

SURFACE is a publication of TRUST dedicated to bringing news about the financing of Oklahoma's transportation infrastructure to community, business and policy leaders around the state. This biannual publication has a central focus of:

- Federal and state funding
- Regulatory news from state Capitol and Congress
- TRUST events and news
- Innovative topics on transportation funding

SURFACE

SPRING 2015



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Protecting Transportation More Important Than Ever

THE FIRST SESSION OF THE 55TH OKLAHOMA LEGISLATURE

WITH THE 2014 GENERAL ELECTION

resulting in the election of 10 new senators and 22 new representatives, the first session of the 55th Oklahoma Legislature convened February 2nd. Governor Mary Fallin presented the first State of the State address of her final term which included a challenge for Oklahomans to improve their health, an analysis of state budget operations and tax incentive programs, budget reductions for most state agencies, corrections reform and funding increases for mental health and substance abuse services and common education. Governor Fallin's executive budget contained no reduction for transportation programs, continuing her commitment to support transportation as a core priority of state government by protecting the ODOT eight-year highway and bridge construction plan as well as the County Improvement for Roads and Bridges (CIRB) plan which utilizes recycled beams from the former I-40 Crosstown Expressway in Oklahoma City. Steady progress is being made to reduce the amount of structurally-deficient bridges on the state system to less than 1% by 2020, a goal initiated by the governor in 2012. While the final FY-2016 budget will be determined late in the legislative session, lawmakers again face the challenge of protecting core government services - transportation, education, human services, public safety, corrections - while continuing to enact reforms that streamline government and provide better and more effi-

cient service to taxpayers, all while dealing with a multimillion dollar budget deficit.

The downturn in oil prices over the past six months has certainly impacted state revenues, however Oklahoma's economy remains relatively stable when compared to other energy states. Our unemployment rate is still extremely low and our diversified economy is helping sustain some of the negative impact of falling energy prices. In addition, the Constitutional "Rainy Day" fund is at full capacity. Continued investment in core governmental services, like transportation, must remain the legislature's priority during this challenging budget year.

In Washington, D.C., the United States Congress is faced with securing long-term appropriations for the Highway Trust Fund (HTF) which reimburses states for certain highway projects. The HTF could reach insolvency in May when its temporary funding expires. Long-term stability for the HTF and federal surface transportation programs is a longstanding priority of the TRUST legislative agenda.

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2015 Legislative Agenda

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With Republicans assuming the U.S. Senate majority following the 2014 general election, Oklahoma Senator Jim Inhofe has resumed chairmanship of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, a post he previously held during the preceding GOP Senate majority. Second District Representative Markwayne Mullin, re-elected in 2014, is a member of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

Having Senator Inhofe and Congressman Mullin representing and protecting our transportation interests in Washington is monumental for Oklahoma. Both are committed to securing long-term funding for the HTF which will allow Oklahoma's ongoing eight-year highway and bridge construction plan to continue uninterrupted while reducing bureaucracy and ensuring execution of future projects. TRUST will continue to partner with Senator Inhofe and Congressman Mullin so that Oklahoma continues to receive its allotted share of federal highway dollars.

As our 2015 legislative agenda states, TRUST will continue to advance the same goals we have advocated over the past several years at the state and federal levels. On the state front, TRUST is at the Capitol each day to educate legislators on the importance of investing in Oklahoma's transportation infrastructure, and maintaining transportation at the center of the legislative debate.

Since 2006, state leaders and the legislature have made tremendous progress to establish transportation as a core priority, and that investment is seen across Oklahoma in the form of new and refurbished highways and bridges on both the state and county highway systems. Simply stated, Oklahoma's transportation infrastructure system is in a much better place than it was just a few short years ago, and our momentum and progress is a direct result of your investment in TRUST. ■

STATE

Protect ODOT eight-year highway and bridge construction work plan. TRUST's top priority is ensuring funding remains at a level where no current projects are interrupted, no planned projects cut and no transportation funds diverted from ODOT's eight-year highway and bridge construction work plan.

Support the continuation of the full statutory allocation to the ROADS fund. In an effort to rehabilitate state highways and bridges, TRUST supports completion of the remaining three fiscal year allocations to the ROADS program.

Protect County Improvements for Roads & Bridges (CIRB) five-year construction work plan. In an effort to rehabilitate county bridges and roads, TRUST supports the CIRB program and its revolving fund to be used strictly for CIRB projects.

Protect transportation-dedicated revolving funds. TRUST supports the protection of transportation dedicated revolving funds. Those funds are designed to fund transportation infrastructure projects and should not be diverted for other governmental purposes.

Motor vehicle fees redirected to transportation. A core TRUST principle is all transportation-derived revenues are used strictly for transportation. TRUST supports returning the remaining allocation of motor vehicle fees from general government to transportation, and encourages the appropriate allocation of motor vehicle fees to state highways, county roads and municipal streets taking into consideration previous motor vehicle fees and general fund allocations. TRUST will continue to support this concept as a matter of sound public policy.

Renovations of Port of Entries – Weigh Stations. TRUST supports methods to complete the construction of Oklahoma's new ports of entries in order to protect highways and bridges from overweight freight. Doing so will result in additional revenues from fines and fees due to increased monitoring of overweight commercial traffic. TRUST also supports returning the one-cent transportation user fee from the Petroleum Storage Tank Indemnity Fund to transportation needs to service the bond debt. This allows for no revenue impact or increased taxes while utilizing transportation fees to support transportation needs.



A FIRST-RATE TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE SYSTEM DRIVES THE ECONOMY, AND OKLAHOMA HAS MADE MARKED PROGRESS OVER THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS. THE LIST OF FUTURE PROJECTS IS LONG AND MUCH NEEDED TO ENSURE A MODERN, SAFE TRANSPORTATION NETWORK. I BELIEVE THE LEGISLATIVE LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNOR FALLIN RECOGNIZE THE IMMENSE IMPORTANCE TO SUPPORT TRANSPORTATION AS A FUNDING PRIORITY AGAIN THIS YEAR."

-Former Governor Frank Keating, TRUST co-chairman



House Speaker Jeff Hickman speaks during TRUST Transportation Day, held March 11th at the State Capitol.

Innovative funding for transportation. TRUST supports innovative and alternative transportation funding that is revenue adequate for the intended purpose and user equitable as part of a comprehensive approach to increase overall transportation funding.

FEDERAL

Support long-term funding of Highway Trust Fund and federal surface transportation programs. TRUST supports the passage of long-term federal legislation that ensures a permanent funding solution to stabilize revenues directed to the Highway Trust Fund, and that enhances regulatory relief efforts and flexibility for states to deliver the federal transportation program.

Support Tribal Transportation Program. Each year tribal transportation partnerships across the state contribute close to \$60 million annually to highway and bridge construction. TRUST supports the current apportionment formula of Tribal Transportation Program federal funds and supports expansion of the Tribal Transportation Program and tribal partnerships.

Budget Priorities: Making the Case for Transportation

THE FOLLOWING OPINION WAS AUTHORED BY TRUST PRESIDENT NEAL MCCALED AND APPEARED ON THE EDITORIAL PAGE OF THE JANUARY 31, 2015 TULSA WORLD.

PRIORITIZING OKLAHOMA'S BUDGET

has always been a delicate process, and as government has grown, numerous non-core entities have reduced funding to the core priorities of transportation, education, public safety and health and human services. State leaders have a responsibility to properly fund these priorities, and opinions certainly vary as to whether they are funded to the 100% satisfaction of taxpayers or respective state employees. While there is constant debate as to government priorities, I strongly advocate a modern, safe transportation infrastructure system as chief among them.

The past is important for historical context. From 1985-2005, the Oklahoma Department of Transportation's budget was annually standstill. Monies were, at times, dedicated to selected capital improvement projects, however no new revenue was available to address Oklahoma's structurally-deficient bridges. The result was Oklahoma quickly garnering a reputation as having some of the worst bridges in America. In 2005, when our bridges and many of our roadways were literally crumbling, transportation advocates from across Oklahoma joined forces in support of SQ 723, a fuel tax increase to revitalize our bridges and infrastructure. The proposal's overwhelming defeat by voters was a true reality check. The lesson learned was that somehow state leaders were going to have to find a method to return transportation funding – after a 20-year absence – as a core priority of state government.

Since 2006, the Oklahoma legislature has transformed its approach to transportation funding. The defeat of SQ 723 shifted the responsibility of reversing years of inadequate funding to the 149 members of the Senate and House. To their credit, the legislature accepted the challenge, and through annual dedicated funding programs, such as the ROADS (Rebuilding Oklahoma Access for Driver Safety) and CIRB (County Improvements for Roads and Bridges) funds, the past eight years have seen a marked

transformation in how Oklahoma funds its transportation infrastructure. State and county highways, roads and bridges are in a far better place than they were just five years ago, however the list of sorely-needed projects remains immense.

Today, the fate of Oklahoma's highways and bridges remain at the hands of decision makers at the state Capitol, and never before in our 107-year history have there been more entities competing for a share of the state budget. 2015 is another critical one for the future of Oklahoma's transportation infrastructure system. The final budget must protect ODOT's eight-year construction plan, a definitive blueprint proposal to reduce structurally-deficient bridges on the state system to less than 1% by the end of 2019. The proven ROADS and CIRB programs must be allowed to reach their full completion, and as a matter of sound public policy, all transportation-generated revenues should be used strictly for highway and bridge construction and maintenance and not diverted to the general revenue fund. A self-funding transportation system would allow additional revenues to be allocated to education, public safety and health and human services.

I have stated many times that in order for Oklahoma to prosper and be a modern, economically-vibrant, job-creating state, we must safely and efficiently move product to market while providing our residents and visitors with safe roadways and bridges. Legislators of both parties have been tremendous partners in recent years, and Governor Fallin has placed highway and bridge investment as one of her top priorities. Their collective efforts are making a real difference and have Oklahoma on a path to recovery. It is imperative the progress continue, and Oklahoma's transportation infrastructure investment remain a budgetary priority, not just this year but for eternity. The economic vitality of Oklahoma and the safety of our citizens depend on it. ■



Neal McCaleb, TRUST president

2015 Transportation Day at the Capitol

ON MARCH 11TH, TRUST held its annual Transportation Day at the Capitol. The forum was attended by over 175 TRUST members and transportation advocates who voiced their support to legislators for continued investment in Oklahoma's transportation infrastructure, including protection of the eight-year plan and ROADS and CIRB programs. Attendees visited with legislators at a luncheon held in the second floor rotunda and during office visits. Following lunch, the gathering moved to the Blue Room where Lt. Governor Todd Lamb, Senate President Pro Tempore Brian Bingman, House Speaker Jeff Hickman, Senate Transportation Committee Chairman Gary Stanislawski, Senate General Government & Transportation Committee Chairman Kyle Loveless, House Transportation Committee Chairman Charlie Joyner, House Appropriations Subcommittee Chairman Mike Sanders, Secretary of Transportation Gary Ridley, ODOT Director Mike Patterson, OTA Director Tim Stewart, Oklahoma County Commissioner Ray Vaughn and Ottawa County Commissioner Russell Earls addressed the audience. Thank you to all TRUST sponsors and transportation advocates who attended this important annual event. Your participation made a positive difference. ■



Senate President Pro Tempore Brian Bingman was one of several legislative leaders addressing the over 175 in attendance at TRUST Transportation Day.



Senator Kyle Loveless, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on General Government & Transportation chairman, was a featured speaker during TRUST Transportation Day.



Washington County Commissioner Micheal Bouvier (left) and ACCO's Chris Schroder (right) at TRUST Transportation Day.



Lt. Governor Todd Lamb addresses a standing room only crowd in the Capitol Blue Room during TRUST Transportation Day.

Why Join TRUST?

Be part of the voice for transportation advocacy that works with legislators to implement solutions. Without your membership to TRUST, we risk losing the valuable momentum we have gained over the past eight years. At the state Capitol, we must have a constant and growing voice for transportation and hope you will join us in this vital cause.

MISSION STATEMENT

TRUST, *Transportation Revenues Used Strictly for Transportation*, is an advocacy group dedicated to restoring Oklahoma's transportation infrastructure. We are committed to creating a culture within Oklahoma government that values and adequately funds transportation as a core priority.

Principles of TRUST

- Use all state transportation-related taxes and fees strictly for transportation
- Protect and grow dedicated funds for Oklahoma's transportation system
- Educate policy makers and the public on the importance of investing in highways and bridges
- Support leaders who are committed to transportation as a core priority of state government
- Use high-quality, lasting materials in building and maintaining highways and bridges
- Advocate efficiency and accountability within the Oklahoma legislature and Oklahoma Department of Transportation

TRUST ON THE WEB

restoreTRUST.org

OKLAHOMA TRANSPORTATION NEWS



Our online news page is updated daily with local and national legislative and transportation articles. To receive articles as they are posted, select the orange RSS feed button located on the news page of the website.

FOLLOW TRUST ON TWITTER AND FACEBOOK



You can follow TRUST on Twitter and Facebook under the username "restoreTRUST." If you are not "Friends" with TRUST on Facebook, please do so today.

EVENTS ONLINE

TRUST provides the opportunity to register for upcoming events online. In addition to TRUST events, meetings for other transportation and member organizations are posted. To review the latest transportation happenings in Oklahoma, visit the events page at www.restoreTRUST.org. To have your organizations' activities posted contact TRUST membership director Helra Han at helrahan@gmail.com.

UPDATE YOUR MEMBER PROFILE ONLINE

In an ongoing effort to conserve operating funds, TRUST continually updates its mailing lists and contact database. If you wish to continue to receive TRUST mailings, emails and newsletters, or wish to add additional contacts within your organization, please visit www.restoreTRUST.org, click on the contribute page and select "update membership profile."

2015 Event & Member Programs

Thank you to all TRUST members who have renewed their membership for 2015. For members who have not renewed or prospective new members, our tiered membership levels offer multiple packages, branding opportunities and reduced admission to TRUST events. Members also have the flexibility to opt out of a membership package and sponsor or purchase admittance to individual events. New or renewed memberships can be registered online at www.restoreTRUST.org by clicking the contribute page or by contacting TRUST membership director Helra Han at helrahan@gmail.com.

MARCH 11, 2015: TRANSPORTATION DAY AT THE CAPITOL

Our annual Transportation Day at the Capitol was held March 11th beginning with lunch in the second floor rotunda for TRUST members, transportation officials and legislators followed by remarks from Lt. Governor Lamb and legislative leaders. TRUST members and guests then made office visits to their hometown legislators or transportation committee members. Transportation Day is an important annual event where transportation advocates join together to create a committed show of support for transportation funding and to emphasize our legislative agenda. Thank you to all TRUST members, sponsors and transportation advocates who attended this year's event.

TRANSPORTATION INNOVATION BANQUET

TRUST annually hosts the Transportation Innovation Banquet attended by over 225 TRUST members, legislators, federal, state and county elected officials, state and county transportation officials and transportation advocates who gather to discuss the current state of Oklahoma's and the nation's infrastructure.

A keynote address is provided by a nationally known transportation insider and the annual TRUST Guardian of Transportation Award is presented to a deserving Oklahoman. You do not want to miss this outstanding opportunity to hear from and visit with Oklahoma's political and transportation leaders. Invitations and additional information will be forthcoming.

TRANSPORTATION INNOVATION BANQUET TABLE HOST - \$1,250

Includes logo placement at event, admission to reception and dinner for eight (8). For TRUST members at TRUSTee and Road Champion levels, table host package is included. For TRUST members at the Advocate, Friend or Basic level, admission for one (1) is included. Additional admissions are \$175.

SENATE/HOUSE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE DINNERS - APRIL 20 & MAY 4

TRUST hosts its annual Senate and House Transportation Committee



Oklahoma Secretary of Transportation Gary Ridley speaks during TRUST Transportation Day.

Dinners each spring. The events begin with a reception for TRUST members and transportation industry advocates to interact with transportation committee members. Both events include a seated dinner with remarks from state transportation officials and updates from legislative leaders on budget negotiations and transportation-related legislation. Invitations and additional information will be forthcoming.

SENATE/HOUSE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE DINNER SPONSORSHIP - \$1,250 EACH EVENT

Includes logo placement at events and admission for two (2) to reception/dinner. For TRUST members at the TRUSTee or Road Champion level, sponsorship and admission to both dinners is included. For TRUST members at the Advocate or Friend level, admission for one (1) to both events is included. Additional admissions are \$100.

TRANSPORTATION FORUMS

TRUST hosts periodic transportation forums which allow TRUST members to interact with congressional, state, county and municipal elected officials regarding transportation issues at their respective level.

TRANSPORTATION FORUM SPONSORSHIP - \$1,000

Includes logo placement at forum and admission for two (2). For TRUST members at the TRUSTee, Road Champion, Advocate or Friend level, sponsorship and admission is included. Additional admissions are \$50.



TRUST president Neal McCaleb (left), Garfield County Commissioner Marc Bolz (center) and Oklahoma County Commissioner Ray Vaughn (right) were among the audience at TRUST Transportation Day.

Sponsors of SURFACE



Dues paid to TRUST, a project of Oklahomans for Safe Bridges and Roads, Inc. are not deductible as charitable contributions. However, 40% of dues paid may be claimed as business expense for federal income tax purposes for fiscal year 2014. Any dues paid used for lobbying efforts are not tax deductible.



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Please Plan to Attend our Upcoming TRUST

- Senate Transportation Committee Dinner - April 20
- House Transportation Committee Dinner - May 4
- Transportation Innovation Banquet

Details Coming Soon!