



### INFRASTRUCTURE: SUPPORT FLORIDA'S INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS

#### **ACTION NEEDED:**

Urge your members of Congress to support county transportation and infrastructure priorities in any new infrastructure bills presented by Congress in the 115th Congress.

#### **BACKGROUND:**

Counties play a critical role in the nation's transportation system, owning 46 percent of all public roads (compared to the 32 percent of public roads owned by cities and townships, 19 percent by states, and 3 percent by the federal government) and 38 percent of the nation's bridge inventory. In Florida, counties own and maintain more than **70,400 miles of roads**, which includes more than 14,800 miles of unpaved roads.

Florida counties face increasingly large infrastructure funding shortfalls. A report by the Florida Center for Urban and Transportation Research (CUTR)<sup>1</sup>, estimates that, over the next twenty years, our Metropolitan Planning Areas will face a \$126 billion shortfall for transportation needs. Annualized statewide, the shortfall is approximately \$6.32 billion per year. To maintain this system, Florida counties spend most of their transportation budgets (approximately 86%) on maintenance alone, leaving little capacity for capital improvements.

From a funding standpoint, counties have been responsible stewards of taxpayer dollars. They are increasingly required to do more with less, which has forced them to be both efficient and innovative when it comes planning, building, and maintaining local infrastructure. As evidence of this, of the \$2 billion Florida counties spent on roads in 2016, more than 41% (\$839.4 million) was subsidized with non-fuel tax revenues to ensure their networks function effectively. What this means, however, is that a very large funding gap for roads exists at the county level.

In addition to road infrastructure, counties continue to make major investments in other transportation modes to support our state's economy. Specifically, for FY 2016, Florida counties spent more than \$1.24 billion on mass transit, \$1.18 billion on airports, \$306 million on water transportation, and another \$206 million on other modes. On average, Florida counties spent \$227.26 per capita on transportation needs.

*...continued on next page*

---

<sup>1</sup>A review of MPO Long Range Transportation Plans and Estimate of Statewide 2035 Metropolitan Area Financial Shortfall. (April 2013). Center for Urban and Transportation Research.



FLORIDA  
ASSOCIATION OF  
COUNTIES  
*All About Florida*

## INFRASTRUCTURE: SUPPORT FLORIDA'S INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS

Funding for infrastructure, of course, extends beyond transportation. County investments in sewer and wastewater, as well as other environmental infrastructure are significant but must compete with other local funding priorities. For these reasons, any Federal infrastructure funding plan should consider the needs and resource limitations of counties.

*The Florida Association of Counties recommends that future policy decisions reflect the following:*

**Preserving the tax-exempt status of municipal bonds.** *Though legislated as part of the tax code through the U.S. House Ways and Means Committee, tax-exempt bonds are a critical tool for counties that facilitates the budgeting and financing of long-range investments in the infrastructure and facilities necessary to meet public demand. Without the tax-exemption, counties would pay more to raise capital, a cost that would ultimately be borne by the taxpayers through means such as reduced spending on the roads and bridges that counties are responsible for, decreased economic development, higher taxes or higher user fees.*

**Promote long-term solvency of the Highway Trust Fund.** *To maintain a robust infrastructure network, the Highway Trust Fund must remain solvent. FAC advocates for an "all tools in the toolbox" approach to accomplishing this, including increased usage of user-fees for infrastructure.*

**Support bi-annual passage of the Water Resources Development Act.** *WRDA legislation authorizes critical water projects and is crucial for addressing the nation's water infrastructure needs, which are vital to the safety, environmental protection and economic development of state and local economies. The last WRDA bill was approved in 2016; thus, Congress must pass a 2018 WRDA bill to remain on the targeted bi-annual schedule.*

**Support the passage of a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) reauthorization bill.** *While the FAA is currently operating pursuant to a short-term funding extension which expires on September 30, 2018, FAC is advocating for FAA reauthorization legislation that will support airport development and maintain air service to large and small communities in the long-terms.*

**New, dedicated federal funding must be part of any new infrastructure package:** *While FAC supports public-private partnerships (P3's) for project development, it is important that any infrastructure package provide funding to those parts of the country where private investment is not appropriate. A robust rural infrastructure plan must be part of any new legislation with the necessary funds to address their unique needs.*

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Eric Poole · [epoole@fl-counties.com](mailto:epoole@fl-counties.com) or Susan Harbin Alford · [sharbin@fl-counties.com](mailto:sharbin@fl-counties.com)