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11/22/2017

# AASHTO: Tax reform bills fail to address infrastructure funding 'crisis'

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Congress is missing the opportunity to use tax reform legislation to address the nation's infrastructure investment "crisis," according to the [American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials](#) (AASHTO).

AASHTO officials told congressional leaders that the proposed "Tax Cuts and Jobs Act" legislation not only misses the opportunity to address infrastructure funding, but would make it "nearly impossible" to later fund a major infrastructure package, the [AASHTO Journal](#) reported.

Neither the House nor Senate tax bills address the federal Highway Trust Fund's (HTF) "looming solvency crisis." Unless Congress shores up the trust fund before its current authorization law expires in 2020, federal highway spending would shrink by 40 percent in 2021, while new HTF mass-transit funding would evaporate completely for three years, AASHTO officials said.

"We are extremely disappointed that it appears, once again, that Congress will not address this funding crisis," [AASHTO wrote in a Nov. 14 letter to Senate leaders](#).

Only major tax legislation offers a vehicle to come up with the money for a major infrastructure program that President Donald Trump has promised, AASHTO leaders wrote.

The Trump administration has said it plans to roll out an infrastructure plan after Congress passes tax reform, but AASHTO officials believe such a strategy won't work.

"Failure to find the revenue for an infrastructure initiative now, as part of tax reform, will make passage of such a package nearly impossible in the future," the association's letter stated.

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**Malcolm Cunningham** · University of Illinois at Chicago

It fails to address ANYTHING except lining conservative billionaires pockets. And proposed cuts/elimination of TIGER grants, FAST starts and other turnkey programs for infrastructure will do even more damage. Billionaires kids however will do very well. I guess the administration is seeking to turn America into a third world country as quickly as possible.

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**Harvey Kahler** · Rail transportation planner at Retired

An infrastructure bill coming after the budget is passed guarantees deficit spending or withholding budgeted allocations and subverting compromises.

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