

**From:** [Anthony R. Giancola](#)  
**Subject:** NACE Alert and Update  
**Date:** Thursday, August 20, 2009 2:31:24 PM  
**Attachments:** [T+I Committee Roster.pdf](#)

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## NACE UPDATE

The almost bi-weekly newsletter for Board members, Committee Chairs, and Members  
August 20, 2009- Volume 09 Number 21

(Note: Sources of information include the AASHTO Journal, NACo staff, Senate and House publications, the Federal Highway Administration, and other association news journals)

### **NACE Alert! Action Needed During August Recess: Urge Continuation of Off-System Bridge Program**

Legislation to reauthorize the federal highway and transit programs has been put forward by the leadership of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. Under this proposed legislation, the Off-System Bridge program would no longer exist due to the elimination of the Federal Bridge program. **A substantial portion of the off-system set aside goes to improving and replacing county-owned bridges. We strongly urge you to contact Members of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee during the August recess and tell them to continue to provide for an Off-System Bridge program. We recommend you do this in-person with the Member or by calling their offices at (202) 225-3121 and asking to speak with the Transportation staff person.**

#### Background

NACo and NACE would like to see off-system bridge funding continue to be available through the reauthorization legislation and we believe there are ways to do so. This 15% set aside requirement for bridges not on the federal-aid system has been in place since 1978 and has been of substantial help to county governments. In FY09, about \$645 million of the \$4.3 billion federal bridge program must be spent on off-system bridges.

#### Talking Points

- These are the bridges that serve the agriculture, tourism, mining and logging industries.
- They carry thousands of school buses each day and are used by fire trucks and other emergency vehicles serving rural regions.
- A closed or weight-posted bridge can severely impact the economy of a rural community and affect the lives of the residents.
- School buses that must detour miles around an unsafe bridge and vehicles that are denied the most direct access to a community's agricultural processing plant hurt local economies, even more so in our current economic crisis.
- The off-system bridge programs works: According a recent U.S. Government Accountancy Office report on the Highway Bridge Program, "Improvements were most notable in bridges owned by **local agencies** and on **rural routes**, which may be attributable, in part, to the federal bridge program requirement—under HBP and some of its predecessor programs—that states spend a minimum amount of their apportionment on non-Federal-aid highway bridges."

Attached to this e-mail is a list of the member of the House T+I committee. If you have any questions, feel free to Bob Fogel at 202/942-4217 or Tony Giancola at 202/393-5041.

**View NACE member and NACo Highway – Highway Safety Subcommittee Chair Dan Fedderly’s Presentation To Congressional Staff on Our Local Roads Matter website!**

Dan Fedderly, Executive Director Wisconsin County Highway Association, Dunn County Supervisor and former Wisconsin County Highway Superintendent presented the “rural county” view in a briefing to Congressional Staffers for the National Association of Counties. To view his presentation visit the NACE Local Roads Matter Campaign site <http://countyengineers...org/LRM/index.html> or click on the Local Roads Matter button on the left side of this page. Then click on the Social Media Center.

**REMEMBER OCTOBER 10<sup>th</sup> is “PUT THE BRAKES ON FATALITIES DAY”**

The annual campaign is gearing up. For the latest information on what you can do visit the PTBF day website at [www.brakesonfatalities.org](http://www.brakesonfatalities.org)

**Bergquist Testifies at Senate Field Hearing in South Dakota**

South Dakota Transportation Secretary Darin Bergquist told the U.S. Senate Surface Transportation and Merchant Marine Infrastructure, Safety, and Security Subcommittee on Monday that rural states must receive a significant increase in federal transportation funding and participate at least proportionately in future growth of the federal highway and surface transportation programs.

The subcommittee -- part of the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee - held the field hearing Monday on "Addressing Surface Transportation Needs in Rural America" at City Hall in Sioux Falls, SD. The hearing was chaired by Sen. John Thune, R-SD and the subcommittee's ranking minority member.

"I want to stress that federal investment in South Dakota's highways is in the national interest," Bergquist told the subcommittee. "It is imperative that legislation reauthorizing the federal highway program continues to provide significant investments in highways in and across rural states, allowing us to continue to meet the demands being placed on our highway network, including from interstate travel."

Federal-aid highways in South Dakota, not just those on the National Highway System, provide many benefits, he said. Among other things, they:

1. Serve as a bridge for truck and personal traffic between other states, advancing interstate commerce and mobility
2. Support agricultural exports and serve the nation's ethanol production and energy industries, which are located largely in rural areas
3. Are a lifeline for remotely located and economically challenged citizens, such as those living on tribal reservations
4. Enable people and freight to traverse the vast tracts of sparsely populated land that are a major characteristic of the western United States
5. Provide access to scenic wonders and facilitate tourism

Regarding rural transit service, Bergquist said federal investment helps ensure personal mobility, especially for senior citizens and people with disabilities, connecting them to necessary services. Federal public transit programs must continue to include funding for rural states, he said, and not focus entirely on large metropolitan areas.

Bergquist expressed support for AASHTO's surface transportation authorization recommendations of \$375 billion in federal highway program funding and \$93 billion in

federal transit funding for the six-year period from 2010 to 2015. These levels would represent significant increases over the roughly \$290 billion in federal funds provided for highway, transit, and safety programs in the 2004 to 2009 period. He also stressed rural states must receive at least their current overall share of federal formula and other program funding, and emphasized that 90 percent of federal highway program funds should be distributed by formula.

Bergquist stressed five other key points in his testimony related to rural states' needs in a surface transportation authorization measure:

1. Don't put new restrictions on the use of federal funds
2. Transportation-related climate-change provisions, such as increasing walking and bicycling, might not make sense in rural states
3. Do not agree to increased regulation through national performance measures, targets, and plan approvals -- national performance measures should be general in nature and each state should be allowed to establish its own specific measures and targets
4. Highway safety provisions should provide flexibility to states
5. Do not agree to increased regulation that would significantly restrict state flexibility in project design and selection

### **President Signs Transportation Funding Rescue Bill; Treasury to Deposit \$7 Billion into HTF**

The White House announced on August 7<sup>th</sup> that President Barack Obama has signed into law a House bill that directs the U.S. Treasury Department to deposit \$7 billion into the Highway Trust Fund from the federal government's General Fund to ensure state transportation departments will continue receiving full reimbursements for federal-aid highway projects through September, the end of the current federal fiscal year.

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### **FY 2010 Transportation Spending Bill Sent to Senate Floor**

On Thursday, July 30, the Senate Appropriations Committee passed the Transportation-Housing and Urban Development Spending bill and sent it to the Senate floor for consideration. The transportation portion includes \$42.5 billion for highway construction and \$1.1 billion for significant transportation projects. After the August recess, the Senate will vote on the appropriations bill and will then have to go to Conference Committee with the House of Representatives in order to find common ground on the measure.

### **T&I Committee to Mark Up Bill Immediately After Recess**

Appearing at an economic recovery news conference last Wednesday in Minnesota, House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman James Oberstar said he will hold a full committee mark-up of a \$500 billion, six-year federal surface transportation authorization the week of Labor Day, when Congress returns from its summer recess.

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### **Federal Funding Available for Training**

Section 5204(e) of SAFETEA-LU provides authority for states to use funds from five primary core programs to support training, education and workforce development. This funding can be utilized to receive ATSSA training - specifically the roadway safety industry's two leading courses - the ATSSA Traffic Control Technician and the ATSSA Traffic Control Supervisors courses. Nearly 40 state DOTs are taking advantage of these available funds to ensure their workers receive roadway safety training. Each state has a state-specific method of accessing the funds that are available. [Click here](#) to be transported to a SAFETEA-LU Q&A page that specifically addresses guidance for the "Use of Federal Aid State Core

Program Funds for Training, Education and Workforce Development SAFETEA-LU Section 5204(e)."

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### **Utilizing ARRA Funds - The Best, The Worst Performing States**

(source ATSSA Flash Report)

In letters sent on August 6, Rep. James L. Oberstar (D-MN), Chairman of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, notified the three states that have best utilized highway funding under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (P.L. 111-5, Recovery Act), as well as the three worst-performing states. The rankings were based on State Progress Reports submitted by all 50 states and the District of Columbia to the Committee in July 2009. To view the press release and the letters, [click here](#).

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### **Visit the FHWA Local and Rural Roads Safety Program Website**

[http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/local\\_rural/](http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/local_rural/)

This website hosts a wealth of information for County Road professionals to assist them in crafting and implementing safety programs in their counties. It is worth a visit to view the many guides and publications, statistics, and policies that are available.

### **Review of Federal-Aid Highways**

The U.S. Government Accountability Office has released a report that explores the Federal Highway Administration's management of several requirements listed in the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users. [\[More\]](#)

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### **Support by State Departments of Transportation for Local Agency Safety Initiatives**

The Institute for Transportation at Iowa State University has released a report that explores initiatives by state departments of transportation designed to assist local agencies in identifying and addressing safety needs on rural roads and urban streets. [\[More\]](#)

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### **Join us September 21-23, 2009 in Orlando for the Southeast Road Safety Audit (RSA) Forum and Road Safety Audits for Local Governments Workshop**

The Southeast Road Safety Audit (RSA) Forum and Road Safety Audits for Local Governments Workshop are Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)-sponsored events held in conjunction with Florida's quarterly Community Traffic Safety Team (CTST) Coalition Meeting which is supported by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT). The first 100 registrants for the Southeast Road Safety Audit Forum will receive an RSA t-shirt and RSA tote bag.

[Southeast Road Safety Audit Forum](http://t2.ce.ufl.edu/workshops..asp?workshop=RSAF) <http://t2.ce.ufl.edu/workshops..asp?workshop=RSAF><http://t.ymlp39.com/ebhadaesmakaesebagausbbsb/click..php>

The Forum will focus on common emphasis areas among the states including current progress, RSA success stories from around the country, and ways to advance implementation of RSAs in the southeast region. This Forum will also serve as a peer exchange among the participating states to facilitate discussion and highlight successful RSA programs and policies. A small registration fee of \$75 covers materials, breaks and breakfast. RSA Forum topics include:

- . An Overview of RSAs
- . Implementation of RSAs in Florida

- . State and Local RSA Programs
- . RSA Findings, Pedestrian RSAs
- . Engaging Law Enforcement in RSAs
- . RSA Conversation Circles

See full agenda at

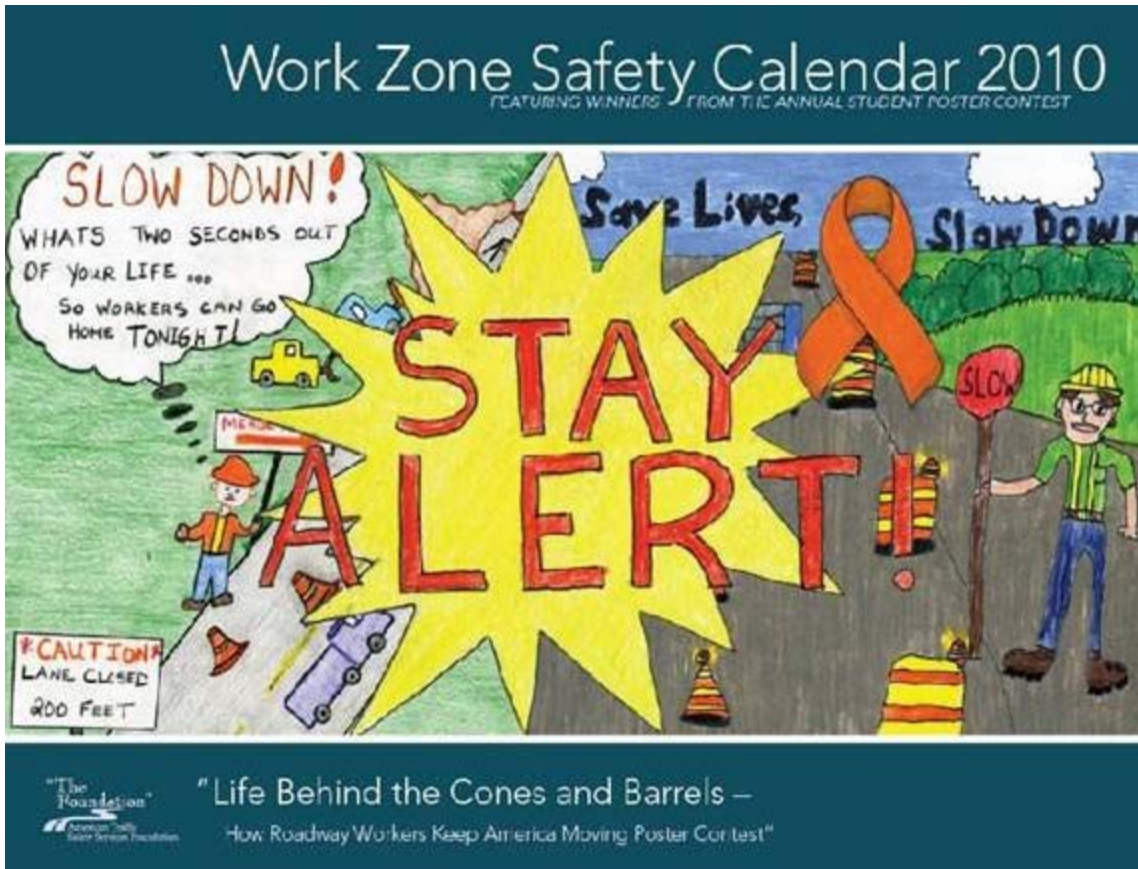
<http://t2.ce.ufl.edu/workshops/agendas/RSAF.pdf>

Road Safety Audits for Local Governments Workshop

<http://t2.ce.ufl.edu/workshops.asp?workshop=RSA1>

This free, optional workshop requires separate registration and immediately follows the Coalition and Forum. The workshop introduces local road agency professionals to RSAs as an effective tool to reduce injuries and fatalities. The training includes basic road safety audit concepts, risk and safety, common issues, and demonstrates how low cost safety improvements can be implemented quickly on any road network. Participants will gain experience in conducting a Road Safety Audit. Road Safety Audit Forum Schedule

Register for one or both events by clicking on the links above or by calling 352.273.1675. For information about the Community Traffic Safety Team (CTST) Coalition to be held Monday morning prior to the start of the SE RSA Forum, contact Sheryl Bradley at 407.246.2814.



**Order Now**

The American Traffic Safety Services Foundation is proud to feature the winners

of this year's poster contest in the all-new 2010 Work Zone Safety Calendar. Discover how children from communities across the country spread the message that "Safer Roads Safe Lives." [Click here](#) to order your 2010 Work Zone Safety Calendars.

Please contact Lori Wilcox at 800-272-8772  
or [lori.wilcox@atssa.com](mailto:lori.wilcox@atssa.com) to place your order.

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