

# DRIVING AHEAD

VOLUME 5/ISSUE 1, 2009

Official newsletter of the  
American Highway Users Alliance

## 2009 OFFICERS

### Honorary Chairman

The Honorable Norman Y. Mineta  
Former Secretary  
U.S. DOT

### Chairman

Governor Bill Graves \*  
President & CEO  
American Trucking Associations

### Vice Chairman

Leslie J. Jezuit \*  
Chairman  
Quixote Corporation

### Treasurer

Roy Littlefield \*  
Executive Vice President  
Tire Industry Association

### Chairman Emeritus

Michael J. Toohey  
Livingston Group

\* Congratulations 2009 Officers\* on your  
re-election at the February 11th Highway  
Users Board of Directors meeting.



1101 14th Street, NW, Suite 750  
Washington, DC 20005  
202.857.1200  
www.highways.org

© American Highway Users Alliance. All rights reserved.

## FEDERAL FRONT

### Highway Users Expresses Grave Concerns Over 2010 Budget

The Obama Administration unveiled its preliminary 2010 budget framework on February 26th. Bean counters in the Office of Management and Budget are planning to short-change highway programs, renege on the President's campaign commitment to invest in roads and bridges. The Highway Users has been in contact with committee leaders in Congress and senior staff at the Department of Transportation (DOT) to express concern about the budget. It does not appear that the DOT press release or the budget framework considered President Obama and Secretary LaHood's previous commitments to roads and bridges.

**Given all of the rhetorical support for roads and bridges by the President, we are mystified by the treatment of highway funding in the FY10 budget framework.**

In response, The Highway Users issued a forceful press statement questioning the authorship of the budget proposal and expressing grave concerns with the draft. President & CEO Greg Cohen stated, "The 2010 budget framework for DOT includes no mention of roads, repeals the 87-year old contracting mechanism that guarantees funds for multi-year projects, and mentions 'road pricing' (tolls) as the non-federal funding option available for

*continued on page 3*

### Supporting Passage of the Economic Stimulus Bill

In mid-February, President Obama signed the \$787 billion economic stimulus package into law. Although The Highway Users supported passage of the stimulus, we were disappointed that Congress did not consider a number of bipartisan amendments to increase highway funding. In addition, it is unfortunate that the conference committee watered down an important tax credit provision to help consumers purchase new vehicles. Yet, the highway funding that remained in the final package will help jumpstart thousands of state and local highway projects, putting people to work and getting America moving again. At least 750,000 jobs will be sustained by the highway funding in the bill.

*continued on page 3*



### Commenting on the Final Finance Commission Report

On February 26th, Greg Cohen was invited to participate in a press event at National Press Club to discuss the final

report from the Transportation Finance Commission. We also issued a press release that put The Highway Users on record, commending the commission for its volunteerism and support for a strong federal-aid highway program while noting that we will reserve our position on highway user fee increases until lawmakers develop a plan for spending the money. The Highway Users urges Congress to make sure highway user fees “will be carefully invested in critical, nationally focused highway needs that directly benefit those taxpayers paying the fees.” The release landed Cohen a mid-day interview on Fox News. Fox News sought our perspective on the Commission report and also gave us an opportunity to discuss the relative value of stimulus funding compared to highway authorization. Cohen stated that although the economic stimulus package is massive at \$787 billion, only 3% has been allocated for infrastructure – approximately \$29 billion. Congress must use the momentum to focus on a larger highway bill. ■



US DOT Secretary Ray LaHood

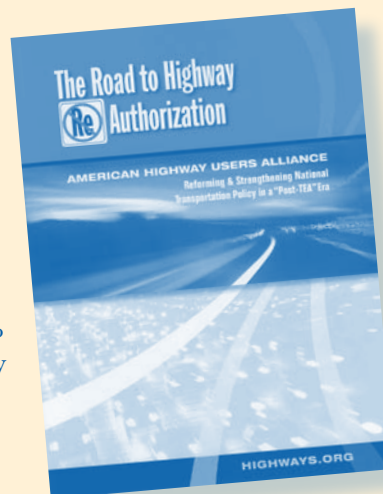
### New DOT Secretary LaHood Addresses Industry Event

Highway Users staff attended a lunch sponsored by the Road Gang and AASHTO on February 24th, featuring new Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood. He discussed the excitement in the Department of Transportation (DOT) over the passage of the stimulus bill, and his desire to make sure these funds are

quickly spent on good highway projects. Greg Cohen publicly commended LaHood for President Obama’s continued emphasis on roads and bridges in speeches, and urged continued leadership from the Administration as a necessary requirement for passage of the next highway bill by September 2009. ■

### Working to Advance Roadway Safety Policy

In late February, The Highway Users and the Roadway Safety Foundation (RSF) staff attended a Highway Safety Performance Venture meeting at the Transportation Research Board. The purpose of the group is to share information on safety and develop a national state-of-safety (SOS) report card. RSF Managing Director Cathy Gillen is chairing the taskforce on the communications portion. Greg Cohen provided the group with information on the Roadway Safety Infrastructure Coalition (RISC). In related news, RISC met to discuss original legislation to promote safety infrastructure in the next highway bill. Rep. Mike Arcuri (D-NY) and Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-VT) are working with the group on this legislation. The Highway Users is a founding member of RISC. ■



### Highway Authorization Briefing to Congressional Lawmakers

The House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee and Senate Environment & Public Works Committee staff have invited The Highway Users to present bipartisan staff briefings on our proposals for congestion relief, safety, freight corridors, aging roads & bridges, funding, and streamlining. Thanks to the many Highway Users members who contributed to our highway

authorization policy papers. A hard copy has been mailed to all Highway Users members. ■

### Leading the Charge on Climate Change

The Highway Users has taken the lead in drafting a united transportation organizations’ position statement for Environment & Public Works Committee Chairman Barbara Boxer (D-CA) outlining changes that are needed to the transit section of last year’s failed Senate climate change bill. The provisions create new, onerous planning regulations and modal restrictions on the use of cap-and-trade funds. To join the coalition of transportation groups signing this letter, contact us at [info@highways.org](mailto:info@highways.org) for more information. ■

### Highway Users Expresses Grave Concerns Over 2010 Budget *cont. from page 1*

states to help them deal with the meager funding levels. Given all of the rhetorical support for roads and bridges (by the President), we are mystified by the treatment of highway funding in the FY10 budget framework.” Despite our funding stance, The Highway Users is continuing discussions with senior DOT and Congressional staff to encourage a re-prioritization of highway funding both in terms of numbers and public pronouncements. The Highway Users also joined leading transportation groups to sign a letter to the President on this issue. We have commended the Chairmen and Ranking Members of key authorizing committees and subcommittees in the House and Senate for also expressing outrage over the budget proposal.

The proposal is so problematic that we urge you to take action now to contact your public officials. Log onto [www.highways.org](http://www.highways.org) to take action now! ■

### Praising Passage of the Economic Stimulus Bill

*cont. from page 1*

In addition, The Highway Users ran an ad in the *Politico*'s pre-inaugural magazine urging Congressional lawmakers to invest in the nation's infrastructure. The ad was developed with a contribution from Highway Users member NuStar Energy LP. It ran next to a profile of new DOT Secretary Ray LaHood.

We also issued a press release on the passage of the stimulus bill, applauding lawmakers for their swift action on the bill. The Highway Users urged lawmakers not to lose momentum by immediately shifting gears to focus on the authorization of a new six-year federal highway bill. The current SAFETEA-LU bill is scheduled to expire on September 30, 2009. President & CEO Greg Cohen remarked, “Now that the stimulus package has been approved, it is time to change course and focus on a truly comprehensive, ground-breaking multi-year highway bill.” ■



### Delivering Economic Stimulus Bill Updates

On February 2nd, President & CEO Greg Cohen spoke at the Arizona Pavements Conference at the invitation of Highway Users member, Rubber Pavements Association. Cohen discussed details on the then-pending economic stimulus bill and encouraged grassroots support for robust funding. He also outlined legislative priorities for the next highway authorization bill, the Obama administration and the 111th Congress. In related news, one day after President Obama signed the economic recovery bill,

Cohen addressed the joint annual meeting for Highway Users members Asphalt Emulsion Manufacturers Association, Asphalt Recycling and Reclamation Association, and International Slurry Surfacing Association (AEMA/ARRA/ISSA) and gave a briefing on the contents of the bill. ■

### Addressing Automotive Engineers at DC Auto Show

In early February, Greg Cohen delivered a speech at a Society of Automotive Engineers event during the Washington DC Auto Show. Specifically, the event was a roundtable discussion about mobility, regulation, and infrastructure and the economy. Other major topics discussed were environmental issues and fuel economy. Board member Bob McKenna of the Motor and Equipment Manufacturers was a panel participant. ■

### Urging the Travel and Tourism Industry to Engage on Highway Issues

Also in late February, Greg Cohen gave a talk at the U.S. Travel Association's Washington meeting. He discussed areas in which the travel industry can become active on highway issues. Cohen encouraged the travel industry to engage with The Highway Users, noting that 85% of tourists travel to their destinations over America's highways, 90% of them on National Highway System (NHS) routes. The Highway Users' plan for the authorization bill includes several performance-based programs to improve NHS routes. Therefore, the travel and tourism industry should have a compelling interest in access for customers and freight, congestion relief, safety and mobility on major highways. ■



## Highway Users Board Meeting & Congressional Welcome Reception Wrap-up



*Rep. Henry Brown (R-SC) address attendees at the Congressional Welcome Reception as Highway Users (far left) Chairman Gov. Bill Graves, Greg Cohen, and Rep. Howard Coble (R-NC) look on.*

The Highway Users held a Board meeting and Welcome Reception for the 111th Congress on February 11th in Washington, DC. During the Board meeting, attendees welcomed new Board members – Jack Gerard of American Petroleum Institute, Kathleen Hennessey of Chrysler LLC, and Shay Bluntzer of NuStar Energy LP. Thanks go to Board member Tom Jensen of UPS for hosting the meeting. Following

the Board meeting, we sponsored a packed Congressional Reception in the newly opened Capitol Visitors Center. Interest was so high for the event that we had to turn away non-member guests. The crowd mixed with over a dozen Congressional lawmakers, including Rep. John Mica (R-FL), the ranking member of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. ■



*New members of the Board of Directors, from left to right:*

*Shay Bluntzer, NuStar Energy LP; Jack Gerard, American Petroleum Institute; Kathleen Hennessey, Chrysler LLC*

## Welcome to New Members

The Highway Users is pleased to announce two new members. NuStar Energy LP (the company that purchased former member CITGO Asphalt Division) joined The Highway Users at the end of 2008 as a Patron Member. Volvo Group North America rejoined The Highway Users in January as a National Advocate member. Welcome and thanks for your support! ■

## Grassroots Outreach Program Update

Want to help our Grassroots Outreach Program grow? It's easy. Help support budget-challenged state and local groups through a new Adopt-A-Member campaign, introduced by Highway Users Chairman Governor Bill Graves of the American Trucking Associations. Graves offered to pay the \$500 membership dues fee to start up a new state Highway Users Conference (HUC) in Kansas. Each State HUC serves as the lead organization to which

*continued next column*

various other state and local organizations affiliate and receive all Highway Users legislative alerts, membership mailings, and other communications at no extra charge.

Other potential HUCs we are working on are located in Ohio, Nevada, South Dakota, Oregon and Idaho. Contact Cheryl Hollins, Membership Director, at [cherylhollins@highways.org](mailto:cherylhollins@highways.org) if you want to participate as an adopter organization. Also, additional sponsors are being sought to support the Grassroots Outreach Program. A list of benefits to sponsors is available upon request. ■

## Building on a Successful Year in 2008

The Highway Users released a report on its significant accomplishments in 2008. Your membership and support helped make our activities in 2008 possible. Read all about it in "The Year in Review: 2008 Accomplishments Report." Additional copies are available by contacting [info@highways.org](mailto:info@highways.org). Pass copies along to your leadership and prospective members. ■



The American Highway Users Alliance is the broadest-based transportation coalition in Washington, DC, focused exclusively on promoting highway system performance, roadway safety improvements and freedom of mobility. The Highway Users was founded in 1932 as a not-for-profit organization.