

# DRIVING AHEAD

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A bi-monthly newsletter of the  
American Highway Users Alliance

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## MEDIA MATTERS

### Expertise Sought in Wake of Bridge Collapse

On August 1, Minnesota's I-35W bridge collapsed and as of press time divers continue to search for missing motorists. Immediately following the catastrophic failure, which has become the poster child for under-investment of the nation's infrastructure, the media delved into the many contributing factors. Highway Users President & CEO Greg Cohen was interviewed by a number of major media outlets in TV, radio, and print on the situation. The Associated Press article reached all over the world – China, India, and the Middle East's Arab network Al-Jazeera! Below are just a few of the dozens of press interviews that The Highway Users conducted on the bridge collapse:

- Fox News Live • Associated Press • Al-Jazeera • KFI-AM (Southern California)
- Minneapolis Star Tribune • KQTV (Missouri) • WGNU-AM (St. Louis, Missouri)

During his interview on Fox News Live, Cohen discussed the feasibility of looking up the status of local bridges so that motorists can learn of any possible bridge deficiencies. He explained that although the National Bridge Inventory is accessible online, it can be quite arduous to match up some of the nearly 100 bridge codes to the proper data

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*On national television, Cohen spoke about the realities of aging infrastructure and urged motorists to visit [www.highways.org](http://www.highways.org) to look up bridge inspection data.*

## INSIDE HIGHWAY USERS

### Four Industry Leaders Elected to Board

The Highway Users is proud to announce the election of four industry leaders who were elected on July 13, 2007 to open seats on our Board of Directors.



- **Bruce Andrews**, Vice President of Governmental Affairs, Ford Motor Company. He oversees all of Ford's federal and state government affairs. Prior to his appointment at Ford in early 2007, Mr. Andrews worked at Quinn Gillespie & Associates from 2000-2007. Previously he served as an attorney in the Public Policy and Telecommunications Groups at Arnold & Porter. He also spent seven years on Capitol Hill in legislative positions for several members of Congress.

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1101 14th Street, NW  
Suite 750  
Washington, DC 20005  
202.857.1200  
[www.highways.org](http://www.highways.org)

75th Anniversary  
1932 - 2007

• **Appropriations Funding Success**

House and Senate Transportation Appropriations Subcommittees have marked up bills that fully fund the \$40.2 billion for highways in fiscal year 2008. In addition, both the House and Senate have agreed with The Highway Users to fully fund the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) vehicle safety programs and administrative expenses from the General Fund of the Treasury, preventing a \$120 million diversion of funds from the Highway Trust Fund at a time when it is under major stress. Both the funding level and the proper sourcing of NHTSA funding are key lobbying success stories for The Highway Users. Unfortunately, the Bush Administration has threatened to veto this bill over both highway funding and unrelated provisions. DOT Secretary Mary Peters has called on Congress to cut highway funding by at least \$631 million. We will work with Congress to stand firm against this cut, which violates the guaranteed funding principles of SAFETEA-LU and does not fix Highway Trust Fund solvency problems. ■

• **Shoring up the Highway Trust Fund**

The Highway Users is lobbying key Congressional tax and policy committees to seal holes in the Highway Trust Fund revenue collection process, in order to prevent funding shortages in 2009. Recent Treasury Department projections show a rapidly falling cash balance in the Highway Trust Fund and

a negative \$4.3 billion balance by the end of 2009. Congress must take decisive action to keep the trust fund solvent and has the ability to do so without raising highway user fees on fuel and vehicles. Some solutions include: reimbursing the trust fund for revenues lost to fuel tax exemptions for local governments, beefing up enforcement of fuel tax evasion, depositing "gas guzzler tax"

revenues into the Highway Trust Fund, crediting the fund for interest that has been diverted, and recapturing an estimated \$8 billion in cash unfairly transferred to the General Fund in 1998. ■

• **Building Momentum to Preserve Vehicle Choices**

Highway Users grassroots members and allies have flooded Capitol Hill with hundreds of letters urging members of the House to cosponsor H.R. 2927, the Hill-Terry bill on Corporate Average Fuel Economy standards. The Hill-Terry bill requires sharply increased fuel efficiency standards but maintains a key distinction between cars and light trucks, thus improving automakers ability to provide a wide variety of affordable vehicles to meet diverse highway users' needs. The bill now has about 100 cosponsors, and is well-balanced with both Democratic and Republican cosponsors. In our view, the Hill-Terry compromise provides a better alternative to the Senate CAFE provisions, which would destroy the affordability of SUVs and light trucks. House leaders are currently opposed to H.R. 2927. ■

**Both the funding level and the proper sourcing of NHTSA funding are key lobbying success stories.**

**Your Chance to Influence 2008 Election Campaigns!**

The Highway Users Board of Directors recently endorsed a new project to provide 2008 Congressional, Gubernatorial and Presidential Candidates an easy-to-read binder of highway information for their election campaigns. The Highway Users is developing the binder for a Winter/Spring 2008 release and members will receive recognition for sponsoring Candidate Binders. For more information about sponsorship levels, please contact Greg Cohen at 202-857-1200 or at [gregcohen@highways.org](mailto:gregcohen@highways.org).



## • National Roadway Safety Award Winners Selected

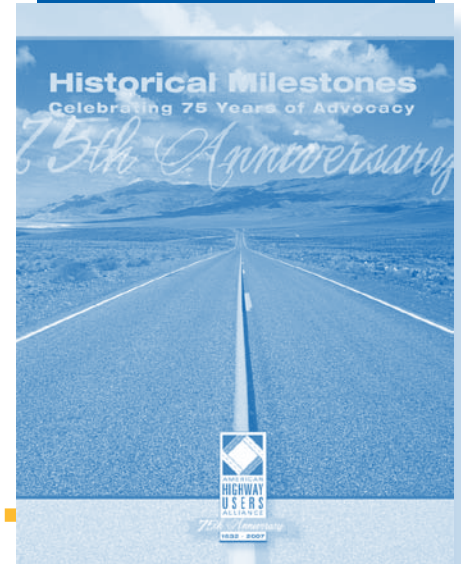
On July 19, Greg Cohen served as a judge on a blue-ribbon panel jointly sponsored by the Federal Highway Administration and Roadway Safety Foundation to select innovative and cost-effective projects and programs that are saving lives on our nation's roads. Nearly 70 applicants submitted entries and 10 winners were selected. Winners will be announced in the fall at a major event at the National Press Club. Stay tuned to find out which projects were selected as winners! ■

## • Roadway Safety Foundation Presents Case For Safer Roads at LTAP Conference

The Roadway Safety Foundation was a Platinum Sponsor for the Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) Association's annual meeting in Chicago, IL from July 23-25. LTAPs around the nation provide technical assistance to counties, municipalities, and tribes. Roadway safety was a key focus for this year's annual meeting, and the Roadway Safety Foundation addressed the general business session to promote involvement by local officials in future roadway safety campaigns, which we are designing for public and media attention in 2008. Along with RSF members from the Federal Highway Administration and the Salt Institute, we provided an information booth for convention attendees to learn more about saving lives and preventing injuries by investing in safer roads. ■

## Celebrating 75 Years

The Highway Users will be issuing its *Historical Milestones* booklet documenting 75 years of advocacy. All members will receive a free copy in the coming weeks.



## ...Bridge Collapse *Continued from page 1*

field, and make an assessment as to whether local bridges are indeed safe to drive over. Cohen called on government officials to ameliorate the data so that it is more user-friendly.

“The Interstate highway system is now 50 years old, and it's reached a midlife crisis.”

Cohen explained to the Associated Press, “We're not doing what the engineers are saying we need to be doing. Unfortunately, when you consistently underinvest in roads and bridges, this is the dangerous consequence.”

Not surprisingly, Congress sprung into action to introduce proposed legislation aimed at fixing the deadly problem of structurally inept bridges. On August 8, House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee Chairman Jim Oberstar (D-MN) announced a national bridge plan that would establish a separate trust fund dedicated solely to bridges. Notably, Oberstar's trust fund proposal would prohibit Congressional earmarks and diversion to non-bridge projects. The Highway Users quickly commended the Chairman on his comprehensive plan to address our nation's aging infrastructure and offered our assistance in devising fair funding sources.

"Chairman Oberstar is on the right track because the motorists and truckers will support a user fee that is neither earmarked nor diverted from the bridges that are in dire need of repair and replacement," stated Highway Users President and CEO Greg Cohen. ■



## Four Industry Leaders Elected to Board...*Continued from page 1*



• **James A. Braselton**, Senior Vice President – Marketing & Sales, Cement Division, Lafarge in North America. He has over 25 years of experience in B2B across several industries in Sales, Marketing and Strategy. He joined Lafarge in 1996 in Montreal, Canada. Prior to assuming his current role, he was VP Marketing and Cement Related Products for the U.S. Cement Region in Southfield, MI. Before joining Lafarge, Mr. Braselton was VP & General Manager of Columbia Trading in Cleveland, OH.



• **Linda Bauer Darr**, President and CEO, American Moving and Storage Association. She is also publisher of the industry's newspaper, The Moving World and Direction magazine, and Secretary of the Household Goods Carriers' Bureau Committee. Ms. Darr has over 18 years of experience in transportation association management and government affairs. Previously, she served as Senior VP of Policy and External Affairs for the American Bus Association. During the Clinton Administration, she served as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Budget and Programs at the U.S. DOT.



• **The Honorable Dave McCurdy**, President and CEO, Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers. He joined the Alliance as President in February 2007 after serving as President and CEO of the Electronics Industry Association for eight years. Prior to leading the EIA, Mr. McCurdy had a distinguished career in the U.S. House of Representatives, and as Chairman and CEO of the McCurdy Group, LLC, a successful business consulting and investment practice. Congressman McCurdy spent 14 years (1981-1995) in the House of Representatives as the member from the 4th Congressional District of OK. He is currently Chairman of the Board of Directors for the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments and holds other distinguished voluntary leadership positions. ■

## New Members Welcomed

The Highway Users is pleased to announce that 11 new members have joined our ranks since March 1, 2007. A warm welcome goes to: Qwick Kurb, Inc., (safety equipment manufacturer) — National Advocate Member, and AAA Mid-Atlantic — State Advocate member.

In addition, the following grassroots organizations who are Highway Users Conference affiliates have become members:

- Alan Mauk Associates, Ltd.
- Arizona Cattlemen's Association
- Associated General Contractors of St. Louis
- Association General Contractors of Missouri
- Missouri Asphalt Pavement Association
- Missouri Automobile Dealers Association
- Missouri Concrete Association
- Missouri Regional Chamber & Growth Association
- Missouri Transportation & Development Council. ■



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.

## Did You Know?

In 1937, the Automotive Safety Foundation (ASF) was created by automobile and allied industries to coordinate highway safety activities and place the industry effort on a permanent basis. President Roosevelt ordered a feasibility study of major cross-country highways. The ASF is a predecessor of the Roadway Safety Foundation. ■