



# COUNTY ENGINEERS ASSOCIATION OF OHIO

## HB 415; Road Improvements

Dean Ringle P.E., P.S. – Executive Director

Proponent Testimony

December 12, 2017

House State and Local Government Committee

Chair Anielski, Vice Chair Hambley, Ranking Member Holmes and members of the House State and Local Government Committee, my name is Dean Ringle, and I am here on behalf of the County Engineers Association of Ohio (CEAO). I am asking you today to support House Bill 415, legislation that seeks to provide additional funding to local political subdivisions for road improvements and repairs in an equitable a fair manner.

Prior to joining CEAO as Executive Director in July of this year, I worked at the Franklin County Engineer's Office for more than 36 years, with the last 17 years serving as the Franklin County Engineer. Throughout my career at the engineer's office, I held positions in construction, surveying, and overall engineering management. I am currently an adjunct faculty member at The Ohio State University's College of Engineering, and serve on the boards of the Ohio State Board of Registration for Professional Engineers and Surveyors and the State of Ohio Public Works Commission.

Local communities are facing big financial hurdles that are impeding them from repairing faulty bridges, maintaining roads, building new transit lines and simply maintaining the existing infrastructure so it remains safe and efficient<sup>1</sup> - Not to mention filling that pothole that can cost a driver thousands in repair costs.

### **CEAO Supports HB 415 for the following reasons:**

#### **1. Raises revenue for local infrastructure without increasing taxes or fees**

Transportation funding has been in a near constant state of crisis for about a decade. Ohio's legislature, left in the lurch by the feds, is left to respond emphatically and creatively in their approaches to raise transportation revenue at the local level. HB 415's creation of the Local Government Road Improvement Fund would provide a new creative revenue source without raising taxes to accomplish it.

#### **2. Creates a Value Proposition between State and Locals**

The Local Government Road Improvement Fund would provide money to local governments for road improvements when the state's fiscal year yields a surplus. A surplus, by nature, is an indicator that all government entities (State and Local) are effectively managing their resources.

#### **3. Increase Potential Development and Job Growth of Ohio's Major Industry Sectors**

Revenue invested in local government plays an important role in not just transportation infrastructure, but development and job growth of Ohio's major industry sectors. Investing in infrastructure can trigger

immediate economic activity that creates and sustains jobs and tax revenues, yet yield long- lived capital assets that facilitate economic activity for many decades to come by providing access to jobs, services, materials and markets.<sup>2</sup>

#### **4. ROI That Keeps Recurring**

One of the most attractive benefits of public investments in transportation infrastructure is it creates tangible capital assets that are long- lived. In addition to creating jobs and generating tax revenues throughout the economy during the construction cycle, these investments provide infrastructure improvements that foster and facilitate continuing economic growth over many years beyond the initial investment.<sup>3</sup>

A study by Dr. Alicia Munnell of the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston concluded that states that invested more in infrastructure tended to have greater output, more private investment and more employment growth<sup>4</sup> Her work found that a one percent increase in public capital would raise national output by 0.15 percent.

Additional studies have found that transportation infrastructure investments have an impact on the attractiveness of local communities, which helps determine local economic activity and land values. In general, most studies find that locations close to large transportation infrastructure investment have higher land values.<sup>5</sup> An increase in road and bridge construction spending would have a positive impact on the output, employment and value added for this industry.

Thank you again for allowing me to present this testimony on HB 415 to you today. I am available for questions.

---

<sup>1</sup>.ARTBA Transportation Development Foundation, *A Blueprint for Economic Growth: The Impacts of Doubling Pennsylvania's Annual Transportation Capital Investment*, June 2010

<sup>2</sup> Munnell, Alicia, *How Does Public Infrastructure Affect Regional Economic Performance*, New England Economic Review, September/October 1990

<sup>3</sup> A synopsis of these studies are available in the Transportation Research Board's *Expanding Metropolitan Highways: Implications for Air Quality and Energy Use* – Special Report 245, 1995

<sup>4</sup> National Conference of State Legislatures, *Deep Dive Transportation*, 2017

<sup>5</sup> ARTBA Transportation Development Foundation, *A Blueprint for Economic Growth: The Impacts of Doubling Pennsylvania's Annual Transportation Capital Investment*, June 2010

## **ALL TRAVEL STARTS AND ENDS ON A LOCAL ROAD**

Since 1940, the County Engineers Association of Ohio has worked to unify its members in providing the highest quality transportation, drainage, surveying and land record keeping services. From the safe and efficient movement of people, goods and services to continuing land development needs, CEOO strives to construct solutions for many challenges to Ohio's local infrastructure.

Your county engineers are responsible for 26,859 bridges and 29,088 miles of urban and rural roadways that are vital to the continued growth and prosperity of state. Although Ohio is ranked 35th in the nation by geographic size, it has the fourth largest interstate network that carries the fourth largest amount of truck traffic. The state is within a 600-mile drive of half of the nation's population and is considered a crossroad for America's manufacturing and agricultural industries.