



TFIC Praises Bradley
For Introduction of HB 1

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The Transportation for Illinois Coalition supports Representative John Bradley's effort to win approval of a transportation capital proposal funded by appropriate revenue increases. With the introduction of House Bill 1, which increases the state Motor Fuel Tax by 8 cents a gallon to fund transportation, Bradley is demonstrating his commitment to Illinois' transportation infrastructure and to the creation of well-paying construction jobs for tens of thousands of Illinoisans.

"As Representative Bradley has indicated, the introduction of House Bill 1 is an important first step that must be taken in order to negotiate a comprehensive and adequately sized transportation capital bill," said Mike Kleinik, Director of the Laborers District Council-LMCC and TFIC co-chair. "He has shown the courage of his convictions and is to be commended for taking leadership on this issue. We are committed to working with Representative Bradley, his colleagues in the Illinois House and Senate, and Governor Pat Quinn to craft a comprehensive transportation capital program."

Coalition members view House Bill 1 in its current form as a first step. State motor

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fuel taxes, a traditional highway user fee, are a logical source of funding for Illinois' transportation network. However, additional revenue must be added to House Bill 1 to fund necessary transportation improvements.

In addition, important reforms to the planning and public accountability of highway programs and real, substantive protections to prevent transportation dollars from going to other uses are key to an effective transportation investment program. Local roads must receive funding and the distribution of money throughout the state must be equitable. Existing diversions from the state's Road Fund should also be reduced.

In 2006, TFIC worked with outside consultants to determine what the cost would be to bring our state transportation system to a state of good repair and to address congestion relief, safety improvements and economic development needs within reasonable time and staffing constraints. According to that needs analysis, which was verified using older numbers from the Illinois Department of Transportation adjusted for inflation, the cost for all modes of transportation is \$42.4 billion over five years. Given current levels of investment by the state, an additional \$23 billion in spending over five years is necessary to meet the need.

A minimally adequate investment in transportation requires \$13.5 billion to pave the roads and bridges, make safety improvements and to maintain our transit systems as they are today. This would require the equivalent of a 16 cent per gallon increase in motor

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fuel taxes or a more diverse combination of user fees increases.

“We may not have the funding needed to produce a \$23 billion spending increase over the next five years to enhance and maintain our roads and bridges, transit and rail systems and small airports, but we need more than the 8 cent motor fuel tax increase will pay for,” said Jim Reilly, TFIC co-chair and chair of the Regional Transportation Authority. “This isn’t about politics – it’s about leadership of the type demonstrated by Representative Bradley. The best way to rebuild our economy is to put people to work on projects that will have a lasting impact. Our transportation infrastructure is the backbone of our economy. We need to invest in it.”

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