

The Board of Supervisors

County Administration Building
651 Pine Street, Room 106
Martinez, California 94553

John Gioia, 1st District
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Contra Costa County



David Twa
Clerk of the Board
and
County Administrator
(925) 335-1900

July 7, 2015

Assembly Member Jim Frazier
State Capitol
P.O. Box 942849, Room 3091
Sacramento, CA 94249-0011

Dear Assembly Member Frazier,

On behalf of the County of Contra Costa, I write to urge you to take action to avert the looming transportation crisis in the State of California and your district by working to find a bipartisan solution in 2015. California has more than 50,000 miles of state highways, 143,000 local streets and roads, and 24,000 bridges. In unincorporated Contra Costa County alone, we own and operate **660** miles of paved roads and **111** vehicle and pedestrian bridges. California's economic vitality and the mobility of all Californians both depend upon a first-class, multi-modal transportation network. In spite of this fact, the stagnant level of investment into our shared transportation infrastructure has resulted in significant unmet maintenance and rehabilitation needs on both the state and local transportation systems.

The 2014 California Statewide Local Streets and Roads Needs Assessment Report found that counties and cities are short \$79.3 billion over the next 10 years just to bring the system into a state of good repair, which would minimize future maintenance costs. In Contra Costa County, we currently have \$25 million in deferred maintenance. We currently do not have adequate revenues to address our failing local infrastructure. This includes bike lanes, sidewalks, traffic signal lights, traffic signage and striping, and road drainage that are not only critical to active transportation options, but also for the safety of the travelling public. California's transit operators also rely on local streets and roads as their primary right-of-way. The state highway system is also facing \$59 billion in deferred maintenance costs over the next decade.

The primary sources of revenue to maintain, preserve, repair, and rehabilitate highways and local roads and bridges are state and federal gasoline excise taxes (gas taxes). Neither the state nor federal gas tax has been increased in more than 20 years. Neither gas tax is adjusted for inflation or increases in the cost of construction.

Increases in fuel efficiency, which are critical to reduce costs to motorists and meet our environmental goals, mean that vehicles are travelling more yet paying less for use of the transportation system. Making matters even worse, the recent short-lived decline in the price of gas, while good for consumer pocketbooks, will result in a year-to-year reduction of \$885 million in transportation revenues.

The California Transportation Commission is currently studying alternatives to the state gas tax such as a road user charge that would more accurately charge drivers for their use of the system, but the results of that study are years away. That is why the County of Contra Costa is asking you to take bold action this year to find interim solutions to begin to make much needed improvements in the transportation system.

The bottom line is that the longer we wait to address our failing transportation infrastructure, the more it will cost in the long run. We need an immediate solution in 2015 to ensure the problem doesn't get worse and to bridge the gap while California considers whether to implement longer-term options to replace the gas tax.

Sincerely,

John M. Gioia, Chair
Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors
Supervisor, District I

c: Contra Costa County Legislative Delegation
The Honorable Edmund G. Brown Jr., Governor, State of California
The Honorable Kevin de Leon, President Pro Tem, California State Senate
The Honorable Bob Huff, Minority Leader, California State Senate
The Honorable Toni Atkins, Speaker, California State Assembly
The Honorable Kristin Olsen, Minority Leader, California State Assembly