



TFIC Recommendations for the 2009 Transportation Authorization

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Challenge: Given its history and location, Illinois has always been a transportation crossroads. The state's extensive and diverse transportation network underpins Illinois' economic health. Today, that network faces difficult challenges. Among them are: an aging overtaxed Interstate system with three of the nation's worst freight bottlenecks; the Chicago rail freight hub hobbled by outmoded congested facilities and delays; and renovating and modernizing one of the nation's oldest and largest rail transit systems some portions of which are more than 100 years old.

The Focus: A continued and increased federal funding partnership is essential for meeting these and other challenges. Last year SAFETEA-LU provided nearly \$1.9 billion for Illinois' roads and bridges and public transportation systems. In the next surface transportation authorization, Illinois' most important need is to continue and improve upon its share of surface transportation dollars. **For highways, TFIC's focus is to increase federal funds to Illinois, improving upon or at least retaining the state's estimated 3.62% share of funds (including earmarks) under SAFETEA-LU. For transit, TFIC's focus is to increase funds to Illinois systems from the \$442 million received in 2009 to at least \$1 billion.**

The Revenue: TFIC recognizes that these objectives cannot be attained without an increase in federal user fee revenues. **TFIC urges Congress to raise existing user fees to support significant funding increases and to consider new user fees for the future.**

The Priorities: Beyond the overall focus on increasing Illinois' funding share in the new authorization, TFIC has identified the following priorities:

- **Highways:** Funding increases for bridge repair/replacement and for Interstate modernization; new funding program for freight corridors of national significance
- **Transit:** Funding increases for rail modernization, for a revamped Clean Fuels/Aging Bus Replacement program and for the Small Transit Intensive Cities program; provisions to expedite new starts projects and to set the match at 80/20
- **Intercity Rail Passenger:** New funding for a comprehensive capital program including improvements to existing corridors, expansions and high-speed rail
- **Other:** Earmark reform through transparency and accountability; streamlining the project delivery process

These priorities collectively enhance mobility through improved public transportation and elimination of infrastructure bottlenecks; enhance safety through repairing and modernizing infrastructure and reducing freight conflicts with cars and pedestrians; and enhance livability through accelerating the switch to clean fuel buses, upgrading transit and passenger rail facilities and reducing highway congestion.