



Contact: Jason Segedy
Director
330-375-2436
330-283-4401 (cell phone)

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

September 30, 2010

Agency endorses federal gasoline tax increase

The Policy Committee of the Akron Metropolitan Area Transportation Study (AMATS) passed a resolution yesterday stating its support for a 10 cent per gallon increase in the federal gasoline tax.

The resolution, which urges Congress to increase the federal gasoline tax, was first proposed by AMATS Director Jason Segedy in May. The committee's action came after four months of discussion and debate, and culminated in a 15-12 vote in support of the measure.

Segedy explains that he urged the passage of the resolution because the Highway Trust Fund is bankrupt and the nation does not have enough money to address its transportation and infrastructure needs. Segedy acknowledges that a tax increase is never a politically attractive option, but says that the alternatives – a decaying infrastructure and a massive national debt – are even less appealing options.

- MORE -

FIRST FEED

“Even though 2010 is an election year, I believe that it is our duty as transportation professionals and policy makers to provide leadership on this issue and do what is in the long-term public interest: ensuring fiscal responsibility and continuing to provide a world-class transportation system.”

The current federal gasoline tax of 18.4 cents per gallon has not been increased since 1993. Because the tax is not indexed to inflation, its actual purchasing power has declined significantly.

In passing the resolution, the committee recognized that - from a fiscal standpoint - there are three options: cut spending, increase revenue, or continue to borrow the money. Federal spending cuts will have very real and undesirable consequences. Cash-strapped local governments and states will need to tighten their belts even further, and our aging bridges and roads will continue to deteriorate and become even more unsafe.

Segedy adds, “I do not believe that it is fiscally responsible, or in the public interest, for our federal government to continue to resort to deficit spending and rely on other nations to pay for our transportation infrastructure. Either we spend less, and accept the consequences, or raise the necessary revenue by increasing taxes. If Congress is willing to take this step next year, it will go a long way toward restoring fiscal stability and begin to make a dent in our backlog of needed road and bridge repairs.”

- MORE -

SECOND FEED

A copy of the resolution accompanies this release and is also available on the AMATS web site at **www.amatsplanning.org**.

AMATS is the regional transportation planning agency serving the Greater Akron area. For additional information, please call us at **330-375-2436** or e-mail us at amats@akronohio.gov.

#