

Policy Resolution PR-2-15

Title: Supporting Action to Ensure Enactment of a Long-term Surface Transportation Bill Reflecting AASHTO's Reauthorization Priorities

WHEREAS, the Surface Transportation and Veterans Health Care Choice Improvement Act of 2015 enacted on July 31, 2015, provided a general fund transfer of \$8.1 billion to ensure short-term Highway Trust Fund solvency and extended the authorization of the federal highway, transit, and highway safety programs through October 29, 2015; and

WHEREAS, the Highway Trust Fund continues to experience a deficit between receipts and baseline outlays averaging \$15 billion per year, which is estimated to accumulate to a total deficit of \$169 billion by 2025 according to the Congressional Budget Office; and

WHEREAS, federal funding supports nearly half of all highway and transit capital investment around the nation that underpins economic development, improves quality of life, and supports jobs in every community and Congressional district; and

WHEREAS, the failure to increase the Highway Trust Fund revenues or provide additional general fund support in Fiscal Year 2016 would result in jeopardizing surface transportation programs and projects; and

WHEREAS, uncertainty and volatility in planning and construction activities—including equipment and labor resource management—due to the instability of the federal program would once again impose heavy opportunity costs on productivity and employment, including layoffs, deferred investment, and project delays; and

WHEREAS, in addition to cessation in new federal funding commitments, the Highway Trust Fund insolvency in 2016 could threaten the states' ability to pay contractors in a timely manner for work already completed on much-needed transportation projects;

WHEREAS, the principle of a federally-assisted, state-administered highway program rooted in the United States Constitution has remained essential in delivering a safe, economic, efficient, and environmentally-sound national system for over 100 years;

WHEREAS, the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) established a performance management system predicated on States having the flexibility and the federal funding necessary to achieve performance targets;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that Congress must act promptly to ensure the solvency of the Highway Trust Fund and enact a long-term surface transportation authorization bill in order to prevent significant planning and construction disruptions to highway and transit projects, to provide stable cash reimbursements to states for costs already incurred, and to ensure and enhance many national benefits of the federal surface transportation program including jobs, economic competitiveness, safety, personal mobility and quality of life;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Congress maintains the core principle of a federally assisted, state-administered highway program and provides at least the current share of total highway program funding provided to the states via apportioned core programs;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Congress preserve the fundamental program and policy reforms in MAP-21 and provide states increased flexibility needed to meet performance targets and address transportation challenges that vary from state to state; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the AASHTO Board of Directors approves this resolution in order to encourage Congress to adopt a long-term surface transportation authorization bill consistent with AASHTO's reauthorization priorities.