of an economic stimulus package appears imminent, so now is a good time to point out a few things to keep in mind about what the package may or may not accomplish. For instance:

- 1) Only a small percentage of the funding in this package will be dedicated to transportation. Whatever the final number is, these are funds that will hopefully begin to get people back to work rebuilding our nation's and our state's infrastructure to improve the mobility and safety of products and people. For the thousands of skilled and hard-working Wisconsinites currently waiting for jobs, this will certainly be welcome news.
- 2) There is a bigger picture, and we must be careful not to lose sight of it. No matter how successful this one-time infusion of money may ultimately be in terms of getting more people back to work, the structural problems we face, in Wisconsin and throughout the nation, are going to require sustainable, ongoing solutions.
- 3) Several federal commissions have carefully assessed the country's transportation needs. All report that our national transportation shortfall is at least a trillion dollars. As a country, we will soon have to decide whether the \$30 billion to \$40 billion we borrow now will be our down payment on a broad new vision for transportation or simply another bridge to nowhere.

In short, it's clear that the dire and pressing needs that have been identified during the recent national conversation about "our crumbling infrastructure" are not going to be remedied by this piece of legislation alone.

The stimulus package raises more questions than it answers. We won't have many answers until Congress and President Obama act on the authorization bills that will come before them after the stimulus legislation has been settled. We will also have a better idea of what this funding will mean for Wisconsin when Governor Doyle and the state legislature act on the biennial budget bill, scheduled to be introduced on February 17th. It is those pieces of legislation that will truly point us in a direction one way or another into the foreseeable future.

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<i>In billions</i>	<u>Senate</u>	<u>House</u>
Amtrak/Intercity Passenger Rail/High Speed Rail	\$3.1	\$1.1
Competitive Surface Transportation Grant Program	\$5.5	None
Total	\$45.3 billion	\$46.1 billion

Wisconsin is likely to do better under the House version of the bill. Current estimates have the state receiving in total for all programs, including transportation, approximately \$4 billion under the House version as opposed to \$3 billion under the Senate version.

Guest Perspective

By Dean Foundation

“Every Ride a Safety Ride” Saves Lives

Despite the existence of child passenger protection laws in all 50 states, riding unrestrained continues to be the primary threat to young passengers in our country. Consider these facts:

- The Center for Disease Control lists car accidents as the leading cause of unintentional injury-related death among children 14 and under.
- 14% of children ride unrestrained.
- 55% of children killed in automobile accidents ride unrestrained.
- Nearly one-third of children ride in the wrong restraint for their age and size.
- An estimated 82% of child safety seats are installed or used incorrectly.



The Dean Foundation’s “Every Ride a Safe Ride” works to reduce these preventable deaths and injuries through public education, car seat inspections, and affordable car seat rentals.

Buckle Bear School Education Program

The Every Ride a Safe Ride program has a very successful educational component. Our friendly and loveable program mascot, Buckle Bear, visits pre-schools and early elementary schools with a message about buckling up. Buckle Bear is very successful convincing pre-school and early elementary school-age children to cooperate and buckle up for safety. Many concerned individuals and companies support this important education program.

Fitting Station Checks

A significant number of deaths and injuries are a direct result of improperly-installed or poorly sized car seats. Dean Foundation conducts Fitting Station checks where drivers have their car seat evaluated to see if it is properly installed and sized. Inspectors often make necessary adjustments at the check or recommend seat replacement. Many individuals and businesses donate time and money to support these Fitting Station checks.

Low Cost Car and Booster Seat Rentals

The Car Seat Rental program provides affordable access to a variety of car seats and booster seats. This program is used by hundreds of residents throughout southern Wisconsin. Currently, Dean Foundation rents a car seat for 6 months for \$5.00 (with a \$15.00 refundable deposit) to anyone who needs a seat. Dean Foundation is constantly adding and replacing its rental inventory.

We are asking members of the Transportation Development Association of Wisconsin to consider supporting these important programs. A small donation goes a long way to making children safer as they travel.

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Engineers Give America's Infrastructure a "D"

America's infrastructure is poorly maintained, unable to meet current and future demands, and in some cases, unsafe according to the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE). In the organization's recently released preliminary report "2009 Report Card for America's Infrastructure", an update to a similar report issued in 2005, America's infrastructure once again received the grade of a "D". ASCE estimates a five-year investment level of \$2.2 trillion is needed to improve the nation's public works, up from \$1.6 trillion in 2005.

Transportation Categories

	2009	2005
Aviation	D	D+
Bridges	C	C
Rail	C-	C-
Roads	D-	D
Transit	D	D+

Grades for aviation, roads, and transit dropped from the 2005 report card. Bridges and rail remain the same. Of the 15 infrastructure categories examined, only energy infrastructure showed improvement from four years ago.

The report also includes the following "5 Key Solutions for Raising the Grades":

- Increase federal leadership in infrastructure to address the crisis;
- Promote sustainability and resilience in infrastructure to protect the natural environment and withstand natural and man-made hazards;
- Develop national and regional infrastructure plans and complement a national vision and focus on system-wide users;
- Address life-cycle costs and ongoing maintenance to meet the needs of current and future users; and

- Increase and improve infrastructure investment from all stakeholders.

A full report card will be released March 25th. The society released preliminary information early in order to influence the congressional debate on the economic recovery bill, which will likely include tens of billions of dollars in infrastructure investment.

Visit www.asce.org for more information.

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For example:

- \$25.00 donation provides a booster seat for the rental program
- \$25.00 donation covers the cost of one car seat inspection
- \$50.00 donation provides a car seat for the rental program
- \$100 fund a school visit by Buckle Bear

Your support can save lives. Please consider supporting one or more of these important programs. Send a tax deductible donation to:

Every Ride a Safe Ride
Dean Foundation
2711 Allen Blvd.
Middleton, WI 53562

Or visit Dean Foundation's on-line giving link at www.dean.org.

Deficits Abound

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) recently released its annual budget and economic forecast. The CBO projects the federal unified budget, which includes Social Security, will have a deficit of \$1.19 trillion in 2009. This doesn't include any additional spending or tax cuts in an economic stimulus bill. The deficit is projected to drop to a more reasonable level by 2011 if the economy recovers and the Bush tax cuts lapse.

Transportation Funding Shortfall

As part of the forecast, the CBO also estimated future taxes and spending for all areas of the federal government, including transportation. The news is not good. Despite an \$8 billion bailout from the general fund in the fall of 2008, the CBO projects that the fund balance will drop to \$3.3 billion by the end of the fiscal year, September 30, 2009. This small expected balance may not be enough to stave off the need for another infusion this year.

In the long-term, the CBO estimates additional tax revenue or transfers of approximately \$79 billion will be needed over the next six years just to sustain the current highway and transit programs (with adjustments for Consumer Price Index inflation). Increased tax revenue or general fund transfers closer to \$93 billion will be needed over the next six years to maintain the program and keep the trust fund solvent, including a balance equal to three months of outlays to cover the unexpected.

State Deficit Grows

Closer to home, the Legislative Fiscal Bureau recently announced that "due to the decline in economic indicators since November" the state can expect \$342 million less in revenue over the next two years – driving the state's deficit to \$5.7 billion over the upcoming biennium.

Five Transportation Headaches and Remedies

A report released by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) and TRIP, a national transportation research group, identifies America's top five transportation headaches and offers five remedies for relief.

Top Five Transportation Headaches:

1. Aging bridges, crumbling pavements and deteriorating transit
2. Congested roads, highways and transit systems
3. Traffic fatalities and injuries
4. System demands
5. Rising costs

Top Five Transportation Remedies:

1. Begin work immediately on "ready-to-go" transportation projects.
2. Boost transportation funding to stimulate economic growth in the short, medium and long-term.
3. Recognize that the benefits of surface transportation improvements outweigh the costs.
4. Use innovation and advanced technology to build highway and bridge improvements that last longer, are environmentally savvy, and take less time.

Visit http://www.tripnet.org/Transportation_Headaches_Report_Jan_2009.pdf to view the entire report.

Transportation in the News

California – President Obama ordered the Environmental Protection Agency to reconsider California’s request for a waiver from the Clean Air Act. California regulations would allow the state – the nation’s most populous – to set tougher tailpipe emission standards than apply nationally. These standards had been blocked in 2007 when the Environmental Protection Agency ruled that the state’s restrictions were not compatible with the federal Clean Air Act.

President Obama also instructed the U.S. Department of Transportation to work out rules by March 30 to improve fuel economy for 2011 model year cars and trucks.

Building America’s Future – The bipartisan organization of state and local officials that supports increased transportation investment released a poll recently showing a large percentage of Americans favor spending more on roads, bridges and other critical infrastructure. Key findings of the Building American’s Future poll include:

- 94% of Americans are concerned about the nation’s infrastructure.
- 81% are prepared to pay 1% more in taxes to rebuild America’s infrastructure
- Accountability is the public’s single highest priority (61%) in rebuilding America’s infrastructure.
- When it comes to infrastructure spending, Americans care most about projects being on time and on budget (31%), and that they can see exactly where the money goes (24%).

Visit <http://www.publishpath.com/Websites/investininfrastructure/Images/Newsroom/Press%20Releases/LuntzRelease.pdf> for more information.

LaHood Sworn in as Secretary

After his confirmation by unanimous consent, Ray LaHood, former Republican congressman from Illinois, was sworn in as the 16th secretary of the U.S. Department of Transportation.

In an opening statement at his confirmation hearing, LaHood spoke of the need for a strong focus in following areas:

- the economy and the role of transportation investment in the recovery,
- sustainable transportation investment acknowledging the new reality of climate change,
- livable communities and
- safety.

LaHood also stated that one of his first and most important tasks will be to manage the effective use of transportation infrastructure spending in the stimulus bill.

Visit http://commerce.senate.gov/public/_files/LaHoodTestimony12109FINAL.pdf to view LaHood’s complete statement.

TDA Welcomes a New Member

League of Wisconsin Municipalities

Interesting News Coverage

Marketplace Magazine January 2009 – “Road work ahead - and rail work, and airport work...” This article includes quotes from Phil Ramlet, president and CEO of OMNI Associates and the current TDA President. <http://www.tdawisconsin.org/data/publications/MarketplaceRoadWorkAhead09.pdf>

Stateline.org January 14, 2009 – “Stimulus could hurt transportation bill.” <http://www.stateline.org/live/details/story?contentId=368540>

National Journal January 26, 2009 – “What Can we learn about transportation from beyond our borders?” <http://transportation.nationaljournal.com/2009/01/transportation-beyond-our-borders.php>

Stateline.org January 27, 2009 – “Congress won’t erase state deficits.” <http://www.stateline.org/live/details/story?contentId=371579>

The Christian Science Monitor January 27, 2009 – “The stimulus engine that can’t. Remember, it’s just a down payment on transport. The US needs a long-term strategy.” <http://www.csmonitor.com/2009/0127/p08s01-comv.html>

Metro Magazine January 27, 2009 – “U.S. public transit faces wave of service cuts.” <http://www.metro-magazine.com/News/Story/2009/01/U-S-public-transit-faces-wave-of-service-cuts.aspx>

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National Center for Freight and Infrastructure Research and Education (CFIRE) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison – The winter 2009 newsletter is now available.

Inside this newsletter, you’ll find:

- A column by Director Teresa Adams outlining the new year’s challenges and opportunities
- Summary materials on the recently completed 21st Century Transportation Workforce Summit (hosted by CFIRE)
- Details on Freight Related Activities at the TRB Annual Meeting
- Innovative Bridge Research Details
- Student of the Year information and a “Where are they Now?” details on past student recipients.
- A calendar of Center sponsored and other freight related meetings and workshops

Visit <http://www.wistrans.org/cfire/newsletter/Winter2009.pdf> to view the newsletter

Association Notes

Calendar of Events

Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) Connections 2030 public meetings
– WisDOT has scheduled a series of public meetings in numerous locations throughout the state. Residents are invited to attend to learn about Connections 2030, ask questions, and submit comments.

Superior

Wednesday, February 11, 2009

Eau Claire

Thursday, February 12, 2009

Rhineland

Wednesday, February 18, 2009

Wausau

Thursday, February 19, 2009

Green Bay

Wednesday, February 25, 2009

Oshkosh

Thursday, February 26, 2009

Visit <http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/projects/state/2030-draft-meetings.htm> for meeting details.

University of Wisconsin –Madison Department of Engineering Professional Development Courses

- Municipal Engineering Fundamentals for Non-Engineers (PDH/CEU:12/1.2): March 9-10, 2009 in Madison <http://epd.engr.wisc.edu/emak338>
- Preparing an Effective Municipal Capital Improvement Plan (PDH)CEU:12/1.2): May 7-8, 2009 in Madison <http://epd.engr.wisc.edu/emak327>

TDA Fly-in to Washington, D.C. – April 21st-22nd. Visit TDA's website, www.tdawisconsin.org, for more information.

If you know of an upcoming event that would be of interest to TDA members, please forward information to the TDA office, general@tdawisconsin.org.

2009 TDA Fly-in

April 21st & 22nd

Now is the time to make your Fly-in travel arrangements. Don't wait. There is still time to register this week!

Every year, we must present our case for transportation and express appreciation for the efforts of our delegation. Visit the TDA website, www.tdawisconsin.org, for event information and some specific reasons you should join the 19th annual TDA Fly-in to Washington, D.C.

Please participate to show your support for Wisconsin transportation.

Save on AAA Membership, Auto & Home Insurance



Visit the AAA website for a listing of membership benefits. You'll also be eligible for high-quality auto and home insurance coverage through AAA at a discounted TDA group rate too. Keep in mind, even if you already have AAA membership or insurance through AAA, you can save even more under this group plan. Enrollment is convenient through a statewide network of AAA offices.

Go to www.aaa.com or call 1-800-236-1300 to find an office near you.

To receive your AAA discount provide your AAA group number TRN003.

Join today and take advantage of the great benefits and savings.