

# DRIVING AHEAD

VOLUME 6/ISSUE 3, 2010

Official newsletter of the  
American Highway Users Alliance

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\* All officers are members of  
The Highway Users Executive Committee  
and Board of Directors.

## SEASON'S GREETINGS!

Best wishes for a healthy  
and prosperous New Year.  
Please drive safely.



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## FEDERAL FRONT

### 112th Congress Will Shake Up the Transportation World

The Highway Users is optimistic about the 112th Congress' ability to enact a highway bill in 2011. Although we have lost a transportation champion in the defeat of House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee Chairman Jim Oberstar (D-Minn.), we are extremely excited to work with the new leadership of the committee. The incoming Chairman is John Mica (R-Fla.) and the likely Ranking Democrat is Nick Rahall (D-WVa.). Both have extensive experience on the committee and are seen as strong advocates for highways, streamlining, and other Highway Users priorities. The Senate

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Environment & Public Works Committee leadership will remain the same. The Highway Users staff has met with senior White House and Treasury staffers, who have indicated that there is renewed interest at high levels within the Administration to approach highway investments more positively. Their goal is for the Obama Administration to secure a domestic policy achievement with the new Congress that grows the economy and creates jobs. This philosophy appears to diverge from the Department of Transportation approach to auto-mobility over the past two years. We have urged Administration officials to re-think the more divisive DOT policies – particularly the anti-motorist “livability” agenda. Bottom line – we believe that a bipartisan Congress will be able to write a good highway bill in 2011 with strong White House support and more motorist friendly policies. We will also work closely with all of the key players to support programmatic reform, streamlining, performance-based policies, and robust funding solutions. ■

### Deficit Commission Recommendations for Highway Program

The Highway Users joined forces with several transportation groups in issuing a press release in support of the bipartisan Fiscal Commission report. The report calls for ending the insolvency of the Highway Trust Fund through a gradual increase in user fees over the next three years, ultimately adding 15 cents per gallon into the Highway Trust Fund by the middle of the decade. Our press release noted that adoption of the recommendations would enable Congress to enact a new highway bill with appropriate reforms. We did not sign an earlier letter sent by some transportation groups that called for a 25-cent increase in the fuel tax, with 10-cents diverted to general fund deficit reduction. The Highway

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U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) Deputy Secretary John Porcari delivered the keynote address at the 2010 Highway Users Annual Meeting held at the Four Seasons Hotel in Washington, DC on October 12th.



(L-R) USDOT Deputy Secretary Porcari, Highway Users Chairman Governor Bill Graves and Highway Users President & CEO Greg Cohen chat before the luncheon.



(L-R) Federal Highway Administration's Office of Safety Associate Administrator Joe Toole, Jay Hansen, VP of Government Affairs at the National Asphalt Pavement Association, and Chester Jourdan, Executive Director of the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission converse at the 2010 Annual Meeting.

**(Deficit Commission Recommendations...**Continued from page 1)

Users supports a user-pays/user-benefits principle and does not support diversion of fuel taxes for any other purpose, including deficit reduction. While commissioners were taking input on the report, The Highway Users sent our own letter urging the members to consider highway programs as a special issue because the program is substantially trust-funded and helps grow the nation's economy. The letter calls on the commission to increase highway funding to get America moving again. To view the letter, visit [www.highways.org](http://www.highways.org). ■

**Shaping President Obama's Highway Plans with White House, OMB and Treasury Officials**

The Highway Users met with the White House economic council staff, Treasury Department economists, and Transportation Department analysts at the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to discuss President Obama's Columbus Day and Labor Day announcements in support of highway investments for job and economic growth. The meeting was set up by "Americans for a Stronger National Highway Network," of which The Highway Users is a founding member. We extend sincere thanks to AAA National for scheduling the meeting. We praised the President's attention to 150,000 lane-miles of highway reconstruction needs and for his new support for getting a

**"We praised the President's attention to highway reconstruction needs and for his new support for getting a transportation bill done."**

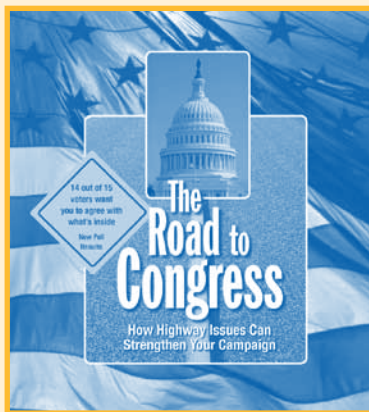
transportation bill completed. We emphasized the need for more details on the proposal and asked for continued, sustained Presidential leadership to encourage the U.S. Department of Transportation to focus more attention to the economic importance of highway investments. We also expressed concern that the economic case for highways has not been a top priority at USDOT. White House and other staff were receptive to these concerns and encouraged us to continue working with them. ■

**Fighting Fuel Tax Evasion**

We all know that money for the Highway Trust Fund is in short supply. But many of us don't realize that there is bleeding from fuel tax evasion and fraud. The Highway Users has been a strong proponent of a strong and technologically advanced IRS fuel tax fraud enforcement program. We simply cannot afford to lose billions of dollars to fraud. Highway Users staff met with the IRS/DOT Joint Taskforce on Fuel Tax Fraud to learn more about the latest efforts to crack down on criminal activity. We were extremely impressed with the recent progress from the team and will be continuing our efforts to ensure that the office is well funded in the next highway bill. For more information, contact [gregcohen@highways.org](mailto:gregcohen@highways.org). ■

## Road to Congress Binders Delivered to All Candidates

During the election campaigns, The Highway Users successfully UPS'd *The Road To Congress* binders to all candidates for Congress. The binder is a guide to making highway issues a winning part of any political campaign. Many candidates called to thank us and we are pleased to have already established a working relationship with several incoming freshmen. Beginning in January, The Highway Users staff will deliver an additional copy of the binder to each Congressional office so that transportation staffers in every office have our information at their disposal. The binder is a comprehensive educational primer on highways with key information, polling results, and talking points to use to develop pro-mobility, pro-highway legislation. Many thanks to the binder sponsors for their contributions and a special thanks to UPS for helping offset the costs of the mailing. ■



## Facebook Grassroots Network Amasses Nearly 11,000 Fans

10,700+ fans and counting! The Highway Users now has the largest Facebook fan-base of any national transportation organization. These fans are our newest generation of grassroots activists – and they are growing at a rate of nearly 1,000 new “likes” per month. Are you a fan? Help diversify and grow our network by getting friends to visit our Facebook site and click the “Like” button. Log onto [www.facebook.com/highwayusers](http://www.facebook.com/highwayusers). ■

## Sponsor Highway Users' Grassroots Campaigns

A massive effort to grow our social network of activists is the most critical project facing The Highway Users. We are having tremendous success but recruitment has its costs. You can help by sponsoring one or both of our new outside-the-beltway educational initiatives.

Information is enclosed about sponsoring our “Grassroots Army” advocacy campaign and our “Raging Battle” reauthorization campaign, which focuses on rebutting the propaganda that constantly flows from anti-mobility / anti-highway groups. ■



## SAFETY

### Working To Cut Traffic Fatalities

The Highway Users participated in the first-ever “Towards Zero Deaths” Summit, which focused on comprehensive strategies to eliminate traffic fatalities over time. The meeting was notable for bringing together transportation and public health professionals to look at engineering, education, enforce-



ment and EMS solutions for the near-, mid-, and long-term to move America “towards zero deaths.” The conference also focused on the psychology of “safety culture” – a newer way to examine and change societal apathy regarding the 34,000 annual deaths on our roads. The conference was held at the National Academies of Science.

In related news, The Highway Users' charitable foundation, the Roadway Safety Foundation (RSF), provided a booth full of safety resources to attendees of USDOT's 2nd National Distracted Driving Conference. Secretary Ray LaHood hosted the summit. We engaged speakers at the meeting to focus more attention on the engineering solutions that reduce the severity of distracted driving crashes. ■



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*\*Also member of Executive Committee*

**WHAT'S AHEAD**

**2011 Meeting Dates  
Mark Your Calendars!**

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2011**

Highway Users members are invited to attend the Welcome Reception for Members of Congress and their transportation staffers on February 15, 2011, 5:00 to 7:00 pm in room 2167 – House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee Room, Rayburn House Office Building.

Be recognized at the event as a sponsoring organization! Sponsorships start at \$500 for Highway Users' members. Please contact [info@highways.org](mailto:info@highways.org) for reception sponsorship information.

**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2011  
BOARD MEETING**

**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 22, 2011  
BOARD MEETING**

**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2011  
ANNUAL MEETING**



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.

(SAFETY...Continued from page 3)

**2011 National Roadway Safety Awards Now Open**

RSF in conjunction with the Federal Highway Administration is now accepting applications for the 2011 National Roadway Safety Awards honoring the best practices in roadway safety achievements. Winners are invited to attend a recognition ceremony in Washington, DC and are given national and local media support. The projects of honorees are highlighted in a *Best Practices Guide* that is distributed to state and local governments as a resource about effective safety countermeasures that may be successful in their areas. To find out more or to apply, go to [www.roadwaysafety.org](http://www.roadwaysafety.org). ■