

RELATED TO FUNDING

“T&I Committee agrees on reauthorization principles” (5/7/09)

“It will look something like this” (5/10/09)

“Highway Users encouraged by Obama transportation budget proposal” (5/11/09)

“FY 2010 budget details reveal nothing new for transportation” (5/11/09)

“Va. is last state to allocate stimulus-funded transportation work” (5/14/09)

“New Administration Continues Bush Toll Road Push” (5/20/09)

“LaHood defends mass transit push” (5/22/09)

“Virginia cuts highway budget again” (5/26/09)



Home Subscriptions Events Calendar Newsletter Contact Us

Search: Search for articles, news, products or suppliers



ARCHIVES

News
Articles
Case Histories
White Papers

REFERENCES

Buyer's Guide

SERVICES

Career Center

SPOTLIGHTS

April 2009
Industry Links
March 2009

ZONES

Asphalt Roads
Bridges
Concrete Roads
Safety
Software
Traffic Management

CURRENT ISSUE



Click here for a subscription to Roads & Bridges

Give us your feedback on our site.

Change your subscription info

Subscribe to our Executive News Summary e-Newsletter.

News this week sponsored by: National Asphalt Pavement Association (NAPA)

T&I Committee agrees on reauthorization principles

New offices addressing streamlining and livability will be created
May 7, 2009

House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman James Oberstar (D-Minn.) has announced that the bipartisan leadership of the committee has agreed on broad principles for SAFETEA-LU reauthorization legislation and that the highway subcommittee could begin marking up the legislation as soon as the week of May 18.

The agreement covers concepts for restructuring the surface transportation programs but does not include funding levels or revenue sources. Program reforms would include consolidating many existing programs into four, with several smaller programs left to stand alone.

The plan also includes the creation within the U.S. Department of Transportation of an Office of Intermodalism to develop a National Transportation Strategic Plan and to coordinate efforts by the different transportation modes to carry it out. Within the Federal Highway Administration a new Office for Expedited Project Delivery and an Office of Livability would be created.

Source: Associated General Contractors of America May 7, 2009

INDUSTRY NEWS

RSS: Roads & Bridges News

Subscribe

Get the latest industry headlines conveniently in our email newsletter! Click [here](#) to subscribe.

Share It

Email this page to a friend

More News

- It will look something like this
- Urban roads in the U.S. continue to crumble
- FY 2010 budget details reveal nothing new for transportation
- T&I Committee agrees on reauthorization principles
- Missouri's Safe & Sound Bridge Program humming along
- W.Va. considers more toll roads
- Construction spending up in March
- Survey indicates concrete's market share could rise
- APTA study: 30K jobs for every \$1B investment in transit
- Rep. Mica questions effectiveness of stimulus spending
- Highway investment in FY 2010 and beyond carries positive tone
- Tenn. breaks ground on Recovery Act project
- Vermont scrambling for transportation money
- Arizona gets FHWA approval for new six-lane freeway
- Tracking stimulus money may be difficult
- Sandvik big winner in "Measures of Success" marketing awards
- ARTBA's new entity sues EPA over Clean Air Act ban
- LaHood tells states savings must be used for other projects
- Administration unveils high-speed rail plan
- 81 transportation projects receive money in Calif.
- As Red River recedes, North Dakota faces major road and bridge repairs
- Alabama looks to spend \$1 billion on roads over 10 years
- 2,000th project funded by ARRA
- John D. Porcari selected as U.S. DOT Deputy Secretary
- Ray LaHood sworn in as U.S. Secretary of Transportation
- Corps of Engineers finds problems with Charles County highway permit application
- N.C. highway spending cut by \$50 million
- Transportation secretary announces decreasing revenues in Virginia
- FHWA warns about the need for new revenue source
- New York State unveils plan to replace Tappan Zee Bridge
- Mass. Turnpike Authority may merge with other state agencies
- Pa. Turnpike responds to FHWA request
- Illinois lawmakers again debating infrastructure program
- U.S. Chamber, associations launch "FasterBetterSafer" campaign
- Report examines worsening travel infrastructure in Massachusetts
- Cal. Navistar join forces
- Senators announce plan to address HTE shortfall
- ODOT honored for I-5 environmental work

ROADS & BRIDGES

Advertise with us
Learn about our online marketing opportunities.

ROADS & BRIDGES

Serving the Transportation Construction Industry for Over 100 Years



Home Subscriptions Events Calendar Newsletter Contact Us

Search: Search for articles, news, products or suppliers



ARCHIVES

News
Articles
Case Histories
White Papers

REFERENCES

Buyer's Guide

SERVICES

Career Center

SPOTLIGHTS

April 2009
Industry Links
March 2009

ZONES

Asphalt Roads
Bridges
Concrete Roads
Safety
Software
Traffic Management

CURRENT ISSUE



Click here for a subscription to Roads & Bridges

Give us your feedback on our site.

Change your subscription info

Subscribe to our Executive News Summary e-Newsletter.

News this week sponsored by: National Asphalt Pavement Association (NAPA)

It will look something like this

Details of Oberstar's reauthorization bill leak out of Washington
May 10, 2009

Somebody still needs to fix that leak in the Capitol building.

Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman Jim Oberstar (D-Minn.) delivered a two-page outline of what he called a "transformational" reauthorization of the six-year highway bill, and much of it has already spilled into the media mainstream.

Oberstar is expected to deliver a final draft to the House of Representatives by June 1, but here are some of the highlights:

* There is a call for the creation of a new undersecretary or assistant secretary for intermodalism. This official would hold monthly meetings with all modal administrators;

* The DOT's 108 programs will be consolidated into four "major formula programs": critical asset preservation, highway safety improvement, surface transportation program and congestion mitigation and air quality improvement. The surface transportation section suggests that metropolitan planning organizations receive sub-allocations based on population;

* DOTs would be asked to hit performance goals, and the legislation calls for agencies to design six-year targets for each of the four performance categories. Reports would be submitted annually and data would be made available online; and

* There is a call for "transit equity." Currently the federal government only pays for half of transit projects, while road and bridge work receives 80% support.

Sources say Oberstar's reauthorization plan will ask for up to \$450 billion in government funding. The current highway bill, SAFETEA-LU, expires on Sept. 30.

Source: BNA May 10, 2009

INDUSTRY NEWS

RSS: Roads & Bridges News

Subscribe

Get the latest industry headlines conveniently in our email newsletter! Click [here](#) to subscribe.

Share It

Email this page to a friend

More News

- It will look something like this
- Urban roads in the U.S. continue to crumble
- FY 2010 budget details reveal nothing new for transportation
- T&I Committee agrees on reauthorization principles
- Missouri's Safe & Sound Bridge Program humming along
- W.Va. considers more toll roads
- Construction spending up in March
- Survey indicates concrete's market share could rise
- APTA study: 30K jobs for every \$1B investment in transit
- Rep. Mica questions effectiveness of stimulus spending
- Highway investment in FY 2010 and beyond carries positive tone
- Tenn. breaks ground on Recovery Act project
- Vermont scrambling for transportation money
- Arizona gets FHWA approval for new six-lane freeway
- Tracking stimulus money may be difficult
- Sandvik big winner in "Measures of Success" marketing awards
- ARTBA's new entity sues EPA over Clean Air Act ban
- LaHood tells states savings must be used for other projects
- Administration unveils high-speed rail plan
- 81 transportation projects receive money in Calif.
- As Red River recedes, North Dakota faces major road and bridge repairs
- Alabama looks to spend \$1 billion on roads over 10 years
- 2,000th project funded by ARRA
- John D. Porcari selected as U.S. DOT Deputy Secretary
- Ray LaHood sworn in as U.S. Secretary of Transportation
- Corps of Engineers finds problems with Charles County highway permit application
- N.C. highway spending cut by \$60 million
- Transportation secretary announces decreasing revenues in Virginia
- FHWA warns about the need for new revenue source
- New York State unveils plan to replace Tappan Zee Bridge
- Mass. Turnpike Authority may merge with other state agencies
- Pa. Turnpike responds to FHWA request
- Illinois lawmakers again debating infrastructure program
- U.S. Chamber associations launch "FasterBetterSafer" campaign
- Report examines worsening travel infrastructure in Massachusetts
- Cal. Navistar join forces
- Senators announce plan to address HTE shortfall
- ODOT honored for I-5 environmental work

ROADS & BRIDGES

Advertise with us
Learn about our online marketing opportunities.

[Home](#)
[Subscriptions](#)
[Events Calendar](#)
[Newsletter](#)
[Contact Us](#)

 Search: Search for articles, news, products or suppliers


ARCHIVES

News
Articles
Case Histories
White Papers

REFERENCES

Buyer's Guide

SERVICES

Career Center

SPOTLIGHTS

April 2009
Industry Links
May 2009

ZONES

Asphalt Roads
Bridges
Concrete Roads
Safety
Software
Traffic Management

CURRENT ISSUE



Click here for a subscription to Roads & Bridges

Give us your feedback on our site.

Change your subscription info

Subscribe to our Executive News Summary e-Newsletter.

News this week sponsored by: National Asphalt Pavement Association (NAPA)

Highway Users encouraged by Obama transportation budget proposal

May 11, 2009

The American Highway Users Alliance is pleased that the Obama administration has presented a final budget proposal that recognizes the need to protect the ailing Highway Trust Fund and authorize a new multiyear program before Sept. 30, 2009.

"Motorists should be pleased by the progress made by this administration since releasing its initial budget framework in late February," said Greg Cohen, president of the Highway Users. "The final budget proposal reaffirms the president's support for motorists by recognizing the critical role of highway transportation programs in enhancing the country's safety, economic vitality, quality of life and the environment."

Cohen added, "We are also pleased that the administration is committed to working with Congress to maintain the short-term solvency and long-term sustainability of the Highway Trust Fund."

Created in 1956 at the dawn of the interstate era, the Highway Trust Fund is a "user-fee" financed account of the treasury, funded by fuel, truck and tire taxes collected from highway users. User-fee revenue collected from motorists is deposited into the Highway Trust Fund and then used to build and improve America's surface transportation system.

Revenue from the Highway Trust Fund has not kept pace with the growing needs of our aging, congested system. Diversion of these user-fee revenues away from highway programs has greatly exacerbated the problem.

"Without an infusion of additional money to support highway programs, current revenues will not be able to support highway programs beyond this summer," said Cohen. "The Obama administration's budget proposal recognizes this problem and suggests that a significant addition of general funds from the Treasury can help to prevent major funding cuts to both highway and transit programs in 2010."

"Critically, the president's budget proposal clarifies that the relatively flat baseline funding levels for future highway programs will be adjusted once Congress passes, and the president signs, a new multiyear reauthorization. The Highway Users urges all parties to consider the full range of proposals to strengthen the Highway Trust Fund and protect the interests of the motorists, truckers, bus companies, RVers and motorcyclists paying the user fees."

Source: American Highway Users Alliance May 11, 2009

INDUSTRY NEWS

RSS: Roads & Bridges News

Subscribe

Get the latest industry headlines conveniently in our email newsletter! Click here to subscribe.

Share It

Email this page to a friend

More News

- Wis. installs sign to reduce crashes
- R&B Exclusive: LaHood talks progress at Chicago luncheon
- FHWA provides relief to W.Va.
- \$1 billion allocated to create jobs, improve transportation in Calif.
- Senate offers direction on reauthorization bill
- PCA now accepting nominations for bridge awards
- AP report reveals stimulus funds are skipping the needy
- Illinois Tollway completes bond sale
- Coalition makes recommendations for new highway bill
- Highway Users encouraged by Obama transportation budget proposal
- It will look something like this
- Urban roads in the U.S. continue to crumble
- FY 2010 budget details reveal nothing new for transportation
- T&I Committee agrees on reauthorization principles
- Missouri's Safe & Sound Bridge Program humming along
- W.Va. considers more toll roads
- Construction spending up in March
- Survey indicates concrete's market share could rise
- APTA study: 30K jobs for every \$1B investment in transit
- Rep. Mica questions effectiveness of stimulus spending
- Highway investment in FY 2010 and beyond carries positive tone
- Tenn. breaks ground on Recovery Act project
- Vermont scrambling for transportation money
- Arizona gets FHWA approval for new six-lane freeway
- Tracking stimulus money may be difficult
- Sandvik big winner in "Measures of Success" marketing awards
- ARTBA's new entity sues EPA over Clean Air Act ban
- LaHood tells states savings must be used for other projects
- Ray LaHood sworn in as U.S. Secretary of Transportation
- Corps of Engineers finds problems with Charles County highway permit application
- N.C. highway spending cut by \$50 million
- Transportation secretary announces decreasing revenues in Virginia
- FHWA warns about the need for new revenue source
- New York State unveils plan to replace Tappan Zee Bridge
- Mass. Turnpike Authority may merge with other state agencies
- Pa. Turnpike responds to FHWA request
- Illinois lawmakers again debating infrastructure program
- U.S. Chamber, associations launch "FasterBetterSafer" campaign

ROADS & BRIDGES

Advertise with us
Learn about our online marketing opportunities.



Home Subscriptions Events Calendar Newsletter Contact Us

Search: Search for articles, news, products or suppliers

News this week sponsored by: National Asphalt Pavement Association (NAPA)

ARCHIVES
News
Articles
Case Histories
White Papers

REFERENCES
Buyer's Guide

SERVICES
Career Center

SPOTLIGHTS
April 2009
Industry Links
March 2009

ZONES
Asphalt Roads
Bridges
Concrete Roads
Safety
Software
Traffic Management

CURRENT ISSUE



Click here for a subscription to Roads & Bridges

Give us your feedback on our site.

Change your subscription info

Subscribe to our Executive News Summary e-Newsletter.

FY 2010 budget details reveal nothing new for transportation

Spending level stays at \$41.1 billion; administration to develop comprehensive approach to reauthorization May 7, 2009

President Obama released further details of his proposed budget for FY 2010. For the highway program, however, there is little new information.

The budget requests \$41.1 billion, just slightly higher than the \$40.7 billion provided in FY 2009. This is the same amount that was included in the president's much briefer budget proposal released in February. These figures do not include any of the transportation funding that resulted from the economic recovery act.

The detailed information that accompanies the request indicates that the Highway Trust Fund (HTF) will only be able to support a \$5 billion funding level in 2010 under current conditions. The budget requests \$36.1 billion in general fund money to ensure positive cash flow so that the program is able to continue functioning. The request also allows for the possibility that other legislation (presumably SAFETEA-LU reauthorization) could be enacted to positively impact the cash balance in the HTF.

The administration indicates that it is developing a comprehensive approach to transportation reauthorization and therefore no policy recommendations are included with the request. The background detail also points out that this funding level does not represent the administration's recommended funding levels or a budgeting approach for the upcoming reauthorization.

This approach is similar to how Congress handled the HTF situation in the budget resolution that was recently approved. The Congressional budget resolution assumes funding at the current baseline and allows for the possibility that new legislation will be enacted that will provide revenue necessary to increase the FY 2010 funding level.

Source: Associated General Contractors of America May 7, 2009

INDUSTRY NEWS

RSS: Roads & Bridges News

Subscribe

Get the latest industry headlines conveniently in our email newsletter! Click [here](#) to subscribe.

Share It

Email this page to a friend

More News

- It will look something like this
- Urban roads in the U.S. continue to crumble
- FY 2010 budget details reveal nothing new for transportation
- T&I Committee agrees on reauthorization principles
- Missouri's Safe & Sound Bridge Program humming along
- W.Va. considers more toll roads
- Construction spending up in March
- Survey indicates concrete's market share could rise
- APTA study: 30K jobs for every \$1B investment in transit
- Rep. Mica questions effectiveness of stimulus spending
- Highway investment in FY 2010 and beyond carries positive tone
- Tenn. breaks ground on Recovery Act project
- Vermont scrambling for transportation money
- Arizona gets FHWA approval for new six-lane freeway
- Tracking stimulus money may be difficult
- Sandvik big winner in "Measures of Success" marketing awards
- ARTBA's new entity sues EPA over Clean Air Act ban
- LaHood tells states savings must be used for other projects
- Administration unveils high-speed rail plan
- 81 transportation projects receive money in Calif.
- As Red River recedes, North Dakota faces major road and bridge repairs
- Alabama looks to spend \$1 billion on roads over 10 years
- 2,000th project funded by ARRA
- John D. Porcari selected as U.S. DOT Deputy Secretary
- Ray LaHood sworn in as U.S. Secretary of Transportation
- Corps of Engineers finds problems with Charles County highway permit application
- N.C. highway spending cut by \$50 million
- Transportation secretary announces decreasing revenues in Virginia
- FHWA warns about the need for new revenue source
- New York State unveils plan to replace Tappan Zee Bridge
- Mass. Turnpike Authority may merge with other state agencies
- Pa. Turnpike responds to FHWA request
- Illinois lawmakers again debating infrastructure program
- U.S. Chamber, associations launch "FasterBetterSafer" campaign
- Report examines worsening travel infrastructure in Massachusetts
- Cal. Navistar join forces
- Senators announce plan to address HTF shortfall
- ODOT honored for I-5 environmental work



Advertise with us
Learn about our online marketing opportunities.

Richmond Times-Dispatch

OPINION: | [Editorials](#) | [Letters](#) | [Commentary](#)

Thursday, May 14, 2009 |

Midlothian, VA 72° Feels Like: 72° Overcast

Va. is last state to allocate stimulus-funded transportation work

Text size: [small](#) | [medium](#) | [large](#)

By PETER BACQUE

Published: May 14, 2009

Virginia yesterday became the last state to obligate its first federal transportation economic-stimulus money.

The other 49 states, along with the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and various U.S. territories, already had taken action to obligate stimulus funds, and many already have begun work on so-called shovel-ready projects.

Virginia certified \$160.1 million in road, bridge and tourism trail projects to the Federal Highway Administration yesterday, the federal agency said. The state is eligible to receive \$694.5 million in federal stimulus money for road and transit improvements.

The Commonwealth Transportation Board should award at least nine paving jobs worth about \$45.3 million at its meeting next week, officials said.

"That's the criterion that matters," state Transportation Secretary Pierce R. Homer said. "These are all new projects.

"That's work that could not have happened without the stimulus funding," he said, "and that will allow a number of small and midsized contractors to stay in business."

None of the projects to be awarded next week are in the Richmond region.

Yesterday, only the territory of the Northern Mariana Islands among the U.S. states and territories had yet to certify to the federal government how it intends to spend the first of its stimulus funds, according to the Federal Highway Administration.

Transportation contractors have questioned how long Virginia's government has taken to set highway stimulus money into action paving roads and repairing bridges.

"Obligating money is important, because federal law requires it," said Jeffrey C. Southard with the Virginia Transportation Construction Alliance, an industry group.

But, Southard said, "obligating money puts nobody to work. Awarding contracts is what will put people to work."

At least 22 states already have paid contractors for construction work performed, with outlays through April 30 totaling \$10.4 million, according to the American Road & Transportation Builders Association in Washington.

Virginia's process for selecting transportation projects for stimulus-package funding has required considerable and prolonged political horse-trading.

From the governor and congressmen, through state legislators and the Transportation Board members, on down to metropolitan planning organization members, local leaders, advocacy groups and members of the public, all have had a say.

In April, the Commonwealth Transportation Board agreed on allocating \$328 million of the federal funds for paving, bridge, military base-expansion, rail and other locally committed projects.

Five large urban-area metropolitan planning organizations will receive \$118 million directly from the stimulus package.

About \$250 million in stimulus money remains to be allocated.

"We anticipate that Virginia will ramp up quickly and will be able to obligate its money on time," said Maureen Knightly with the U.S. Department of Transportation in Washington.

States and territories have until June 29 to obligate at least half their stimulus money.

Contact Peter Bacqué at (804) 649-6813 or pbacque@timesdispatch.com.

Reader Reactions

Posted by (vajetski) on May 14, 2009 at 9:35 am

Agreed Anon, the Transportation Secretary needs to go. The current condition of the highways in Richmond is outrageous. I 64 was backed up for miles yesterday in the west end because of a huge chunk of concrete in the middle of the road. I 64 repaving should be a top priority.

[Report Inappropriate Comment](#)

Posted by (Anon) on May 14, 2009 at 8:41 am

Why is it we had to read about this first on the front page of yesterday's NY Times?

Alfred Harf

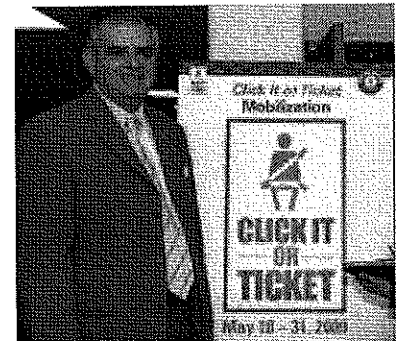
From: noreply+feedproxy@google.com on behalf of TheNewspaper
[sharedarticle@thenewspaper.com]
Sent: Wednesday, May 20, 2009 1:05 PM
To: Alfred Harf
Subject: Updates from TheNewspaper.com

Updates from TheNewspaper.com

New Administration Continues Bush Toll Road Push

Posted: 20 May 2009 02:16 AM PDT

Despite early indications that the Obama Administration did not want to follow the toll road policies of the previous administration, the US Department of Transportation is spending millions in federal taxpayer dollars to encourage states to impose tolls on new and existing roads. On Monday, the DOT published formal rules for states interested in applying to receive \$1.5 billion in federal tax grants under the new "Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery" program.



"TIGER discretionary funding will open up the door to many new *innovative* and cutting-edge transportation projects," Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood said in a statement.

The rule published in the Federal Register gave as examples of "innovative" projects those that use "dynamic pricing" and "radio frequency identification (RFID)" tracking devices on vehicles. The notice goes on to explain that grant applicants must have "legislative authority to charge user fees or set toll rate" if the project involves tolling.

LaHood also announced last Thursday that the department would bankroll a number of toll road feasibility studies using \$6 million in federal gas tax dollars under the department's Value Pricing Program.

In the San Francisco, California Bay Area, \$3.2 million would be spent to encourage tolls on State Route 237. In Washington state, \$1.3 million would be spent on a study of tolling in the Puget Sound region. In Minnesota, federal taxpayers would pay \$400,000 to create a study showing the benefits of imposing tolls on Interstate 94. Finally, \$717,000 in federal tax dollars would be spent on a study of GPS-based per-mile tolling for trucks in New York.

The latter grant is unusual because the White House explicitly backed away from the concept of nationwide per-mile taxes when LaHood first floated the idea in February.

"I can weigh in on it and say that it is not and will not be the policy of the Obama administration," Press Secretary Robert Gibbs said on February 20.

Prior to the White House policy statement, LaHood had been quite explicit in **his support for a policy of imposing tolls** on drivers with rhetoric indistinguishable from that of his predecessor, former Transportation Secretary Mary Peters. Now LaHood is once again providing vocal support for tolls. Last week he sent a signal to the

New York state legislature and New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg to revive the **failed effort** to impose a tax of up to \$22 for cars and trucks entering downtown Manhattan. In an interview with **NY1 News**, LaHood promised that the \$350 million in federal tax money would be available as a financial reward if the city imposes the toll.


"The money that was going to be provided for that particular project is still at the Department of Transportation," LaHood told NY1. "If New York got its act together around that kind of opportunity, I think we would look at it."

Source

✦ [Email this](#) ✦ [Digg This!](#) ✦ [Submit to Reddit](#)

You are subscribed to email updates from [TheNewspaper](#)
To stop receiving these emails, you may [unsubscribe now](#).

Email delivery powered by Google

Inbox too full?  [Subscribe](#) to the feed version of TheNewspaper in a feed reader.

If you prefer to unsubscribe via postal mail, write to: TheNewspaper, c/o Google, 20 W Kinzie, Chicago IL USA 60610

boston.com

Sign In | Register now

Home Delivery **The Boston Globe**

Local Search Site Search
[Search Box]

HOME TODAY'S GLOBE NEWS BUSINESS SPORTS LIFESTYLE A&E THINGS TO DO TRAVEL CARS JOBS HOMES LOCAL

Political Intelligence

< Back to Front Page

Text size - +

LaHood defends mass transit push

Posted by Foon Rhee, deputy national political editor May 21, 2009 06:44 PM

Email | Link | Comments (0)

By Alan Wirzbicki, Globe correspondent

WASHINGTON -- Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood defended the pro-mass transit policies of the Obama administration today, and fired back at conservative writer George Will, who devoted an entire column to attacking LaHood earlier this week.

"We have to create opportunities for people who want to ride a bike or walk or take a streetcar," he said. "The only person that I've heard of who objects to this is George Will."

Will wrote a column in Newsweek magazine criticizing the secretary, whom he dubbed "Secretary of Behavior Modification," for supporting measures to wean commuters off automobiles.

LaHood, a former Republican congressman from Illinois, made his remarks during a speech at the National Press Club about Obama's economic stimulus plan, which directed billions to transit and high-speed rail, and the upcoming transportation bill. The Obama administration hopes the bill, which sets federal policy for the next five years, will shift more money into public transportation.

One of only two Republicans in the Obama cabinet, LaHood was named to the post in part to serve as the president's ambassador to Congressional Republicans. He acknowledged that efforts to win GOP support for the stimulus had failed, but said he believed more Republicans would support the Obama administration on healthcare and climate change legislation that is also expected this year.

In a question-and-answer session following his remarks, LaHood expressed exasperation with the suggestion from some of his fellow Republicans that redirecting federal transportation money from highways to other modes of transportation amounted to government meddling in individual decisions.

"About everything we do around here is government intrusion into people's lives," he said.

"It is a way to coerce people out of their cars. Yeah."

Comment | Permalink | Email | ShareThis | Yahoo! Buzz

» Back to Front Page

Previous Entry

Next Entry

Broadside: Budget debate



00:00 04:52

▶ 🔍 📄 📄 📄 📄 📄 MENU



GLOBE POLITICAL ON TWITTER

Obama commends climate change bill - <http://is.gd/Cb7A> about 10 hours ago

Romney praises Cheney, zings Obama - <http://is.gd/Caxu> about 11 hours ago

LaHood defends mass transit push - <http://is.gd/Ca3h> about 12 hours ago

White House wants suggestions - <http://is.gd/Ca3g> about 12 hours ago

Biden headed to Lebanon - <http://is.gd/C7UQ> about 15 hours ago

FOLLOW GLOBEPOLITICAL ON TWITTER

Follow other Boston.com Tweets! What is Twitter?

Newsweek

Ray Lahood, Transformed

Secretary of Behavior Modification

George F. Will
NEWSWEEK

From the magazine issue dated May 25, 2009

You might think the Department of Transportation would be a refuge from Washington's inundation of painfully earnest and pitilessly incessant talk about "remaking" this (health care, Detroit) and "transforming" that (the energy sector, the planet's temperature). Transportation, after all, is about concrete practicalities—planes, trains and automobiles, steel, asphalt and concrete.

Furthermore, the new transportation secretary, Ray LaHood, was until January a Republican congressman practicing militant middle-of-the-roadism. He knows what plays in Peoria, and not just figuratively: He is from there. Peoria is a meatloaf, macaroni-and-cheese, down-to-earth place, home of Caterpillar, the maker of earthmoving machines for building roads, runways, dams and things.

LaHood, however, has been transformed. Indeed, about three bites into lunch, the T word lands with a thump: He says he has joined a "transformational" administration: "I think we can change people's behavior." Government "promoted driving" by building the Interstate Highway System—"you talk about changing behavior." He says, "People are getting out of their cars, they are biking to work." High-speed intercity rail, such as the proposed bullet train connecting Los Angeles and San Francisco, is "the wave of the future." And then, predictably, comes the P word: Look, he says, at Portland, Ore.

Riding the aforementioned wave to Portland, which liberals hope is a harbinger of America's future, has long been their aerobic activity of choice. But LaHood is a Republican, for Pete's sake, the party (before it lost its bearings) of "No, we can't" and "Actually, we shouldn't" and "Not so fast" and "Let's think this through." Now he is in full "Yes we can!" mode. Et tu, Ray?

Where to start? Does LaHood really think Americans were not avid drivers before a government highway program "promoted" driving? Does he think 0.01 percent of Americans will ever regularly bike to work? Intercity high-speed rail probably always will be the wave of the future, for cities more than 300 miles apart. And as for Portland ...

Its government has been, intermittently, as progressive as all get-out, trying to use zoning, light-rail projects and high-density housing to cool the planet by curbing automobile use. This sort of "New Urbanism" is metastasizing. Last year California's attorney general, Jerry Brown, 71, the state's once (1975–82) and, he hopes, future governor, was a prime mover behind a new law that would deny certain state aid to communities that do not adopt "smart growth" plans. They are supposed to herd Californians into higher-density living near mass-transit rail lines in order to reduce their carbon footprints (tire prints, actually).

For many generations—before automobiles were common, but trolleys ran to the edges of towns—Americans by the scores of millions have been happily trading distance for space, living farther from their jobs in order to enjoy ample backyards and other aspects of low-density living. And long before climate change became another excuse for disparaging America's "automobile culture," many liberal intellectuals were bothered by the automobile. It subverted their agenda of expanding government—meaning their—supervision of other people's lives. Drivers moving

around where and when they please? Without government supervision? Depriving themselves and others of communitarian moments on mass transit? No good could come of this.

Although proponents of the "war against sprawl" think of it as newfangled, it actually is quaintly retro. In the 1950s, when liberalism took a turn toward esthetic politics, its thinkers began looking askance at middle-class America. To the herd of independent thinkers who deplored it in chorus, suburbanization was emblematic of the banality of bourgeoisie life. Then, 45 years ago this week, a Democratic president who had been in office exactly six months heeded the liberal intellectual's *cri de coeur*.

On May 22, 1964, President Lyndon Johnson, speaking at the University of Michigan, announced plans to transform America by leading it "upward to the Great Society." Exhorting the Class of 1964 to "indignation," he said America was in danger of being "buried under unbridled growth." The implication was clear: Government must put a bridle—and a saddle and snaffle—on Americans, the better to, LBJ said, "enrich and elevate" their lives above "soulless wealth" and to serve "the desire for beauty and the hunger for community."

Once upon a time, government was supposed to defend the shores, deliver the mail and let people get on with their lives. Today's far-seeing and fastidious government, not content with designing the cars Americans drive to their homes and the lightbulbs they use in their homes (do you know that, come 2014, the incandescent lightbulb will be illegal?), wants to say where their homes can be. And to think that Republican Ray LaHood, Secretary of Behavior Modification, is an enthusiast for this, well, cozy relationship between Washington and Peoria, and everywhere else, too.

URL: <http://www.newsweek.com/id/197925>

© 2009

ROADS & BRIDGES

Serving the Transportation Construction Industry for Over 100 Years


[Home](#)
[Subscriptions](#)
[Events Calendar](#)
[Newsletter](#)
[Contact Us](#)

 Search: Search for articles, news, products or suppliers


ARCHIVES

News
Articles
Case Histories
White Papers

REFERENCES

Buyer's Guide

SERVICES

Career Center

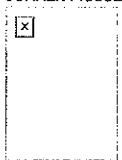
SPOTLIGHTS

April 2009
Industry Links
May 2009

ZONES

Asphalt Roads
Bridges
Concrete Roads
Safety
Software
Traffic Management

CURRENT ISSUE



Click here for a subscription to Roads & Bridges

Give us your feedback on our site.

Change your subscription info

Subscribe to our Executive News Summary e-Newsletter.

News this week sponsored by: National Asphalt Pavement Association (NAPA)

Virginia cuts highway budget again

State forced to slash \$1.5 billion due to funding shortfall
May 21, 2009

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) presented a draft of the Six-Year Improvement Program for Fiscal Years (FY) 2010-2015 to the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB). The total proposed program is \$7.4 billion, down from \$8.9 billion in the revised FY 2009-2014 budget approved three months ago.

The FY 2010-2015 budget reflects \$650 million in cuts to the highway program and \$880 million in reductions to rail and transit. The highway declines are largely a result of continued state and federal revenue shortfalls, while the transit and rail declines are mainly attributed to the transition of the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project to the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority, which reduced the program by \$776 million.

"The commonwealth is continually challenged to meet federal obligations and state maintenance requirements for our highway system while dealing with drastic declines in state and federal revenues," said Pierce R. Homer, Virginia secretary of transportation. "We have been able to maintain our rail and transit programs and services."

Transportation revenue reductions have forced the CTB to significantly reduce the six-year program over the past several years:

- FY 2008-13 program adopted June 2007: \$11 billion (\$8.7 billion for highways);
- FY 2009-14 program adopted June 2008: \$10.6 billion (\$7.9 billion for highways);
- Revised FY 2009-14 program adopted February 2009: \$8.9 billion (\$6 billion for highways); and
- Proposed FY 2010-2015 program: \$7.4 billion (\$5.4 billion for highways).

VDOT also applied previously allocated but unused dollars from interstate projects to fund two major ready-to-go projects in order to match federal funds for FY 2009. More than \$97 million from projects with phases that were not currently under way was reallocated in order to complete the I-95 bridge rehabilitation and I-64 paving projects in the Richmond District.

"After reducing the highway program by \$2 billion in the revised FY 2009-2014 program, VDOT is again faced with more program funding challenges," said VDOT Commissioner David S. Ekern, P.E. "VDOT is stretching every dollar to ensure federal and state obligations are met, and using available funds to keep projects that can move forward progressing as quickly as possible."

Source: VDOT May 21, 2009

INDUSTRY NEWS

RSS: Roads & Bridges News

Subscribe

Get the latest industry headlines conveniently in our email newsletter! Click here to subscribe.

Share It

Email this page to a friend

More News

- Illinois looks to create \$12 billion for infrastructure
- ITS America launches new forums
- Virginia cuts highway budget again
- R&B Exclusive: LaHood talks progress at Chicago luncheon
- Wis. installs sign to reduce crashes
- FHWA provides relief to W.Va.
- \$1 billion allocated to create jobs, improve transportation in Calif.
- Senate offers direction on reauthorization bill
- PCA now accepting nominations for bridge awards
- AP report reveals stimulus funds are skipping the needy
- Illinois Tollway completes bond sale
- Coalition makes recommendations for new highway bill
- Highway Users encouraged by Obama transportation budget proposal
- It will look something like this
- Urban roads in the U.S. continue to crumble
- FY 2010 budget details reveal nothing new for transportation
- T&I Committee agrees on reauthorization principles
- Missouri's Safe & Sound Bridge Program humming along
- W.Va. considers more toll roads
- Construction spending up in March
- Survey indicates concrete's market share could rise
- APTA study: 30K jobs for every \$1B investment in transit
- Rep. Mica questions effectiveness of stimulus spending
- Highway investment in FY 2010 and beyond carries positive tone
- Tenn. breaks ground on Recovery Act project
- Ray LaHood sworn in as U.S. Secretary of Transportation
- Corps of Engineers finds problems with Charles County highway permit application
- N.C. highway spending cut by \$50 million
- Transportation secretary announces decreasing revenues in Virginia
- FHWA warns about the need for new revenue source
- New York State unveils plan to replace Tappan Zee Bridge
- Mass. Turnpike Authority may merge with other state agencies
- Pa. Turnpike responds to FHWA request
- Illinois lawmakers again debating infrastructure program
- U.S. Chamber, associations launch "FasterBetterSafer" campaign
- Report examines worsening travel infrastructure in Massachusetts
- Cat, Navistar join forces
- Senators announce plan to address HTF shortfall
- ODOT honored for I-5 environmental work

ROADS & BRIDGES

Advertise with us
Learn about our online marketing opportunities.