

RESOLUTION NUMBER 2010-17

**OF THE METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION POLICY COMMITTEE
OF THE AKRON METROPOLITAN AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY**

SUPPORTING AN INCREASE IN THE FEDERAL GASOLINE TAX

WHEREAS, the Akron Metropolitan Area Transportation Study (AMATS) is designated as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) by the Governor, acting through the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) and in cooperation with locally elected officials in Summit and Portage Counties and the Chippewa Township area of Wayne County; and

WHEREAS, the Highway Trust Fund was established by Congress in 1956 as a means of funding transportation improvements; and

WHEREAS, the revenues that support the Highway Trust Fund are generated through taxes on fuel; and

WHEREAS, the Highway Trust Fund is currently insolvent, and has had to receive two infusions of over \$27 billion in general revenue funds from Congress over the course of the past year; and

WHEREAS, the Highway Trust Fund's precarious fiscal situation will necessitate spending cuts, tax increases, continued general fund transfers, or some combination of the three; and

WHEREAS, budget cuts in the federal transportation program will mean that local governments, states, and regional transit authorities will have greater difficulty in maintaining existing infrastructure and service levels; and

WHEREAS, the Highway Trust Fund's current reliance on general fund transfers is neither fiscally responsible, nor desirable for the following reasons: 1) it undermines the "user-pay" principle that has been in place since 1956; 2) it threatens the loss of contract authority for planned transportation improvements; and 3) it severely hampers the ability of AMATS and its member governments to reliably plan for the future; and

WHEREAS, the existing federal tax on gasoline of 18.4 cents per gallon has not been increased since 1993; and

WHEREAS, the National Commission on Surface Transportation Infrastructure Financing, created by Congress, has recommended increasing the federal tax on gasoline by 10 cents per gallon; and

WHEREAS, the existing system of federal transportation funding is no longer sustainable; and

WHEREAS, SAFETEA-LU, the existing transportation bill, expired in 2009 and has not yet been renewed; and

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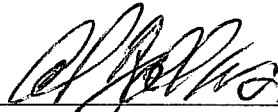
WHEREAS, a new transportation bill is needed to: 1) clearly define national transportation goals and priorities; 2) reform existing federal funding programs; and 3) discourage urban sprawl which contributes to our nation's dependence on petroleum and reduces the cost-effectiveness of infrastructure investments; and

WHEREAS, this Committee believes that the continued ability of AMATS and its member local governments to plan for and to fund transportation improvements is of critical importance.

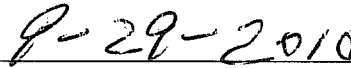
NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

1. That this Committee recognizes that it is not fiscally responsible, nor is it in the public interest, to resort to deficit funding to pay for critical transportation improvements.
2. That this Committee therefore supports a ten cent per gallon increase in the federal gasoline tax, in order to generate transportation revenue in a fiscally sound manner.
3. That this Committee recognizes that a gasoline tax increase is a short-term solution, and that in the long-term, a new federal mechanism for generating transportation revenue should be found; specifically, one that is not dependent upon encouraging the public to use more petroleum and other fossil fuels.
4. That this Committee urges Congress to pass a new transportation bill in 2011 that accomplishes the following:
 - a) Clearly defines national transportation goals and priorities vis-à-vis highway system preservation, highway system expansion, public transportation, and passenger rail.
 - b) Recognizes that urban sprawl contributes to our nation's dependence on petroleum and reduces the cost-effectiveness of infrastructure investments.
 - c) Reforms the convoluted system of dozens of separate transportation funding categories, most of which contain outdated rules and regulations.
 - d) Allows federal transportation dollars to be used for public transportation operating expenditures.
5. That this Committee authorizes the Staff to provide copies of this Resolution to the members of Ohio's Congressional delegation and other individuals and agencies, as appropriate, as evidence of action by the Metropolitan Planning Organization.

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Al Hollas, 2010 Chairman
Metropolitan Transportation Policy Committee



Date