



# COUNTY ENGINEERS ASSOCIATION OF CALIFORNIA



September 3, 2009

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The Honorable Sam Blakeslee  
Minority Leader  
California State Assembly  
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## Re: Thank You for Saving Vital Local Gas Tax Revenues in the State Budget

The County Engineers Association of California (CEAC), representing all 58 California county public works directors, engineers, and staff, would like to thank you and your colleagues in the Assembly Republican Caucus for your integral role in stopping the proposed cuts to the local gas tax, or the Highway User Tax Account (HUTA), contained in ABX4 24 and ABX4 30 during the state budget revisions enacted in July 2009. Retaining these funds for counties saved over 4,000 county public works jobs that would have been lost during the worst economic era this state and our nation has experienced in decades. Moreover, taking HUTA funds from local governments would have also resulted in additional lay-offs in other county departments, cities and the private sector.

Your work to save local HUTA funds in the budget will also help keep the traveling public safe and keep our economy moving in the right direction. A loss of HUTA funds in the magnitude that was being considered by the Legislature would have jeopardized safety projects, emergency response, and critical maintenance functions such as street lighting and snow removal. While some of these services may appear to be minor in nature, they are in fact vital to providing and maintaining a safe and efficient transportation network that all Californians rely on in their every daily life. This same roadway system is also vital for commerce, goods movement and farm-to-market activities all of which have consequences on economic activity throughout California.

Recognizing that our State's budget problems are unfortunately far from over, CEAC encourages you to remember how devastating permanent cuts as well as lengthy deferrals are to local governments. We hope that you will continue to rely on our organization as well as the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) as a resource for accurate and reliable information on the impacts of budget proposals. We want to work with you as active partners to ensure budget decisions, while difficult, are well informed and based on sound public policy.

Once again, thank you for your involvement in saving HUTA funds in the FY 2009-10 State Budget. California's counties understand the tough decisions that were facing you in July and will continue to face you in the coming months. Our county and our public works staff and the people we mutually serve are most appreciative of your efforts.

Sincerely,

Peter Rei  
President, County Engineers Association of California  
Director of Public Works, County of Tuolumne

cc: Members, Assembly Republican Caucus  
Delette Olberg, Special Advisory, Office of Minority Leader Sam Blakeslee