

**THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS
RESOLUTION ON FUTURE OF TRANSPORTATION PROGRAMS**

WHEREAS, America's surface transportation system drives economic growth and competitiveness, supports rural and urban connectivity and sustains jobs and the quality of life for our citizens; and

WHEREAS, Americans who use the transportation system should pay for consumption of the system and expect certain levels of performance and reliability; and

WHEREAS, there should be broad federal purposes for the transportation program and states should lead a cooperative intergovernmental process with local governments and metropolitan planning organizations to establish performance-based outcome measures to aid the planning and programming process with no increase in federal regulation; and

WHEREAS, America's infrastructure is aging rapidly and traditional funding mechanisms have proven to be inadequate to meet the minimum levels needed to maintain the existing transportation system; and

WHEREAS, state departments of transportation are struggling to meet the demands of repairing crumbling infrastructure, building new roads, and providing transportation alternatives to citizens with existing revenue sources; and

WHEREAS, improvements in system condition, performance and capacity are needed to deal with access and connectivity, traffic congestion, the interregional and interstate movement of freight, and the high number of traffic fatalities; and

WHEREAS, the high price of motor fuels makes providing transit and other transportation alternatives an imperative in both rural and urban areas; and

WHEREAS, annual funding levels for transportation need to be significantly increased to meet the maintenance and expansion needs of the nation's transportation infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. needs to invest sufficiently over the next 50 years to upgrade the transportation network to a good state of repair, and build more advanced facilities to remain competitive; and

WHEREAS, the federal fuel tax at current rates has proven insufficient to maintain the national transportation network and build needed improvements; and

WHEREAS, the upcoming re-authorization of federal highway programs provides an excellent opportunity to re-examine the funding of surface transportation and the prioritization of projects and policies; and

WHEREAS, many alternative finance options show great promise for raising revenue, alleviating congestion, and encouraging use of different modes of transport in more urban and high traffic locations, though they are not always appropriate in rural low traffic and low population areas; and

WHEREAS, there are mechanisms for generating funds that are more strongly linked to actual use of the transportation system and that promote more efficient use of the system, yet must be carefully structured or combined with other actions to be fair toward low-income residents; and

WHEREAS, the transportation sector is responsible for about a third of the nation's greenhouse gas emissions and future transportation policy should focus on reducing transportation's impact on greenhouse gas emissions and air quality.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Council of State Governments calls on Congress to pass a federal authorization bill that provides short term funding stability, long term vision, strong federal funding and maximum flexibility to states in meeting transportation and infrastructure needs; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council of State Governments recognizes that increasing and indexing the federal gas tax may be necessary in the short term to provide a revenue source for the Highway Trust Fund until a new, more stable long-term funding mechanism can be put in place; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council of State Governments calls on Congress to plan for the eventual migration of the Trust Fund to a new funding stream with a diversified portfolio of revenue sources; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council of State Governments calls on Congress to authorize additional research on and pilot program funding for alternative finance options for transportation, including vehicle miles traveled pricing systems, and to clear any legal hurdles so that states may implement them; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council of State Governments calls on the Federal Government to encourage innovation by states by providing them with maximum flexibility to address their unique challenges and by removing federal regulatory barriers to implementing new revenue mechanisms; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council of State Governments urges Congress to broaden eligibility for existing core and other federal transportation programs and allow states to shift federal transportation dollars to programs and projects that work best for each individual state, guided by the State Transportation Improvement Program and state-led performance measures jointly developed with local governments, metropolitan planning organizations and transportation providers; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council of State Governments urges Congress to cap earmarks for transportation projects at an appropriate percentage of the federal program; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council of State Governments calls on Congress in the next federal authorization to allow states and other transportation providers to focus on customer service including safety and performance in the transportation system; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council of State Governments supports the development of innovative alternative financing mechanisms that support state transportation goals and that are flexible enough to work in different regions of the country; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council of State Governments will encourage states to adopt laws that provide dedicated funding sources for transportation and that prohibit the transfer of state transportation funds to non-transportation related General Fund expenditures; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council of State Governments supports a transportation authorization that considers the needs of both urban and rural areas; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council of State Governments supports a strong federal-state-local partnership on transportation policy and encourages Congress to consider the impacts of revenue raising mechanisms and other proposed actions for each level of government; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council of State Governments supports a future federal surface transportation funding strategy that does not attempt to compete with, disable or federalize funding streams already utilized at the state or local level including tolling, value pricing and public-private partnerships and that does not intrude into state and local tax bases, which would only shrink the revenues available for transportation; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council of State Governments supports the protection of the public interest when states enter into public-private partnerships (P3s) such as long-term leases of transportation assets. It supports the principles of transparency and public participation throughout P3 negotiation processes; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council of State Governments calls on Congress to pass a federal authorization bill that appropriately addresses reducing congestion including funding public transportation, intercity passenger rail and transit options with the goal of substantially increasing transit ridership over the next several decades; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council of State Governments calls on Congress to commit resources to fund highway improvements to better connect rural communities and smaller metropolitan areas and to provide better public transportation in those areas; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council of State Governments supports the concept of a National Infrastructure Bank to allow the Federal government to finance infrastructure projects more effectively with public and private capital and recommends that the bank be structured to be accessible to rural as well as metropolitan projects, and further supports federal level bonding such as Build America Bonds proposals as an additional means of funding transportation programs; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council of State Governments calls on states and other intergovernmental partners to consider the synchronization of transportation, land use, housing, environment, and energy policies through the planning process; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council of State Governments calls on Congress to give priority to preservation and modernization of the existing transportation system; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council of State Governments calls on Congress to give priority to air quality, mitigating greenhouse gas emissions, and funding community-level transportation enhancements while also reforming environmental review, permitting and federal planning requirements and reducing the federal regulation of state and local governments to speed the delivery of transportation and infrastructure projects and reduce administrative costs; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council of State Governments calls on Congress to improve the national freight network through an initiative funded through freight-related user fees generated outside the Highway Trust Fund and with a focus on eliminating chokepoints, increasing throughput and improving interregional and interstate freight movement; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council of State Governments calls on Congress to establish national traffic safety standards and to work with states and metropolitan areas to implement strategies to improve transportation safety with the goal of reducing highway traffic fatalities by half within two decades; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council of State Governments calls on Congress to authorize transportation energy research to develop alternatives to petroleum and to encourage early transition to fleets not dependent on fossil fuels; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council of State Governments strongly supports the continuation of a robust Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Research and Development program to advance safety and mobility, to improve freight delivery and

to address climate change; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council of State Governments will seek to partner with the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials and other organizations that share these principles on the future of transportation funding in advocacy before Congress.

Adopted this 6th day of December, 2008 at the CSG 75th Anniversary Celebration and Annual Meeting in Omaha, Nebraska.



Governor M. Jodi Rell
2008 CSG President



Rep. Kim Koppelman
2008 CSG Chair