

★ ISSUE BRIEF

Invest in our Nation's Infrastructure

AIA POSITION

The American Institute of Architects (AIA) urges Congress to act immediately to stabilize the Highway Trust Fund and pass long-term transportation reform that invests in our nation's infrastructure.

BACKGROUND

Our current transportation system is broken. Crumbling infrastructure and rising congestion have hurt our nation's competitiveness, reduced safety and increased greenhouse gas emissions. In addition, outdated transportation laws have underfunded public transit, worsened congestion, and encouraged sprawl. This system has resulted in less livable communities and forced Americans into longer and longer commutes.

To make matters worse, the Highway Trust Fund, which finances transportation projects across the country, is in danger of running out of money this summer, which would effectively mothball thousands of projects and cost hundreds of thousands of jobs. The design and construction industry, still recovering from the Great Recession, cannot afford to see these projects idled. Congress needs to act to stabilize the Trust Fund and reform transportation laws to help communities plan and build better transportation networks.

These ideas reflect findings in a 2008 study by the AIA and the University of Minnesota's Center for Transportation Studies, *Moving Communities Forward*, authorized by Congress and funded by the U.S. Department of Transportation. This study showed how well-designed transportation projects can bring multiple enhancements to communities in terms of economic development, health and the environment, and public safety.

Continuing to delay action on comprehensive transportation reform will trap our communities in a failed system that threatens our economic and environmental well-being. Congress should work to ensure that the United States has a truly 21st Century transportation system with stable and sustainable funding.

