

DRIVING AHEAD

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A bi-monthly newsletter of the
American Highway Users Alliance

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75th Anniversary
1932 - 2007

INSIDE HIGHWAY USERS

Celebrating 75 Years of Advocacy for Safety & Mobility

House T&I Chairman Jim Oberstar, Ranking Member John Mica, Highways & Transit Subcommittee Chairman Peter DeFazio and Ranking Member Jimmy Duncan honored The Highway Users by co-sponsoring a congressional resolution – H. Res. 772 – commemorating our 75 years of public-interest advocacy. The T&I Committee unanimously reported the resolution to the House. To read the resolution text and Chairman Oberstar's remarks, visit www.highways.org.

Congressional Reception

Commemorating our 75th anniversary, The Highway Users held a celebratory Congressional Reception on Capitol Hill on September 25th. Highway Users Honorary Chairman Secretary Norman Mineta introduced the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee's top leaders to address the capacity crowd, which included sixteen Members of Congress and staff from dozens of offices. Addressing the attendees were Transportation Appropriations Chairman Rep. John Olver (D-MA), T&I Chairman Jim Oberstar (D-MN), Ranking Member John Mica (R-FL), and Highways Subcommittee Chairman Peter DeFazio (D-OR). The leaders emphasized the vital importance of The Highway Users' leadership in advancing a robust highway program and thanked us for our collaborative efforts with Congress.

Earlier in the day, The Highway Users held its 75th annual business meeting at the National Press Club. Governor Bill Graves of the American Trucking Associations (ATA) chaired the business meeting, marking his first official meeting as Chairman of the Board. During the luncheon following the meeting, President & CEO Greg Cohen honored immediate-past-Highway Users Chairman Fred Webber with an award to thank him for his service as the organization's lead officer. Webber stepped down from the Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers earlier this year, and served two years as the Chairman of The Highway Users.



Highway Users Chairman and ATA President & CEO Gov. Bill Graves presided over the 2007 Annual Meeting with Honorary Highway Users Chairman Secretary Norm Mineta.

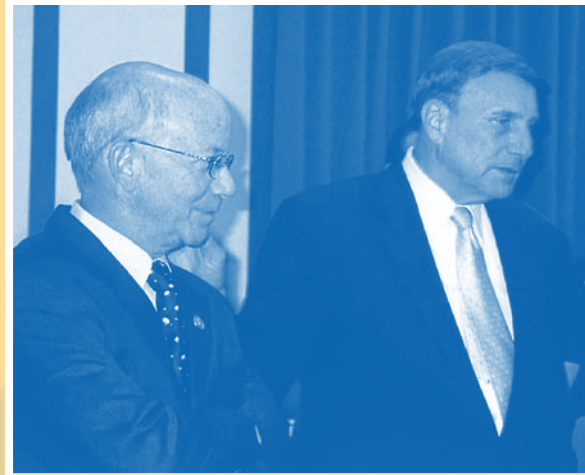


House T&I Chairman Jim Oberstar (D-MN) addresses the crowd at The Highway Users' Congressional Reception and enjoys a laugh with Secretary Norm Mineta.

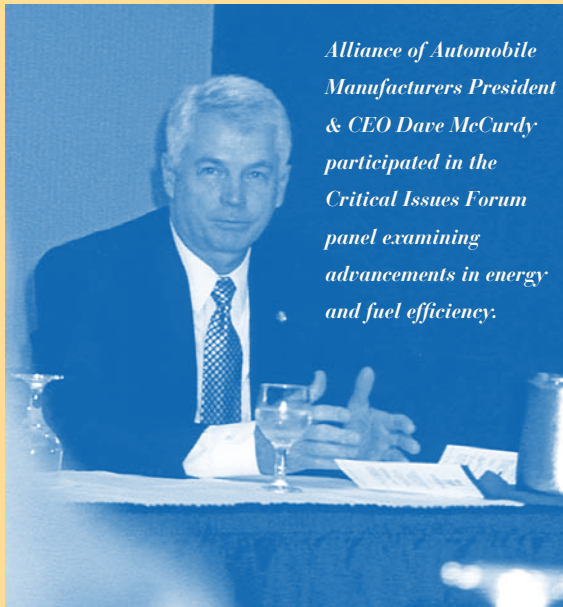
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Highways & Transit Subcommittee Chairman Peter DeFazio (D-OR) spoke to attendees at The Highway Users' 75th Anniversary Congressional Reception on Capitol Hill.



Peter DeFazio (D-OR) and Ranking Member John Mica (R-FL) were among the House transportation leaders who made appearances and addressed the capacity crowd at the Congressional Reception.



Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers President & CEO Dave McCurdy participated in the Critical Issues Forum panel examining advancements in energy and fuel efficiency.

DC Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton was one of 16 Members of Congress who attended the Congressional Reception. Norton chatted with Secretary Norm Mineta.



YOUR CHANCE TO INFLUENCE POLICYMAKERS

The Highway Users will be updating its Candidate Binder – *The Road to Congress*, which is designed to educate candidates on highway issues. Decisions made by elected officials in 2009 are expected to have the biggest impact on national highway funding levels and priorities since the establishment of the Highway Trust Fund in 1956. The binder will include valuable state-by-state data on critical needs and will help candidates understand public sentiments about transportation. Don't miss your chance to be a part of this important Congressional project! For details on how to participate and sponsorship opportunity benefits, please contact us at info@highways.org or at 202-857-1200. ■

- **Success with the Senate Finance Committee on Highway Trust Fund Solutions**

The Highway Users met with bipartisan staff of the Finance Committee to press for solutions to the fast-approaching bankruptcy of the Highway Trust Fund. We presented five options to temporarily keep the Trust Fund solvent through the end of FY '09. Later, the Committee included three of our suggested options in the Senate-passed version of the FAA (airports) bill. In total, their provisions would raise \$5 billion. The Highway Users has also been organizing a letter for national associations to sign commending the Senate Finance Committee for its action and encouraging support from the House Ways and Means Committee. ■

- **Endorsing a 3-Year National Highway System Bridge Authorization**

We met with House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee Chairman Jim Oberstar (D-MN) to lend support for his bridge trust fund concept and pledged to work with the Chairman to develop the details. We commended Oberstar for proposing this needs-based, earmark-free, diversion-free program and suggested that other programs could be reformed as well. ■

- **Advising Appropriations Committee on Bridge Funds for 2008**

The Highway Users met with House Democratic Appropriations staff to discuss options for boosting bridge funding above SAFETEA-LU levels in the FY '08 appropriations bill. The Senate appropriations bill provides an extra \$1 billion in FY 2008 for bridges. House appropriators requested our advice in developing their response to the Senate proposal and also weighing Oberstar's bridge trust fund concept as an alternative. We discussed our support for the additional funding, the potential for amending the bridge program and holding the Highway Trust Fund harmless in the process. The Appropriations Committees have been extremely helpful to The Highway Users in recent years, responding favorably to our requests on funding levels and limiting diversions. ■

- **Attending Presidential Address on Energy and Climate Change**

The Highway Users was invited to listen to President Bush outline a new energy and climate change policy at the U.S. State Department. The President proposed that governments representing the largest economies take a leadership role in developing specially tailored plans that consider each leading nation's most realistic and cost-effective approach to addressing climate change. The Highway Users is working to add highway congestion relief to the menu of consumer-friendly options available to reduce carbon dioxide emissions. We oppose mandatory carbon caps that inflate the price of fuel without providing revenue for the Highway Trust Fund. ■

- **Discussing Highway Project Delays with GAO**

The Highway Users met with officials from the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to discuss project planning and construction delays associated with the "strings" tied to the use of federal funds. We had some important successes in the 2005 highway bill with streamlining provisions but many problems remain. We emphasized delays caused by federal mandates, which slow project approvals. We suggested an expansion of a new pilot program allowing for federal-to-state delegation of environmental reviews and we supported the creation of a priority list of major, nationally significant projects for additional streamlining. ■

Historical Milestones Documents 75 Years of Advocacy

It's been a long road to the celebration of The Highway Users 75 years of accomplishments, and a new publication, *Historical Milestones* celebrates the trip. Members will find a summary of major achievements documented decade-by-decade since The Highway Users founding in 1932 by Alfred P. Sloan, Jr., Chairman of the Board of General Motors Corporation. Take a look at the enclosed copy, which also features an interesting comparison of key statistics, "Then and Now." The one statistic that has dipped over time is the mileage death rate – from 14.0 in 1932 to 1.47 in 2005 (the most recent year for which figures are available).



Expertise on Bridge Safety

Fox News Live interviewed President & CEO Greg Cohen to discuss how commuters can best research their local bridges for safety information in the wake of the Minnesota bridge collapse. In the interview, Cohen remarked that safety data was available online, but could be tedious for



Highway Users President & CEO Greg Cohen was featured on Fox News Live to discuss bridge safety data.

a layperson to sort through and called it “not very user-friendly.” He drove viewers to The Highway Users web site – www.highways.org – to access links to the Federal Highway Administration’s online section of the National Bridge Inventory.

Cohen noted, “The public is not really aware of how much it costs to fix [aging bridges]” and pointed out that our nation’s infrastructure is in a “mid-life crisis.”

“To commemorate the 75th anniversary, a congressional resolution – H. Res. 772 – was introduced by House T&I leadership honoring The Highway Users.”

Celebrating 75 Years of Advocacy (cont. from page 1)

Critical Issues Forum

Members and invited guests then participated in an important forum on critical highway issues. We explored the looming Highway Trust Fund crisis, safety innovations, advancements in energy and fuel efficiency, and the nation’s aging infrastructure. Prominent leaders from various industries shared their perspectives on the panel issues including the Honorable Kirk Steudle, Director of the Michigan Department of Transportation; Red Cavaney, President & CEO of the American Petroleum Institute; The Honorable Dave McCurdy, President & CEO of the Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers; Steve Sandherr, CEO of the Associated General Contractors of America, King Gee, Associate Administrator for Infrastructure at the Federal Highway Administration, and Rich Prisinzano, Economist with the U.S. Department of Treasury. Select speaker presentations are available online at www.highways.org. ■

“Americans would be willing to pay more for a better program; one that focused on improving safety and mobility on our most important highways.”

Other reporters filmed media interviews at The Highway Users offices for their local ABC television affiliates on the issue. Cohen also gave a number of radio interviews, including one for *Minnesota Public Radio*. *The Philadelphia Inquirer* editorial board and staff writers from multiple newspapers interviewed us for daily publications. ■

Revived Media Interest in Evacuation Report Card

As part of 9/11 remembrance coverage, *NBC Nightly News* interviewed Greg Cohen on the findings of The Highway Users' *Emergency Evacuation Report Card* and weighed the research as part of larger national homeland security concerns. Issued last year, the *Report Card* was a first-of-its-kind study focusing on the nation's largest urban areas and their infrastructures' ability to handle a mass evacuation in the event of an emergency. In addition, The Highway Users shared a panel with the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency while presenting the study's findings at the Mid-Atlantic Section of the Institute of Transportation Engineers, in Valley Forge, PA. ■



NBC Nightly News interviewed Greg Cohen on The Highway Users' Emergency Evacuation Report Card findings and its implications on overall homeland security concerns.



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.