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## February 2015

### President's Report

By Ramon Gavarrete, PE  
Highlands County, Florida



#### Strategic Planning

The Executive Committee is continuing our NACE Strategic Planning efforts. On February 19-20 we met for approximately 13 hours in Fredericksburg, Va., and Washington D.C. Over the past couple of months, the leadership engaged our state directors and several Past Presidents to identify NACE's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

Grouping and discussing the items was an interesting exercise. We found several common themes: membership (retaining and new), finances, staffing, communications, and relationships with NACo and other organizations. The collected information will serve as the base to build upon. Strategic Planning is not something to be taken lightly. This was just the start, so many laps remain to the finish line. This will likely continue through at least NACo's 80th Annual Conference and Exposition in Charlotte (Mecklenburg County), North Carolina in July.

#### NACE Participation in NACo's Legislative Conference

In addition to Strategic Planning, the Executive Committee and other NACE members attended the NACo Legislative Conference held in Washington D.C. NACE members provided input in the Airports, Transit/Rail, and Highway Subcommittee meetings and the Transportation Steering Committee. I want to thank Committee Chair, Commissioner Peter McLaughlin (Hennepin County, Minn.), for giving me the opportunity to address the Committee and for his leadership during this reauthorization of MAP-21.

Over 15 NACE members participated as active members of the Transportation Steering Committee. Plus, numerous members participated in visits with legislators and NACo's Transportation and Infrastructure Briefing held at the Capitol Visitor Center. Our focus was the role of counties in the nation's transportation system, counties' funding and financing of infrastructure investments, and our push for Congress to fix the Highway Trust Fund and pass a long-term reauthorization of MAP-21.

#### NACE Sponsored Streamlining for Simple Projects

Working with NACE's Legislative Committee, Daniel Fedderly, Executive Director of the Wisconsin County Highway Association, and Richie Beyer, County Engineer of Elmore County, Alabama, sponsored a special project aimed at project streamlining.

We're pleased to report the Committee approved a [Pilot Program](#) to Expedite Federal Highway Project Delivery. It's designed to alleviate concerns related to reducing or waiving regulatory requirements by focusing on a specific category of projects, termed 'simple projects'. These would be projects which receive \$5 million or less in federal funding, meet a project type in 23 CFR Part 771.117 (c) and/ or (d), and occur within the existing right-of-way in a manner that substantially conform to the preexisting design, function, and location as the original. These could include upgrades to meet existing codes and standards as well as upgrades warranted to address conditions that have changed since the original construction.

The Secretary of Transportation would select a number of locally-administered 'simple projects' to demonstrate whether waiving or reducing federal requirements would reduce costs and expedite project delivery without significant risk. This would allow for a strategic partnership to identify the value of reducing or waiving regulatory requirements on projects with county government sponsors.

This pilot program could be accomplished in one of two manners. 1) NACo and NACE could directly engage the Secretary to enact a program through use of flexibilities in existing sections of Title 23 USC [106 (g) 1A & 3, 109 (2), 315, and 325 (a) 1 & (c)]. 2) Or include similar language in perspective reauthorization legislation. NACo will use this "special project" request part of their efforts with Congress in reauthorization efforts.

#### Safety Resolutions

The Committee passed 2 interim resolutions on Local Transportation Safety Funding: SHSP Local Coordination and Establishment of TZD Grant Program. These will be considered at NACo's 80th Annual Conference and Exposition.

Historically there has been significant variation in how the state Departments of Transportation include counties in the development of the Strategic Highway Safety Plans (SHSP) and subsequently allocate funding. The resolution urges Congress to require states to coordinate with locals in developing SHSPs.

Several states have implemented TZD, which has proven successful in reducing incidents and increasing safety. The resolution urges Congress to establish Toward Zero Deaths Grants to local and non-profit organizations (NACE, NACo, etc.) to implement proven safety practices and programs on the local transportation system to increase safety across the nation.

The Committee passed several other interim resolutions:

Modification of Procedures for Environmental Review and Challenges Involving Federal Highway Construction  
Federal Freight Goods Movement Investment in the United States  
Equitable Funding and Expenditures of the Highway Trust Fund

### Special Thanks

Special recognition goes to Brian Keierleber, PE, County Engineer of Buchanan County, Iowa, for serving as a panelist at the workshop for County Transportation and Infrastructure Investments Driving Economic Growth. His presentation was well received and several attendees went out of their way to express their impression of Brian's knowledge.

I would also like to thank Jessica Monahan, NACo's Associate Legislative Director, for her assistance and guidance during the preparation of the interim resolutions and special project.

View additional [Transportation Information](#).

2,417 emails received 866 sent.....

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### NACE Sponsors Lower Cost Delivery for Simple Projects Resolution



Working with NACE's Legislative Committee, Daniel Fedderly, Executive Director of the Wisconsin County Highway Association, and Richie Beyer, County Engineer of Elmore County, Alabama, sponsored a special project aimed at project streamlining.

NACE and NACo are proposing that a pilot program be developed with the Secretary of Transportation to select a number of **Locally-Administered Projects receiving \$5 million or less in federal funds** to study whether waiving or reducing federal requirements would reduce costs and expedite project delivery without significant risk.

This method would allow for a strategic partnership to identify the value of reducing or waiving regulatory requirements on projects with county government sponsors. This pilot program could potentially be accomplished in one of two manners. 1) NACo and NACE could directly engage the Secretary to enact a program through use of flexibilities in existing sections of Title 23 USC [106(g) 1A & 3, 109(2), 315, and 325(a) 1 & (c)]. 2) Or Include similar language as indicated below in perspective reauthorization legislation.

#### Narrowed Scope

The specific category of projects would be termed 'simple projects:' a highway, tunnel or bridge project eligible for funding under title 23, US Code, that meets the following criteria:

- 1) receives \$5 million or less in federal funding;
- 2) is a project type that is set out in 23 CFR Part 771.117(c) and/ or (d);
- 3) occurs within the existing right-of-way in a manner that substantially conforms to the preexisting design, function, and location as the original (which may include upgrades to meet existing codes and standards as well as upgrades warranted to address conditions that have changed since the original construction); and
- 4) involves the repair, reconstruction, restoration, retrofitting, or replacement of any road, highway, bridge, tunnel, or transit facility (such as a ferry dock or bus transfer station), including ancillary transportation facilities (such as pedestrian/bicycle paths and bike lanes), that is in operation.

The Secretary would establish and implement a pilot program to demonstrate whether waiving or reducing federal requirements for at least 10 locally administered simple projects could expedite project delivery and decrease project costs.

#### Project Selection

In selecting projects to participate in the program, the Secretary shall –

- 1) take into consideration geographic diversity;
- 2) take into consideration the local agency's experience in administering federal-aid projects; and
- 3) consult and coordinate with the National Association of County Engineers, the American Public Works Association, and other stakeholder groups as necessary.

#### Anatomy of the Pilot Program

Two certifications by the project sponsor (consisting of a letter) to the FHWA Division Administrator. These certifications would be:

- 1) Certification from the project sponsor that the project was developed and designed to the standards of the project sponsor, this would be local standards for local government agencies, and state standards for STD projects;
- 2) Certification from the STD or project sponsor that the project will be competitively bid in accordance with 23 CFR 635 Subpart A. The certification will be executed by the STD if the project is bid by the STD regardless of project sponsor. Conversely, projects to be bid by local government sponsors shall have their certification executed by the local sponsor.

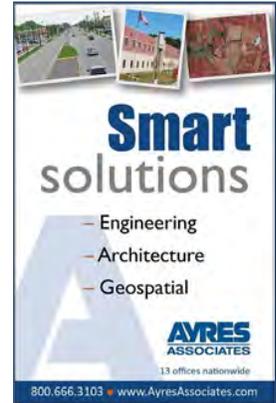
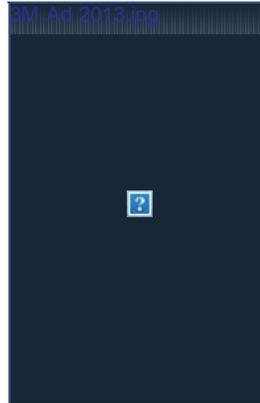
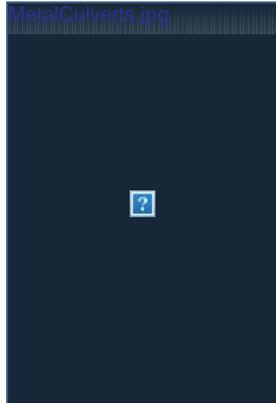
All simple projects that qualify for authorization under this proposal would not be subject to any additional review or requirements of any other federal agencies.

Additionally, project sponsors would have the same ability allowed under current regulations to request approval for force account construction.

### Report to Congress

The Secretary shall prepare a report in consultation with the National Association of County Engineers, the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, and other stakeholder groups to make recommendations to Congress based on the outcome of the pilot program.

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## February 2015

### Invite Your Commissioner or Supervisor

#### NACE Elected Officials Track on Transportation

#### Tuesday, April 21

Expo

Barefoot on the Beach Dinner / Dance



#### Wednesday, April 22

Transportation Sessions

Counties are vital in building and maintaining our Transportation and Infrastructure systems. You and your peers invest over \$100 billion annually in roads, bridges, transit, water systems, and other public facilities. A safe and efficient network, Transportation is fundamental for the economic growth and quality of life in your local communities.

Knowing this, NACo President Riki Hokama's (Maui County, Hawaii) top priority is his Transportation and Infrastructure Initiative. Specifically designed for Elected Officials, these sessions, part of the NACE Annual Conference, will provide you with relevant information to take back to your county. The Elected Officials Track is scheduled for April 22, but we welcome you to attend the entire conference to participate in the numerous relevant sessions and events.

#### [Schedule and Registration](#)

#### **Elected Officials' Sessions**

#### **General Session with NACo Legislative Update**

Highway Trust Fund Reauthorization, MAP-21 Road & Bridge Funding, Waters of the US, and other initiatives that affect counties.

#### **Toward Zero Deaths (TZD)—A National Strategy for Eliminating Highway Fatalities on Local Roads**

Nearly 33,000 lives are lost annually on the nation's highways. While these have declined, there is acknowledgement that even one fatality is too many.

#### **Infrastructure 101 for Elected Officials**

What do local officials need to know about types of bridges, bridge inspection requirements, replacement options, and pavement preservation options?

#### **USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Program and Funding Opportunities**

Local municipalities repair watershed impairments that have been caused by a natural disasters.

#### **Transportation Funding for Local Public Agencies**

Efficient infrastructure funding can vary, including the federal aid program and state "buyout" programs.

#### **Impacts of Advanced Vehicle Technology (V2V, V2I)**

Vehicle-to-vehicle or vehicle-to-infrastructure technologies will transform the way local entities operate and maintain transportation systems.

The registration fee of \$325 includes a Tuesday reception / dinner and Wednesday breakfast and lunch.

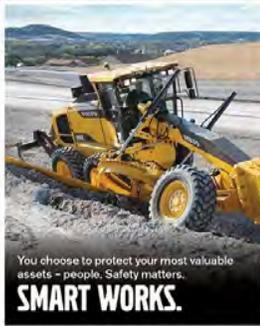
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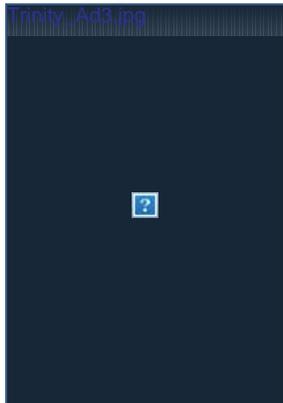
The American Traffic Safety Services Association (ATSSA) has released a new case-study publication, Preventing Vehicle Departures From Roadways.

NACE Executive Director Brian Roberts was part of a volunteer review team, made up of ATSSA members and industry representatives. Auburn University researched and created the publication, which was distributed by mail to all ATSSA members during their 2015 Annual Convention and Traffic Expo in February in Tampa, Fla.

The case studies are presented to prevent roadway departure crashes, which account for 56% of all motor vehicle crashes in this country. Countermeasures for these crashes are expanded into 14 brand new case studies grouped into 3 parts—signs, pavement safety and roadside design. A fourth part of the booklet covers funding for local safety projects.

These case studies are excellent talking points for visits to state and local authorities to assist them in making vital roadway safety decisions. Electronic copies of the new publication can be obtained by e-mailing ATSSA's Director of Communications James Baron at [james.baron@atssa.com](mailto:james.baron@atssa.com).

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### County Engineer / Public Works Director Roundtable

Please Take the Survey Below

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You are cordially invited to the ...

#### 2015 County Engineer / Public Works Director Roundtable

Tuesday, April 21

8:00 am – 10:00 am

Hilton Daytona Beach, Florida

Being a County Road Official in today's challenging times is a difficult feat. Unprecedented budget constraints plus a contentious political environment and a historically underfunded infrastructure is not exactly a recipe for success. Wouldn't it be nice to have a network of your peers to ask questions, share success, get advice and spread knowledge regarding all facets of your role as County Road Official?

How would you like to interact with hundreds of your peers from around the country and see what they are doing to succeed in 2015? Well we've got that covered! Oh yeah, and we're giving away an Apple Watch to one lucky County Engineer or Public Works Director!

Since we began this program, we've assisted directors in developing media materials to aid in educating elected officials and citizens, developing an industry survey for Public Works Directors, and discussing partnership efforts to make all departments more effective in providing services.

We will be streaming the discussion using the Roundtable Twitter handle [@PWDRoundtable](#), so follow us get the most out of the session.

Please [Take the Survey](#) before joining us in Daytona Beach. It will help make the session more valuable, informative and participatory. Your time is valuable, so we've kept it short. Then be ready to WATCH the magic on April 21!

If you still need to register for the 2015 Joint Expo & Conference, [Visit our Site](#).

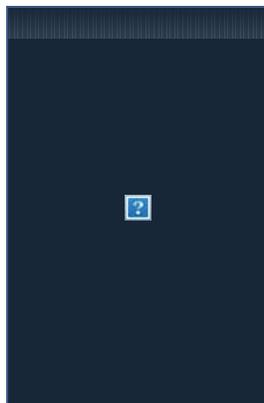
If you have questions about the Roundtable, please contact Chris at [chrise@apwafloida.com](mailto:chrise@apwafloida.com) or 727-638-1699. Looking forward to a great event!

Cordially,

Ramon Gavarrete, PE - NACE President

Chris Evers - Florida Chapter APWA Past President

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### NACE Participates in NACo Legislative Conference

By George Webb, PE  
Palm Beach County, Florida



I had the pleasure to represent NACE at the Annual NACo Legislative Conference on February 20-24 in Washington, DC. President Ricky Hokama (Maui County, Hawaii) continued his push to make Transportation and Infrastructure the number one priority.

General Session speakers included Vice President Joe Biden and House Transportation and Infrastructure Chair Rep. Bill Shuster (R-Penn.) A special briefing, **The Road Ahead for County Infrastructure: County Priorities for Transportation and Infrastructure Funding and Financing**, was held on Capitol Hill. Several Members of Congress spoke on what they believed might, and should, happen over the next few months.

Representatives and Senators were visited by NACo and NACE representatives throughout the conference. It was apparent to me after hearing directly from our electeds and from those who visited theirs, that what we have read about the reauthorization is true—there is absolutely no consensus on what will happen. The sense is another short term extension (6 months? 9 months?) will address the May 31 Trust Fund shortfall instead of a new full bill.

House and Senate staffers are separately working on drafts of new reauthorization language. One of the better stories involves the staff leader whose baby is due shortly—so she has made this an absolute priority to get a draft out prior to her baby being born!

One office says that the President's proposal to have a one-time tax on foreign investments has a chance of passing and providing the needed funding for a 6 year bill. Then the next office says that just won't happen. The next office supports increasing the gas tax as the easiest short term fix. But a member of the House Budget Committee says it will never pass.

What you do hear though is consensus that funding needs to be found and our failing infrastructure needs to be improved. How to accomplish that still seems to be far away.

Other business that wasn't transportation related included a presentation to NACo's Board of Directors on the current voting power of small versus large counties. They also discussed new rules for candidates for NACo offices (particularly the office of Second Vice President): potential restrictions on deadlines for announcing and campaign spending. Both issues will be back for consideration at future meetings.

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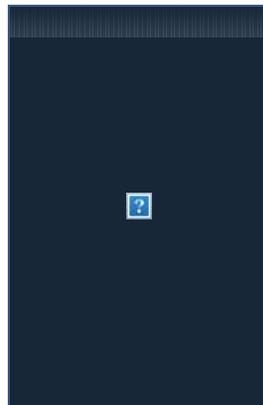


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### New! Manual for High Risk Rural Roads' Safety Improvements

By: James Dahlem, FHWA Office of Safety

Horizontal Curves
Intersections (Signalized)
Intersections (Unsignalized)
Non-Motorized Clear
Pavement and Shoulder Resurfacing
Pavement Marking
Roadside
Signing
Vertical Curves
Other Treatments

State and local agencies face significant safety challenges on rural collectors and rural local roads, where the fatality rate is nearly 2.5 times as high as the urban fatality rate. According to NHTSA, in 2012 the rural fatality rate was 1.84 per 100 million vehicle miles traveled (VMT), while the urban fatality rate was 0.77 per 100 million VMT. However, the majority of rural roadways are owned by local agencies with limited funding and expertise to solve safety issues on these roadways.

The FHWA Office of Safety is committed to reducing crashes and saving lives on these high risk rural roads. As part of this effort, FHWA has released a new resource to assist State and local transportation agencies in selecting and comparing safety treatments: the Manual for Selecting Safety Improvements on High Risk Rural Roads.

This manual allows users to quickly identify and compare cost-effective proven infrastructure treatments to address crash problems on these rural roadways. Based on research into State, local, and tribal agencies' noteworthy practices, the manual provides ...

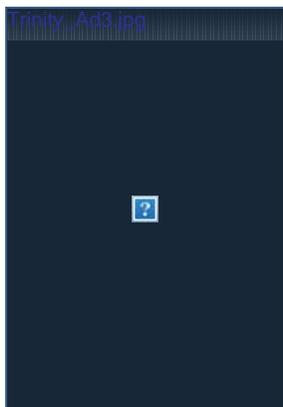
- \* Where treatments may be most effectively used,
- \* Information on each treatment's safety benefits,
- \* Information on both initial costs and recurring maintenance costs, and
- \* Benefit-cost ratio when used on specified functional classifications.

The manual is organized into categories by roadway feature and is color-coded throughout to aid in navigation. A matrix in each category section helps users narrow the possibilities based on criteria specific to an agency's needs and available resources. The manual also covers safety program management, potential funding sources and processes, and decision-making tools. A matrix at the beginning of each section provides a quick reference on the costs and benefits for each treatment to quickly identify a few potential countermeasures that can be compared in greater detail in the manual.

Color-coded and tabbed sections allow a user to quickly jump to the section of the manual that describes treatments for each of the roadway feature types.

View the [HRRR Safety Manual](#)

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### April is National County Government Month



This year's theme:

### Counties Moving America Forward: The Keys are Transportation and Infrastructure

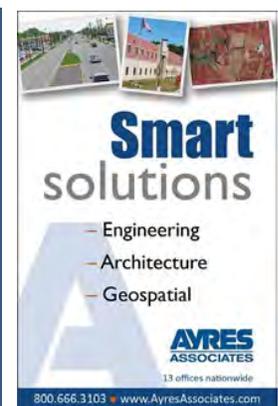
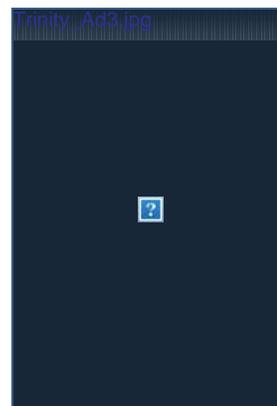
This is the focus of NACo President Riki Hokama's presidential initiative.

NCGM presents an opportunity to highlight key transportation projects like new bridges, roads, resurfacing projects or other infrastructure work. You can also highlight infrastructure projects which you fund.

Use other examples to show how your county plays a central role in your community and helps "move America forward." Counties participate in NCGM by hosting a variety of community outreach events and activities, including tours of county facilities, recognition ceremonies for volunteers and county employees, outreach on county services and programs, sponsoring student essay or art contests and adopting resolutions.

Start planning your NCGM activities today! To help with this, NACo has created a [NCGM Resource Site](#) that includes ideas and suggestions to raise awareness about the vital programs and services you provide to the residents of your county.

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## February 2015

### Capitol Hill Update

- **Lawmakers Call for Lasting Highway Bill**
- **Tax Reform for Infrastructure**

#### House Lawmakers: End the Uncertainty for Highway Funding

By David Tanner, Land Line Senior Editor

With a May 31 deadline approaching to extend the life of the Highway Trust Fund, a large group of US representatives believes it's time to pass a lasting highway bill and end the short-term extensions. A bipartisan letter addressed to House Speaker John Boehner (R-Ohio) and Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) contains signatures from 284 representatives led by Republicans Reid Ribble of Wisconsin and Tom Reed of New York and Democrats Dan Lipinski of Illinois and Bill Pascrell Jr. of New Jersey.

"Very simply, we support transportation and infrastructure investment because our economy needs a national system to safely move people and deliver goods from place to place," the letter reads. "Our constituents in the manufacturing, construction, agriculture, energy, and distribution sectors rely heavily on our network of roads and bridges to move the products that make us competitive around the globe." The current highway bill, Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century, became law in 2012 and technically expired in September 2014.

Congress passed an 8 month extension that lasted through election season and into the new Congress. The lawmakers say more short-term extensions only lead to uncertainty as states plan their transportation budgets. "We are united in our conviction that now is the time to end the cycle of short-term extensions that kick the can down the road by doing the work needed to pass a multi-year surface transportation authorization bill," they wrote.

"To make this happen, we support efforts to develop a long-term sustainable revenue source for our nation's transportation network as soon as possible. Otherwise, we will not be able to enact a transportation bill that truly meets our country's economic and infrastructure needs."

The letter does not say exactly how a long-term transportation bill—traditionally 5 or 6 years in duration—should be paid for. Some lawmakers and the White House have floated a plan that uses tax reforms to send more money to transportation. Others have suggested raising fuel taxes, while some have suggested public-private partnerships, tolling, or using proceeds from oil and gas drilling.

*Reprinted from Land Line magazine, February 24 issue.*



#### How Big Does Tax Reform Have to Go for Infrastructure?

By Fawn Johnson, National Journal

John Thune wants a long-term surface transportation bill. Paul Ryan wants comprehensive tax reform. Both powerful Republicans in Congress see the potential for marrying the two, and both realize the window for such an ambitious legislative proposal is short. Basically, we have until August.

Ryan, who chairs the House Ways and Means Committee, recently said that comprehensive tax reform was the "only way" that the Highway Trust Fund could see an influx of cash that would keep it afloat for five or six years. That's a heavy lift for a Congress that has done almost nothing in the last two years.

The good news is that Democrats, including the White House, are on board with the idea of reworking overseas tax laws to give the Highway Trust Fund a hefty onetime boost. Vice President Joe Biden and Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx took a bus tour through the South promoting the White House's proposal for a \$478 billion surface transportation bill that would be funded through repatriation at a 14 percent tax rate.

Policymakers seem to be coalescing around this idea. The only question is whether overseas repatriation—President Obama's proposal or other versions floating around Capitol Hill—must be part of a bigger and more complex tax bill. Thune, the No. 3 Republican in the Senate, said in a recent interview with National Journal that lawmakers are unlikely to find their way to a comprehensive tax deal by May 31, when the Highway Trust Fund runs out. "If I were a betting man and I was putting odds on this, where this ends up is we probably end up doing some sort of a onetime repatriation and fund that way,"

he said.

That would be a pretty big deal in its own right, considering we haven't seen a long-term surface transportation bill since 2005. But Thune is also worried that the repatriation-for-infrastructure idea, as attractive as it may be, could thwart broader tax reform. "It's a temporary thing, and you're giving up something that's really important to doing comprehensive tax reform," he said.

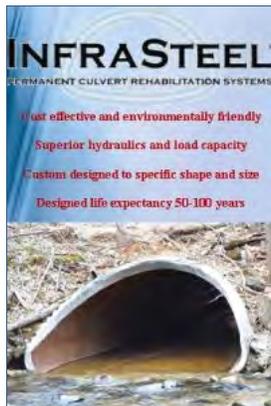
It goes like this: In order to get the rate reductions that Republicans want, international taxation needs to move to a "territorial system" that doesn't tax U.S. corporations on foreign earnings and, more importantly, doesn't allow them to exempt foreign expenses. It's a fairer, easier system, and it gives companies the incentive to move money back into the United States. The Joint Committee on Taxation says the shift could bring in more than \$70 billion over 10 years, a good chunk of change to cover the cost of lowering marginal rates.

But if lawmakers decide to tweak only the repatriation system by allowing companies to bring foreign earnings back in to the United States for a discounted price, that eliminates a big incentive (and revenue raiser) for moving to a territorial system and overall tax reform. Yes, repatriation would fund infrastructure well into the next election cycle, a welcome relief to state transportation departments and lawmakers who probably getting sick of the perennial "highway cliff." But is that trade-off worth it to people like Ryan, who want big tax reform more than the presidency?

For our insiders: What is the impact of tax and infrastructure being discussed in the same policy circles? How different is this debate from previous tax and/or transportation debates? Is Thune right that only repatriation is a reasonable expectation for this year? What else should policymakers be thinking about other than the immediate pay-for of a highway bill? Are we looking at another short-term extension of the Highway Trust Fund?

*Reprinted from National Journal, February 22 issue.*

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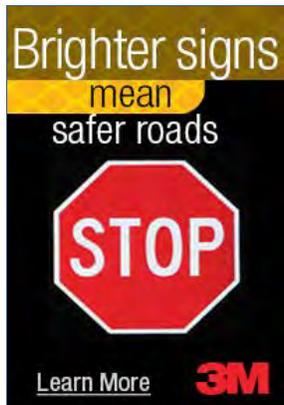
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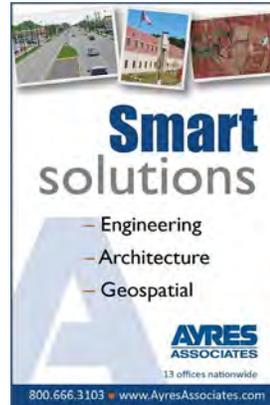
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### Evaluation of Dynamic Speed Feedback Signs on Curves



FHWA released in January a new publication, Evaluation of Dynamic Speed Feedback Signs on Curves: A National Demonstration Project.

Each year, more than 13,000 people are killed in speeding-related crashes. The majority occurs on local streets and collector roads, having the highest speeding-related fatality rate on a per vehicle miles driven basis. The challenge facing safety professionals is to design roadways so that drivers better understand the nature of the roadway and adjust their speed appropriately.

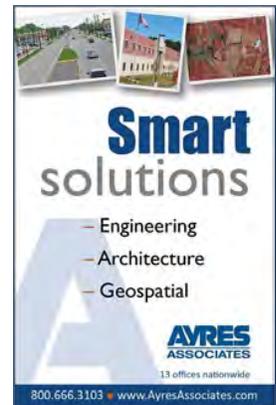
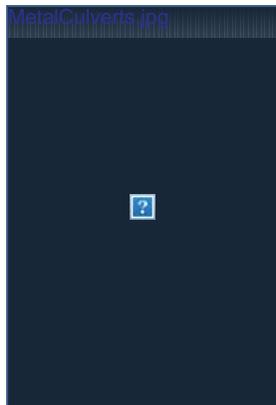
This report addresses treatments that can potentially reduce speeds and speeding-related crash risks on rural horizontal curves. This report describes the effectiveness of dynamic signs that alert drivers to changes in roadway conditions and that provide those drivers with recommended speeds to safely negotiate a curve. The effectiveness of these signs was determined based on

field analysis in 22 locations.

[View the Document.](#)

It appears based on the summary information that dynamic speed feedback signs have an overall crash reduction factor of 5-7%. Of note is that the top end speeds (e.g., those in excess of the 85%) show significant reductions when averaged across all 22 test sites (page 6).

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## February 2015

### NACo Releases Video at 2015 Legislative Conference

More than 1,500 county officials were in Washington, DC, to meet with members of the Administration and Congress on key issues like transportation, municipal bonds, the environment and public lands as part of NACo's Annual Legislative Conference Feb. 21–25. They took their message to Congress and the White House emphasizing that federal policies matter to county government and county government matters to America.

"Counties and residents feel the effects of countless decisions made in Washington," said NACo President Riki Hokama, council member, Maui County, Hawaii. "We are here to work with our federal partners since their actions profoundly impact everyday Americans on the ground, where they live and work."

Vice President Joe Biden, who began his political career as a New Castle County, Del. councilmember, is slated to address conference attendees on Feb. 23. In meetings with lawmakers and Administration officials, county leaders outlined a number of key federal policy priorities for counties including:

- preserving the tax-exempt status of municipal bonds
- fixing the Highway Trust Fund and passing a long-term surface transportation authorization bill
- ensuring full funding for the Payment in Lieu of Taxes and Secure Rural Schools programs
- enabling counties to collect existing sales taxes on remote and online sales
- creating a clear, workable definition of "waters of the U.S."
- protecting the federal-state-local partnership for Medicaid, and
- supporting comprehensive immigration reform.

Other members of the Obama Administration scheduled to speak included Secretary of Labor Thomas E. Perez; Jerry Abramson, Director of the White House Office of Intergovernmental Affairs; Michael Botticelli, Director of the White House Office of National Drug Policy; and US Trade Ambassador Michael Froman. Members of Congress were expected to include House Committee on Natural Resources Chairman Rob Bishop (R-Utah) and House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman Bill Shuster (R-Penn.).

NACo held special Capitol Hill briefings on transportation, municipal financing, and Medicaid, as well as an awards reception honoring House and Senate county alumni. NACo also launched a new online video describing top federal policy priorities and why they matter to counties and residents. "Decisions made by the White House, Congress and federal courts have a major, cascading impact on our ability to lead our communities and pursue a better future," the video states.

Rounding out the schedule were more than two-dozen educational workshops featuring county officials and other leaders in the public, private and nonprofit sectors. They focused on topics such as workforce and economic development; transportation and infrastructure; public health and safety; mental health and jails; and cybersecurity and technology.



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### April is Distracted Driving Awareness Month

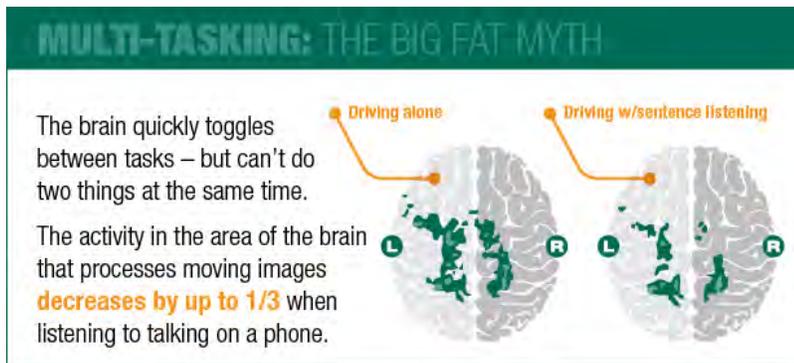


The campaign is promoted by the National Safety Council. What are the leading concerns? According to Injury Facts 2014, the Council's annual report on unintentional injuries, the 3 biggest causes of fatalities on the road include:

- Alcohol (30.8%)
- Speeding (30%)
- Distracted driving (26%)

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### Submit for the 2015 National Roadway Safety Awards



The biennial program is jointly sponsored to recognize exemplary roadway safety projects. Judges will evaluate nominations based on effectiveness, innovation, and efficient use of resources in 2 categories:

- Infrastructure and Operational Improvements
- Program Planning, Development, and Evaluation

View the applications and [further information](#).

Read about the 2013 National Roadway Safety Award [Winners](#).

The deadline for receipt of applications is May 15, 2015.

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### Raising Gas Taxes Gets Bipartisan Boost from Governors

By Daniel Vock, Governing



Increasing the gas tax may not happen anytime soon in Congress, but it is gaining traction in more than a dozen state capitols this year.

Many governors made finding new money for roads and other infrastructure a major priority in the early months of this year's legislative sessions, even if that means increasing fuel taxes. Both Democrats and Republicans say spending more money on roads could spur local economies at a time when federal funds are sparse, gas is cheap, interest rates are low and re-election campaigns are a long way off.

Nationally, 20% of highway miles are in need of resurfacing or reconstruction, while nearly a quarter of bridges are structurally deficient, according to the FHWA.

South Dakota Gov. Dennis Daugaard presented one of the most detailed plans for raising transportation funds. His plan would include hiking the state's vehicle excise tax and increasing the motor fuel tax by 2 cents a gallon every year. "No one wants to raise taxes less than I do," the Republican governor said. But "there is a difference between being cheap and being frugal. A cheap person refuses to spend money even when it would be wise to do so. A frugal person is careful with money but understands that sometimes spending in the short run is smart and saves money in the long run."

Other governors stressed the need for more money but did not specify where to get it. "I am not going to stand here and tell you how to swallow this elephant," Idaho Gov. Butch Otter told lawmakers. "But we all know it must be done." Leadership from governors is important to getting legislators to find more transportation money, said Sean Slone, a transportation analyst for the Council of State Governments. Increasingly, he said, governors and legislative leaders are talking about raising the per-gallon taxes, despite the potential political trouble that would bring. "Straight-up gas taxes are more in vogue this year than they have been in the last couple of years," Slone said.

Carl Davis, a senior analyst at the Institute of Taxation and Economic Policy, a liberal group that focuses on tax fairness and sustainability, said as many as 12 states could pass gas tax increases this year. Those include Georgia, Idaho, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New Jersey, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Utah and Washington. Minnesota Gov. Mark Dayton, a Democrat, wants to add a 6.5% tax on wholesale purchases of gasoline. South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley, a Republican, proposed raising gas taxes by 10 cents a gallon, but only if it were tied to an overall reduction in the state's income tax.

Iowa Gov. Terry Branstad has stressed the need for increased spending on infrastructure, as state lawmakers craft a funding bill that is expected to come with a 10-cent per gallon tax increase. The fact that so many governors are promoting infrastructure projects is a good sign for efforts in those states, said CSG's Slone. But governors can stymie those efforts as well. New Jersey's transportation trust fund could run out of money as soon as July, but Gov. Chris Christie has been reluctant to back a new gas tax to replenish the account, adding uncertainty to the fund's future.

Newly inaugurated Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan, a Republican, wants to repeal the automatic increases in the state gas tax signed by his Democratic predecessor. "Marylanders deserve the transparency to know how their elected leaders vote every time the state takes a bigger share of their hard-earned dollars. This is a regressive tax that hurts struggling Maryland families and our most vulnerable, and which adds to the cost of almost everything," Hogan said.

The repeal effort is a long shot in a legislature controlled by the same Democrats who passed the escalating tax two years ago. But the idea proved popular in Massachusetts, another state where Democrats dominate the legislature but where voters rolled back annual gas tax increases in last November's election. States are feeling the effects of other ballot measures from last fall. Connecticut Gov. Dannel Malloy, a Democrat, called for more transportation money, but only if that money is protected from being raided for other uses. The "lockbox" idea is similar to changes approved by voters in Maryland and Wisconsin last year.

Voters' rejection in August of a ballot measure to raise the sales tax to improve Missouri roads means the state won't have enough money to match incoming federal funds by 2017, Missouri Gov. Jay Nixon, a Democrat, warned legislators. He urged them to consider adding tolls to Interstate 70 and increasing the gas tax. Both ideas have long been unpopular in the Republican-led legislature there.

Many state leaders are worried that federal funding is unreliable, too. Congress hasn't raised the federal gas tax since 1993, and it's been unable to cobble together a long-term transportation law since the last one expired in September 2009. The most recent extension only runs through May. Many of the states looking at making their own spending increases have been discussing the issue for years. Special commissions have studied funding options in Georgia, Louisiana, South Dakota and Wisconsin.

ITEP's Davis also credited falling gas prices for putting fuel tax increases on legislative agendas this year. "These discussions have been on the table for years," he said. "The fact that gas prices have come down just makes it a little more politically palatable to deal with problems we've had for a long, long time now."

*Reprinted from Governing magazine, February 9 issue.*

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### Pedestrian Fatalities Remain High in 2014

States Employ Engineering, Education & Enforcement to Prevent Crashes and Save Lives

By Governors Highway Safety Association



The number of pedestrians killed on U.S. roadways last year is expected to remain relatively unchanged from 2013 and approximately 15% higher than it was in 2009. Spotlight on Highway Safety: Pedestrian Traffic Fatalities by State is the first look at 2014 pedestrian fatality data. Released by the Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA), the report stresses the need for continued vigilance as more Americans continue to choose walking as their preferred mode of transportation.

Using preliminary data provided by the 50 State Highway Safety Offices and the District of Columbia, Dr. Allan Williams, former chief scientist at the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, compared the number of pedestrian fatalities from the first six months of 2013 and 2014. Although the preliminary data indicate a slight (2.8%) decrease, after factoring in expected undercounting, Williams estimates that 2,125 pedestrians were killed in the first half of 2014, essentially unchanged when compared with the 2,141 pedestrian fatalities during the same period in 2013.

"This is a clearly a good news, bad news scenario," said Jonathan Adkins, GHSA Executive Director. "While we're encouraged that pedestrian fatalities haven't increased over the past two years, progress has been slow. Protecting pedestrians is a priority for GHSA and our members; we're determined to drive the number down to zero."

Making sustained strides in pedestrian safety has been challenging, according to Dr. Williams. "Pedestrian deaths declined steeply from 7,516 in 1975 to 4,735 in 2013. But when you consider the percentage of pedestrians killed in all motor vehicle crashes, the gains are less pronounced. The rate was 17% in the late 1970s and early 1980s. It fell to a low of 11% in the past decade, but climbed back to 14% in 2013."

Dr. Williams pointed out that states with the most fatalities are primarily large-population states with large urban centers. Four states - California, Florida, Texas, and New York - accounted for 43% of all pedestrians deaths in 2013. Delaware and Florida had the highest rates of pedestrian deaths per 100,000 residents, at 2.70 and 2.56, respectively. In the District of Columbia, pedestrians account for the highest %age of all motor vehicle deaths (45%), followed by New York (28%), Nevada (25%), and Delaware (25%).

The findings, however, do offer some promise. 24 states and the District of Columbia had decreases in pedestrian fatalities in the first half of 2014, compared with the same period in 2013, while 5 remained the same. 16 states had nine or fewer pedestrian fatalities, with Wyoming and Nebraska each reporting just 1.

Also encouraging is the substantial reduction in pedestrian fatalities involving the elderly and children. While pedestrians 70 and older have always had the highest per capita crash rate of any age group, that number dropped from 9.3 in 1975 to 2.2 in 2013. Meanwhile, in 1975 nearly one in four pedestrian deaths (21%) involved a child between 0 and 12 years of age; that rate fell to 4% in 2013.

What is troubling is the 28 percentage point surge in deaths involving pedestrians ages 20 to 69 over this same period. Additionally, about 70% of pedestrians killed in motor vehicle crashes are males, many of whom are struck at night and in the fall and winter months. Alcohol is also a factor in many of these fatal crashes. In 2013, more than a third (36%) of pedestrians 16 and older involved in fatal crashes had blood alcohol concentrations of .08 or higher. Distraction may play a role as well, since there is some evidence from FARS and emergency room data that both distracted driving and walking are contributing increasingly to pedestrian injuries and fatalities.

To combat the problem, states are using a combination of engineering, education and enforcement solutions. For example, California is distributing a "how to" guide to help communities address pedestrian safety using social norming principles. At high-risk intersections in Pennsylvania, specially identified crossing guards are educating pedestrians of all ages about safe crossing practices, while police officers in Delaware are participating in education patrols: violators are stopped, educated and, in some cases, given items to increase their visibility.

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## Current Issue

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- NACE Participates in Crash Study Review
- NACE Introduces Project Streamlining Resolution
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- Free Webinar on Road Diets

## February 2015

### Free Webinar on the Road Diet Guide



FHWA's Office of Safety

### An Introduction to the Road Diet Informational Guide

March 3, 2015

1:00 pm – 2:30 pm EST

In November 2014, FHWA published the Road Diet Informational Guide to help communities understand Road Diets and their numerous benefits to all roadway users. This webinar will provide an overview of the new guide and the basics of Road Diets. Participants will learn about the various safety and operational benefits of Road Diets and how to determine if they may be helpful in their location.

Keith Knapp, PhD, PE (Iowa Local Technical Assistance Program) and Brian Chandler, PE, PTOE (Leidos) were part of a team of practitioners who developed the guide and will serve as panelists for this webinar. The session will provide an overview of the new guide and the basics of Road Diets.

If you have questions or need assistance in registering, contact Jennifer Symoun at [jennifer.e.symoun@leidos.com](mailto:jennifer.e.symoun@leidos.com).

\* Please note that PDH Credits are not offered for this web conference.\*

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