



National Surface Transportation Program Authorization Positions

I-95 Corridor Coalition

The I-95 Corridor Coalition is an alliance of transportation agencies, toll authorities, and related organizations, including public safety, from Maine to Florida. The Coalition is a forum for policy makers and transportation officials to address transportation management and operations issues of common interest. As a volunteer, consensus-driven organization, it enables its member agencies to work together to improve transportation system performance far more than they could working alone.

The Executive Board of the Coalition is made up of the Chief Executive Officers, or their designees, from each of the Coalition's sixteen State DOT member agencies. The Executive Board approved the positions below and urges their consideration and adoption into National Surface Transportation Program Authorization legislation.

Position: Facilitate multi-state partnerships/coalitions to improve transportation system performance and reliability. Reduce the user and environmental costs of long distance travel through better management of the transportation system by supporting multi-state systems and projects along transportation corridors that help achieve national goals related to:

- clearing incidents quickly;
- informing the public about significant incidents and events;
- conducting orderly evacuations, resulting from natural and other emergencies, across state boundaries;
- implementing interoperable advanced technology safety and mobility systems; and,
- improving the operation of passenger and freight systems and intermodal connectors.

Support: The long distance movement of people and goods across state boundaries on highways and railroads is the life blood of the American economy. When our highway and rail arteries become clogged with congestion, the increased transportation costs are passed back to businesses and households, increasing the cost of doing business and the cost of living, weakening the economic vitality and global competitiveness of local, state, and national economies. National economic competitiveness demands Federal support for cooperative multi-state programs aimed at using existing transportation system capacity as effectively as possible.

Position: Fund large-scale improvements along nationally significant corridors where the costs of the improvements are too great for any single entity to fund and where benefits will accrue to the entire region or nation. The financing of large-scale improvements in nationally significant corridors is critical to efficient interstate commerce and international trade and is an appropriate role of the federal government.

Support: The improvements needed to air, highway, rail, sea and waterway systems along nationally significant transportation corridors are often complex and costly, potentially draining the resources of state agencies and preventing other critical improvement projects from being undertaken. The costs of these projects are often too great for any single entity to undertake. And the benefits of the improvements often extend regionally and nationally reaching individual travelers and consumers in distant locations. The future cost to the nation's economy of not addressing these issues is staggering, especially in view of the dramatic growth predicted in freight alone. Newly authorized funding sources, eligibility criteria and support for institutional mechanisms (involving all levels of government as well as the private sector) for undertaking critical large-scale improvements in nationally significant corridors are urgently needed.



Context

The Coalition's Northeast, Mid-Atlantic and Southeast regions are national and global centers of education, finance, government, high-tech manufacturing and agriculture. They are tightly integrated and interdependent economies. The region's and the nation's future prosperity depends on innovation, productivity and trade. And the foundation and enabler of that prosperity is the efficient, long distance movement of freight, people and information across state boundaries.

The entire Coalition region comprises a \$4.7 trillion economy—36 percent of the U.S. total gross domestic product—and equivalent to third largest economy in the world. It hosts 37 percent of all U.S. jobs and accounts for 28 percent of all U.S. exports. The Coalition region will experience 25 percent of the nation's projected population growth over the next two decades. It has 21 percent of the nation's road mileage, but 35 percent of the nation's vehicle miles of travel. It also has 22 percent of the nation's freight railroad track, 18 of the nation's top 50 commercial service airports, and 15 of the nation's top 50 commercial water ports. It accommodates movement of 565 million long-distance (> 100 miles) trips and 5.3 billion tons of freight annually. And many of these trips are being made over aging roads and railroads that were not designed to meet current, let alone projected, travel demands.

Increasing long distance travel demands commensurate with a growing and more mobile population, national economic growth, the explosive increase in international trade and the fierce competitiveness of a global economy, and global climate change concerns are all strong and compelling reasons to look at transportation issues on a broader basis than state-by-state.

The cost of failing to do this—failing to keep up with growth and trade, failing to fix major transportation system bottlenecks—will be economic failure. When trucks are delayed for hours on the road, the costs are passed back to shippers and receivers, and eventually to their customers. When railroads shed freight to trucks, the costs of the additional pavement and bridge maintenance are passed back to state and local highway and transportation agencies and eventually to the taxpayers. And when transportation costs are passed back to businesses and households, they increase the cost of doing business and the cost of living, weakening the economic vitality and global competitiveness of the local, state, and national economies.

The I-95 Corridor Coalition has developed a set of principles to support a sustainable transportation vision for the region. The principles cover economic, environmental, energy, and transportation sustainability. The complexity and scale of these issues suggests need for a program structure and funding source that transcends what individual states, acting alone, could accomplish. The members of the Coalition recognize that achievement of our future transportation vision requires the coordinated action of numerous public and private organizations.

Since the completion of the Interstate Highway System in the early 1990s, the Federal transportation program has lost its focus on these broader regional and national needs. This is a critical concern to the Coalition's members. Our state departments of transportation, our public and private transportation authorities, and our transportation carrier companies exist to move people and goods and to ensure our region's and our nation's social, economic, and environmental well being. Therefore, we support initiatives that will enable us to regain a strong regional and national vision and purpose for our national transportation programs. We believe there is a clear role for the Federal government in supporting interstate commerce and facilitating and funding multi-state coalitions.

