Roadmap to Reauthorization

Your Guide to Influencing the Next Highway Bill
This publication is provided by the Members of the National Asphalt Pavement Association (NAPA), who are the nation's leading hot-mix asphalt (HMA) producer/contractor firms and those furnishing equipment and services for the construction of quality HMA pavements.

NAPA Members are dedicated to providing the highest quality HMA paving materials and pavements and to increasing the knowledge of quality HMA pavement design, construction, maintenance, and rehabilitation. NAPA also strongly supports the development and dissemination of research, engineering, and educational information that meets America’s needs in transportation, recreational, and environmental pavements.
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Without a plan, the hot-mix asphalt industry will be ill-prepared for the legislative debate that will soon take place in the U.S. Congress. This Roadmap to Reauthorization is your how-to playbook for being involved in the political process for this tremendously important debate.

The Roadmap was prepared by the Highway Bill Task Force which was established by NAPA’s Legislative Committee in January 2007. The intended audience for this document is anyone and everyone involved in the business of hot-mix asphalt.

The Roadmap provides a brief history of the Federal-aid Highway Program and the unique role of the asphalt industry in fulfilling the program’s goals and promises. This federal program has evolved to the point where the hot-mix asphalt industry now has a huge stake in the next highway bill. The Roadmap explains why this debate is crucial for your company, your employees, your families, your industry, and your country.

The Roadmap describes in layman’s terms the legislative process for the next reauthorization. Particular emphasis is placed on providing tools the reader can use in advocacy efforts. The last section is devoted to specific steps you and your company can take to secure a strong highway construction market for 2009 and beyond.

This Roadmap will show how you can turn to Congress and make your voice heard.
The efficiency of the nation’s highway network is dependent upon a sustainable pavement infrastructure system of sufficient capacity and quality to expedite the flow of both freight and people safely and cost effectively. The federal government acts as a catalyst, providing nearly half of all capital funding for highway construction in the United States. The construction and maintenance of roads is contracted out to private-sector firms including hot-mix asphalt companies.

The bulk of the construction and maintenance costs in the U.S. are paid from taxes collected by federal, state and local governments. The investment decisions made by various levels of government—including the federal government—directly affect all those involved in the construction and maintenance of the highway infrastructure system.

Hot-mix asphalt companies, their employees, and their families are significantly affected by the decisions the federal government makes on policies and programs involving the nation’s highway infrastructure system. In 2009, Congress will decide whether to expand or reduce the federal government’s role in funding construction and maintenance of the nation’s highways.

This debate on the future of surface transportation in the 21st century will be the most important involving highway policy since Congress passed legislation in 1956 establishing the Interstate Highway System. The outcome will not only establish your company’s future market, it will leave a legacy on which future generations of Americans will depend.

This publication has been prepared to help you understand what is at stake for the HMA industry. Whether you are in the highway market or not, this legislation will affect your business. A second and more important objective for this publication is to help you be an effective advocate for the HMA industry when Congress takes up reauthorization of the Federal-aid Highway Program in 2009.

The hot-mix asphalt industry is made up of many, many people who truly care. If everybody in the industry played a role, no matter how small, it would give the Congress the support it needs to make the tough decisions on funding the Federal-aid Highway Program in 2010 and beyond.

Mike Acott
President, National Asphalt Pavement Association
The development of highways and highway transportation in the United States would not have been possible without a strong federal government acting under the remarkably successful Federal-aid Highway Program. As the name indicates, the Federal-aid Highway Program involves joint federal-state funding and execution of the design and construction of highways on approved systems of interconnected routes in all states. The following is a short history of the Federal-aid Highway Program.

The Early Years

The start of the federal-state joint highway effort began in 1916 with the passage of the Federal Aid Road Act. This landmark legislation, promoted by the national Good Roads Movement, marks the first time that the federal government provided assistance for state highway costs. The 1916 Act is the forerunner of much more federal highway assistance legislation over the years.

The Federal Aid Road Act provided funding for the improvement of any rural road over which the U.S. mail was carried. A key feature of the legislation was the requirement that each state must have a highway department capable of designing, constructing and maintaining designated roads in order to share in the appropriation.

The Federal Highway Act of 1921, together with the Post Office Appropriations Act of 1922, provided a multi-year plan of federal funding for the program. This federal-state partnership supported by a multi-year authorization bill and annual appropriations are essential to a continuous Federal-aid Highway Program that has endured to this day.

The Bureau of Public Roads, from which the Federal Highway Administration evolved in 1970, worked with the states to implement and administer the legislation beginning with the Federal-aid Road Act of 1916. In the early years, the Bureau held a tight rein on development of the program including approval of project plans and specifications. This initial strong central control accomplished a major objective of uniformity in the administration of emerging regulations and procedures among the states, thus establishing federal-aid programs in each state on a common basis.

The Interstates

This successful federal-state partnership culminated in the building of the 46,871-mile Interstate Highway System between 1956 and the 1990s. While the origins of the Interstate Highway System can be traced back to the 1930s, it was not until 1956 that Congress made it official with the enactment of the Federal-Aid Highway Act.
Another major feature of the legislation was the establishment of the Highway Trust Fund and the assignment of specific motor-vehicle user taxes to this fund for the payment of highway construction costs.

The act prescribed the standards for the Interstate System and established a new method for apportioning funds. The interstate highways were built largely at federal expense in order to ensure the completion of expensive urban highways and an integrated national highway system. States had to contribute only 10 percent of the total cost of construction.

Another major feature of the legislation was the establishment of the Highway Trust Fund and the assignment of specific motor-vehicle user taxes to this fund for the payment of highway construction costs. The Act also required the Federal-aid Highway Program to operate on a “pay-as-you-go” basis, requiring that Trust Fund revenues be adequate to meet all needs without drawing upon the General Fund of the U.S. Treasury.

The “TEA” Years

As the Interstate Highway System neared completion with the construction of the Boston Central Artery/Tunnel project, Congress debated the federal role in transportation. The first transportation legislation of the post-interstate era was approved by Congress in 1991. That legislation, known as ISTEA (the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act), directed the federal government to develop a national “intermodal” transportation system, including public transportation and improved access to ports and airports. While ISTEA boosted funding for highway construction, the legislation also gave states unprecedented flexibility for state and local governments to shift highway funds to pay for a broad array of non-highway programs.

TEA-21 (the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century) enacted in 1998 retained ISTEA’s essential features while boosting highway construction investments and creating new budget accounts for highway and transit programs. The bill directed all fuel taxes to the Highway Trust Fund and gradually began drawing down on the unspent balance in the Highway Trust Fund.

In 2005, Congress enacted SAFETEA-LU (Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users), which maintained state spending flexibility while focusing on safety and planning. The bill opened the door for more tolling and private-sector financing of infrastructure projects. It also contained over 6,300 so-called “earmarks,” specific projects requested by Members of Congress.
Crossroads

The Federal-aid Highway Program has changed over the last 90 years. Having started as a rural post road improvement plan, the program grew with the nation and its urban population, evolving to meet the need for intercity and interstate motor vehicle transportation. Under the so-called “TEA” bills, Congress refocused the program to address transportation challenges at the local level.

In the near future SAFETEA-LU will exhaust the Highway Trust Fund’s highway account. At the same time, the nation’s aging highway pavements must support rapid population growth, travel increases, and dramatic growth in freight. The transportation policy of the federal government will have to change—some predict dramatically—in the next reauthorization of the Federal-aid Highway Program, especially if the federal government, in partnership with the states, is to adequately address these challenges and keep America on the road to prosperity.
A Highway System in Crisis

Funding Crisis
- Highway Trust Fund will be insolvent by 2009.
- The value of the 18.3 cents federal gas tax rate will have declined 55 percent to 8.3 cents between 1998 and the end of 2015.
- Construction costs between 1993 to 2015 will have increased 70 percent.

Quality Crisis
- Original Interstate Highway System has approached its design life and needs to be rebuilt.
- 33% of US major roads in poor or mediocre condition.
- Current backlog of needed road, highway and bridge repairs now totals $461 billion.

Congestion Crisis
- 36% of US major highways are congested.
- Traffic congestion costs Americans $63 billion per year in wasted time and fuel.
- Americans spend 3.7 billion hours a year stuck in traffic.
- Population over the next 50 years is expected to grow by 140 million people.
- Highway travel in the U.S. as measured by vehicle miles traveled is expected to grow by 2.07% per year.
- Truck tonnage is expected to increase 114 percent between 2004 and 2035.

Competitive Crisis
- China is building a 53,000-mile National Expressway.
- India is building a 10,000-mile national expressway system.
- Europe is spending hundreds of billions of euros on a network of highways, bridges, and tunnels.
Asphalt Industry’s Role in the Federal-aid Highway Program

Since 1956 when the Interstate Highway Program was launched, Congress has provided billions of dollars for the construction and maintenance of the greatest public works project in our nation’s history. Over the years, the hot-mix asphalt industry has provided the material of choice to satisfy the public demand for smooth, durable pavements on our nation’s highways.

The role of the asphalt industry in the construction and maintenance of the federal-aid highway system is significant. It is helpful to understand just how large the federal-aid highway system is and the impact it has had on the hot-mix asphalt market.

Today, asphalt surfaces 94 percent of all paved public roads in the United States, including 83 percent of the National Highway System. Older sections of the original Interstate Highway System, many built with concrete, are now being replaced with hot-mix asphalt.

Today, the federal-aid highway system stretches a total of 980,968 miles. This includes the original 46,781 miles of the Interstate Highway System.

The Intermodal Surface Transportation and Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991 established the National Highway System (NHS). The NHS includes 115,502 miles of principal arterials, highways, international border crossings, and ports. All routes in the Interstate System are a part of the NHS.

In 2004, total highway capital spending by all levels of government totals $70 billion. The federal government’s investment is 44 percent of the total highway construction market.

State and local governments, and toll revenues, make up the remainder. Most federal highway dollars are invested in improvements to the federal-aid highway system. The federal-aid program also helps to drive state and local spending.

Considering that the highway construction market is approximately 65 percent of the HMA market in the United States, the hot-mix asphalt industry has a significant stake in the outcome of the next surface transportation bill.

HMA Stakeholders

• HMA producers
• Oil suppliers
• Aggregate companies
• Equipment manufacturers
• Equipment dealers
• Subcontractors
• Suppliers
• Vendors
• Consultants
Industry Challenge

Future federal investment in highway construction is in doubt for 2009 and beyond. By all estimates, the Highway Trust Fund will not have enough revenue to support the federal commitment promised in SAFETEA-LU. The federal fuel tax has not been adjusted since 1993 and the cost of construction has increased.

Moreover, the “Bridge to Nowhere” debacle has harmed public support for the Federal-aid Highway Program. Given high gas prices and the reluctance of lawmakers to support a fuel tax increase, many are pushing for greater private-sector funding even though revenues from tolls will not come close to replacing the current federal commitment to the highway program.

Why the HMA Industry Needs to Care

Why should 300,000 employees and their families in the hot-mix asphalt industry invest their time and money in the outcome of next surface transportation bill? The answer is that federal policymakers are seriously debating whether to pull the federal share of investment out of the highway market! A whopping 44 percent of the $70 billion annual highway market could disappear, putting at great risk good-paying American jobs.

Employees of HMA companies can affect the decision-making process, and direct involvement in the legislative process by the rank and file can be improved and increased. With the enactment of ISTEA in 1991, most assumed—incorrectly—that increased vehicle miles traveled would drive up gas tax revenues, and thus more highway spending, on a year-to-year basis.

While highway spending has increased, SAFETEA-LU has bankrupted the Highway Trust Fund and saddled states with over 6,000 earmarked projects. The frustration resulting from SAFETEA-LU now provides Congress an historic opportunity to re-examine the nation’s transportation policies and establish a new transportation vision that meets the nation’s challenges.
What is at Stake for the HMA Industry

The hot-mix asphalt industry typically has the opportunity to influence the highway construction market at the national level every year. During the run-up to the year in which Congress will reauthorize the Federal-aid Highway Program, this intensifies. The next transportation bill will not be a typical re-authorization. With a funding crisis looming, a federal surface policy and revenue commission has been established to examine the nation’s transportation priorities and challenges. Many stakeholder groups are engaged and Congress has already held hearings on the future surface transportation legislation.

In short, Congress has begun to debate the future of transportation policy in the United States, a debate not seen since the enactment of the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956. The issues will revolve around money, money, and money. Will Congress cut the fuel-based user fee? Can Congress raise a fuel-based user fee? If Congress raises a fuel-based user fee, will it get spent on highways or be diverted? Who will control the funding? Will the federal commitment to highway construction and modernization shrink? How will congressional action, or lack thereof, affect the HMA market?

The risks are great, the challenges daunting, and the opportunities potentially endless. One outcome is certain: when Congress makes its decision, the industry will have to live with it for the next six years or longer. NAPA urges every HMA contractor, their employees, and their families to get involved in the political process. Each and every employee must make some effort, no matter how small, towards making a difference and leaving a legacy for the future of the HMA industry.

Congress will soon debate the future of transportation policy in the United States, a debate not seen since the enactment of the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956.
The first and most crucial step in financing a highway project under the Federal-aid Highway Program is the **authorization legislation**. An authorization, such as SAFETEA-LU, TEA-21, ISTEA, etc., is a law that continues the program for a fixed period of time (five or six years). SAFETEA-LU provides states with spending authority for various highway programs based on a complex formula.

While acts such as SAFETEA-LU provide the multi-year foundation for the Federal-aid Highway Program, the actual financing of the projects is much more dependent on a second legislative act known as an **appropriations act**. Appropriation acts establish the amount of cash available from the Highway Trust Fund annually that would be used to reimburse states for the federal share of a given project. Congress tries to enact an appropriations act prior to the beginning of each new fiscal year which begins on October 1.

A state receives its spending authority according to a formula written into the law by SAFETEA-LU. However, a state also receives a lump sum of obligation authority by the appropriations act—an amount that is almost always less than the total spending authority it receives. When a state commits funds to a highway project, it must assign equal amounts of spending authority from SAFETEA-LU and obligation authority from the appropriations act.
The first and most crucial step in financing the Federal-aid Highway Program is development of authorizing legislation. Since 1916 with the passage of the Federal Aid Road Act, these acts have provided a multi-year foundation for the Federal-aid Highway Program.


Here is a roadmap.

**Administration Bills**

The administration (executive branch) normally proposes legislation to reauthorize highway and other surface transportation programs. This is not required by law, but has been a tradition in recent authorizations.

The Department of Transportation, working with affected agencies such as the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration, will prepare the proposed legislation. Since the transportation sector plays an important role in climate change and energy-related issues, the Department of Energy and the Environmental Protection Agency will also be involved in development of the next administration bill. To ensure consistency with the administration’s priorities, the Office of Management and Budget reviews and approves the legislation prior to the bill being sent to Congress.

*Then-NAPA Chairman Peter Wilson speaks at a rally on the National Mall. Photo ops and rallies can be very effective as attention-getters.*
The comprehensive administration bill prepared by the Department of Transportation is introduced in Congress during the year in which the prior authorization is set to expire. SAFETEA-LU expires September 30, 2009. Therefore, in 2009, Congress will consider the administration’s bill as it formulates its own legislation, and may incorporate provisions of the administration’s bill in its own legislation.

### 2008 Elections

The timing of the 2008 presidential elections presents a challenge to meeting this timetable. The outgoing administration is preparing a comprehensive surface transportation bill for the next President to present to Congress—along with a proposed FY 2010 Federal Budget—in early 2009. Many expect the Bush administration to present a skeletal framework of a new surface transportation act and leave the details and funding levels to be worked out by the new administration.

### Congressional Bills

Responsibility for developing surface transportation legislation rests with specific authorizing committees, and their appropriate subcommittees in Congress. For the Federal-aid Highway Program, the principal jurisdiction rests with the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee. The Highway Trust Fund and other revenue matters rest with the House Ways and Means Committee and the Senate Finance Committee. However, many other committees in the House and Senate are involved in the drafting of surface transportation legislation.

Congress begins the authorization process by conducting hearings as a springboard for developing legislation. Normally, the hearings begin shortly after the administration’s bill is introduced; however, numerous committees have already started the hearing process due to the critical nature of this legislation.

The hearings provide an opportunity for Congress to hear from interested organizations, experts and the executive branch on the future direction of the federal surface transportation programs.
Once the committee hearings are complete, the subcommittees begin preparing draft legislation on surface transportation programs and issues within their jurisdictions. Subcommittees will “mark up” (amend) the draft bills and present an agreed-upon draft to the full committee. The full committee will “mark up” the subcommittee drafts and present an amended version to the full chamber of the respective body of Congress for consideration.

The House and Senate will debate, amend, and vote on their versions of the legislation. When both bodies have acted, a conference committee is formed to reconcile differences and arrive at a consensus or compromise bill.

Upon agreement by the conference committee, a single bill is returned to each body of Congress for a vote. The bill must be voted on and approved in its entirety. When the conference bill has passed both the House and Senate, it is sent to the President for signature.

Possible 2009 Legislative Timeline

- New President & Congress take office
- New Congress begins hearings
- Subcommittees begin marking up draft bills
- House & Senate debate bills
- Conference committee meets
- SAFETEA-LU expires
- Administration bill introduced w/ FY10 budget
- House & Senate debate bills
- Congress approves final bill

Transportation Construction Coalition (TCC) Legislative Fly-In in Washington, DC
Coming to Washington Shows Legislators That You Care

A NAPA delegation from Mississippi, led by Tone Garrett, meets with Senator Trent Lott during a TCC Fly-In. Such group lobbying efforts can deliver a powerful message. The more citizen lobbyists participate, the better!

The annual Transportation Construction Coalition (TCC) Fly-In provides talking points, updates, and lobbying tips to help the industry participants become effective advocates for the highway program.
From a citizen’s perspective, Congress can seem distant and intimidating. The debate over transportation policy and legislation is hard to follow and the legislative process is complex. But don’t let that deter you from making your voice heard. Congress is your representative institution. You pay the tax dollars to fund your government. Your federal government provides nearly half of the funding for highway construction. Your job may depend on how actively you are involved in the next Federal-aid Highway Program reauthorization bill.

Your voice and opinions are powerful. Your Members of Congress are elected to represent you. It is up to you to voice concerns and to make your voice heard. If you take the time to convey your thoughts to your elected officials and follow up with them, your messages on the Federal-Aid Highway reauthorization bill will have great impact.

Get Involved

This may be hard to believe, but you as the local constituent enjoy more persuasive ability to influence a Member of Congress than a lobbyist based in Washington. Why? Because you have the home field advantage. You vote.

You are their boss and the elected lawmaker serves at your pleasure. It is not only your right, but your duty to make contact with your Member of Congress.

Most Americans engage in the political process by voting in elections, knowing who their elected representatives are, and contacting them with questions and concerns. When the transportation bill is debated in Congress there will be scores of stakeholder groups and special interests seeking congressional support for their issue (See box at right).

That is why it is critically important for you to stay informed about important transportation issues before the Congress. At the right time, you may be asked by NAPA to get involved by contacting your member of Congress.

It is important that you have a plan in place for when a legislative alert comes in via e-mail or fax. Remember, your issue is only one of many, many issues—some of them conflicting—that Congress will deal with when it debates the transportation bill. Congress in general handles a bewildering array of issues on any given day.

Your job may depend on how actively you are involved in the next Federal-aid Highway Program reauthorization bill.
Silence or lack of involvement by the highway construction community will only ensure that Congress will not have the benefit of the industry’s input when the next highway program bill is enacted.

**Identify Your Member of Congress**

The easiest way to find out who represents you in Congress is to go to NAPA’s legislative Web site at http://legislative.hotmix.org. At the top of that site, there is a “Find Your Representative” feature where all you have to do is enter your zip code and it will provide you with a link to your Representative and U.S. Senators. (You need to use your nine-digit Zip code.)

This feature will provide you not only with the names of your elected officials, but also links to their Web pages, online contact forms, telephone numbers, and mailing addresses.

**Contact Your Member of Congress**

Staying in touch with your Representative or Senator is a cornerstone of active citizenship. It is a key to securing a well-funded, long-term transportation bill. While Members of Congress receive an average of 3,500 pieces of mail per month, the vast majority of Americans never pass on a thought or an opinion to their elected representatives. There is always room for one more voice—your representative wants to hear from you.

Staying in touch is the only way to guarantee that your views are known and your voice is heard on the next transportation bill. You can communicate with your Member of Congress and congressional staff in a variety of ways. Here are ten ways you can participate in this debate and make a difference:

- **E-mail** — E-mail is now the most popular way to get in touch with a Member of Congress. As a consequence, e-mail messages reaching the Congress have skyrocketed while the resources and staff to manage the workload have remained the same since the 1970s. Therefore, you should follow a few simple rules:
  - Send a message only to your House Representative and U.S. Senators.
  - Short, informative, personalized messages have more impact.
  - Utilize the Web forms provided by your Member of Congress to send a message.
  - Be sure to include your name, address, and phone number.

- **Letter** — The good news is that all correspondence to a Member of Congress is reviewed and you will almost certainly receive a response. Like an e-mail, your letter should be thoughtful and personal. The fact that few people take the time to craft a thoughtful letter almost guarantees that your letter will capture the attention of the legislator.
Fax — A fax is a letter sent electronically as opposed to being sent though the US Postal Service. Ever since 9-11, all mail sent via the postal service must be screened off-site, slowing delivery to congressional offices. If timing is an issue, sending your letter by fax is an acceptable means for delivering your message to Congress. Fax numbers are available through NAPA.

Phone — It is difficult to get a Member of Congress on the phone, but you can certainly pass on a message or talk to the legislative staff person handing transportation issues. Before calling, review your message, plan to keep your phone call to five minutes, and be prepared to give your name, address and phone number. Be sure to ask for a response from the Member of Congress.

Meet in Washington — Members of Congress make time in their schedules for constituents as long as appointments are made in advance. The best time to come to Washington is during the Transportation Construction Coalition’s (TCC’s) annual Legislative Fly-In held in the spring of each year. Briefings on key transportation issues and leave-behind materials are provided to assist in delivering the message.

Meet in the district office — This is often an easier and more productive meeting. There are many distractions in Washington resulting in very brief meetings. Meetings are easier to set up in the district office. The fact that you meet in the district office in no way diminishes your message.

Attend a local public meeting — Members regularly hold meetings. Congress will carve out one- or two-week recesses for members to work in their districts. Look for the schedule on your legislator’s Web site. Members will also mail future public or town-hall meeting notices to their constituents.

Issue a speaking invitation — You can invite a member to speak to a local group to which you belong. This is a great way to start a dialogue on highway spending.

Respond to a survey — Members of Congress will send surveys by mail or online to solicit views of their constituents on issues before Congress. Participate in those surveys and mention highway spending as a top priority.

Participate in virtual forums — Many Members of Congress now hold virtual forums. It is easy and convenient to participate in these online discussions. Consult with the lawmaker’s Web page to find more information.

Keep in mind, the more of these things you can do, the better.

Dave Carlson, NAPA Chairman at the time, testifies before Congress. Direct intervention by citizens in the legislative process keeps legislation responsive to real-world needs.
Tips for Delivering the Message

Now that you are ready to contact your Member of Congress, there are a few basic principles you should follow to be effective:

- **Be factual**: Utilize NAPA for facts and figures. You do not want to mislead your member of Congress.
- **Keep it short and to the point**: Time is valuable whether it be in a letter or a meeting. Be sure to state clearly your position and keep it to one issue only.
- **Be personal**: Use your company stationary. Explain how the issue affects you, your family, or your company.
- **Provide a solution**: Members of Congress hate whiners. Raise the problem and include the solution.
- **Be courteous**: If you disagree with a Member of Congress, do not threaten or argue. Instead, agree to disagree. That way you’re more likely to earn the respect of your Member of Congress.
- **Be a listener**: Listen to your Member of Congress. By listening, you will gain valuable insight into his or her thinking. You may learn how to better influence your lawmaker in the future.

Don’t forget NAPA: Your association can assist you providing you with key messages and offering strategic advice. Keep NAPA in the loop by providing feedback after the meeting.

The Message

Some people are uncomfortable asking for something, especially from a Member of Congress. But in this case, it is important to “make the ask.” In fact, the only way to ensure a congressional office thinks about you and your issue for longer than five minutes is to force them to make a decision. And the only way to force them to make a decision is to ask for something.

The “ask” could be to cosponsor a bill or sign a letter. You might ask the Member of Congress to support or oppose legislation pending in committee or on the floor of the House or Senate.

You could ask a Member of Congress to visit your plant or quarry, make a statement on the floor about a particular award you won, or write an article for your newsletter.

As a member of NAPA, you should consult your association for specific messages on the surface transportation bill. Remember, messages can differ as bills advance during the legislative process, so it’s wise to keep up with current developments.
Ideas for Increasing Involvement

Key to a successful transportation bill will be mobilizing your company’s employees at the right time during the legislative process. People make the difference. This includes your employees who also have a huge stake in the outcome of the next transportation bill. The following tips can improve our grassroots effectiveness and help secure a better transportation bill:

- **Develop a company grassroots policy:** When a NAPA alert arrives by e-mail, how will it be handled in your office, division, branch, or company? Set up a procedure for distributing alerts throughout the company and insist on employee participation. The more people who contact the Member of Congress on a given transportation issue, the more effective the response.

- **Engage the State Asphalt Pavement Association:** Urge the state association to establish a policy for distributing and responding to national grassroots alerts. State associations have the ability to reach beyond the national membership base, thus broadening the reach of the original alert.

- **Sponsor a “meet and greet”:** Meet and greets can be held in your home and may be as simple as inviting your friends and neighbors over for coffee to meet candidates or lawmakers. Meet and greets can also be held at your company. Ask your member to come and meet your employees for an hour and discuss current issues that have an impact on your business.

- **Hosting facility tours:** Facility tours are an excellent way for lawmakers to expand their understanding of the transportation construction industry and your company’s importance in the community. Lawmakers can see firsthand how current issues affect your company’s operations. The various operations of the transportation construction industry are much more memorable seen up close than described on paper.

- **Host or attend a fundraiser:** One of the most helpful activities that you can do for a political candidate is to host a fundraising event in your home. Campaigns always need money – and planning and hosting an event in your home is a generous contribution of your time and energy. If you cannot host a fundraiser, attend a fundraiser instead.

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**Sample “Ask”**

“Please support full funding for the highway program. My job depends on it!”

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*Invite your Member of Congress, together with staff, to tour your HMA plant. The “getting to know you” process will benefit both sides.*
Join Other Coalitions

While individuals may initiate change, organized coalitions sustain change over time by defining issues and priorities, gaining support, and holding elected officials accountable for the results.

Join with groups who share your point of view. There is strength in numbers. Working in a coalition with others presents an opportunity for you to pool your resources and add your voice to a chorus of voters who share your concerns.

There are numerous partners to consider when forming a coalition. They include local business leaders, local Chamber of Commerce groups, labor unions, transit stakeholders, and AAA. A local coalition that is working to grow transportation funding may already be established in your area. Consider getting involved.

Coalitions can be national, statewide, or local. NAPA participates in a national US Chamber of Commerce-led coalition called Americans for Transportation Mobility (ATM). The Transportation Construction Coalition (TCC), of which NAPA is a founding member, organizes the construction industry’s premier annual legislative fly-in each spring.

There are numerous state and local coalitions fighting for increased transportation funding. These coalitions can be helpful when Congress reauthorizes the surface transportation programs in 2009. Your involvement will help ensure that the messages of these groups are in accord with the messages being conveyed at the national level.

State and Local Decision-Makers

When it comes to federal transportation funding issues, state and local governments matter. Many state transportation agencies are being directed by their state elected leaders to base their investment programs on current commitments, not new taxes. With sizable backlogs of unfunded highway projects, more and more states are turning to debt financing, tolling, and the sale or long-term lease of their state transportation assets.

At the local level, many officials feel that transportation costs, which were traditionally funded by the state, are being shifted to regional agencies and local governments.

State and local officials will be pushing Congress to increase funding levels for transportation projects. It is important for the state associations and local contractors to work with the state and local stakeholders to establish priorities (e.g., increased funding for highway maintenance), to ensure common messages, and to establish an agreed-upon set of facts.

State and local stakeholders include:

- Governor: Appoints head of DOT and submits transportation budget.
- Legislature: Approves annual transportation funding levels and enacts state transportation laws.
- Department of Transportation: Plans, designs, builds, and maintains the state highway system and develops statewide, long-term transportation plans.
- Mayors, county executives, city and county councils: Control local revenue.
- Local public works departments: Manage and operate local roads and streets.
Letters to the Editor

Engaging the media is an essential step. Letters to the editor can educate the public and influence Members of Congress.

Most Members of Congress and their staffs monitor their hometown newspapers for issues affecting their district and any articles that mention the Member of Congress. Use the media to create public support for your positions. Members are always looking to see what the public wants.

Media includes the mainstream press such as regional newspapers, radio and TV stations. Neighborhood newspapers and civic association newsletters should not be overlooked. Electronic media including Internet news sites and blogs are widely read. NAPA’s legislative Web site at http://legislative.hotmix.org includes a media function that enables users to identify the media in your area with local contact information. Armed with that information, letters to the editor could be crafted and sent.

Letters to the editor, like letters to Members of Congress, should be short, clear, and personal. Cite references including recent newspaper articles or reports from national groups such as TRIP. NAPA can help you craft a letter to the editor, but using your own words is always better and increases the likelihood that your letter will be published.

Town hall meetings are a great way to interact with your legislator. If you participate, your legislator will know your concerns.

It is important for the state associations and local contractors to work with the state and local stakeholders to establish priorities.

See page 30 for Suggested Company Grassroots “To-Do” List
Identifying your Members of Congress

Find your Senators: http://legislative.hotmix.org
Find your Representative in the House: http://legislative.hotmix.org
Local phone books have congressional office information, too.

Making contact by phone
Senate switchboard: 202-224-3121
House switchboard: 202-225-3121

Making contact by mail
The Honorable (Senator’s full name)
US Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable (Representative’s full name)
US House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Making contact by e-mail
For the Senate: www.senate.gov/contacting/index.cfm
For the House: www.house.gov/writerep/
For both houses of Congress: http://legislative.hotmix.org

Web sites
NAPA Legislative Website: http://legislative.hotmix.org
The Senate: www.senate.gov
The House: www.house.gov
Tracking Legislation: www.THOMAS.gov
US Department of Transportation: www.dot.gov
Federal Highway Administration: www.dot.gov/fhwa

Media
Identifying local media: http://legislative.hotmix.org
TRIP: www.tripnet.org

Coalitions
Americans for Transportation Mobility: www.a-t-m.org
Suggested Company Grassroots “To-Do” List

The following list contains suggested steps YOU and YOUR COMPANY can take to be prepared for the next federal highway reauthorization bill:

1. Identify the Federal-Aid Highway Program reauthorization as a top company priority.

2. Appoint an individual to serve as company grassroots coordinator and identify individuals in branch offices to serve as grassroots disseminators.

3. Prepare a company grassroots action plan and disseminate to all employees.

4. Add “Company Grassroots” to your management team meeting agenda.

5. Provide a Web site link to your local Members of Congress on the company intranet to facilitate employee communication.

6. Set up an action center for employees to send messages to Congress.

7. Designate an employee to work with your local Chamber of Commerce on transportation funding issues.

8. Meet with subcontractors and vendors to encourage their involvement.

9. Plan to attend the Transportation Construction Coalition Fly-In in Washington in May.


Watch for Grassroots Alerts and sample letters from NAPA.
Easy steps to contact your Member of Congress

Follow these easy steps to contact your Representatives:

1. You will need your nine-digit Zip code. If you don’t know your four-digit extension, look it up at http://zip4.usps.com/zip4/welcome.jsp.

2. Go to this Web site provided by the House of Representatives: http://www.house.gov/writerep/

3. Follow the instructions under the banner “To contact your Representative:” First, select your state of residence from the pull-down menu. Second, enter your Zip code including four-digit extension. Third, click the “Contact your Representative” button.

4. On the next screen, fill in your name, address, phone number, and e-mail address. Then click the button that says “Continue to Text Entry Form.”

5. Enter your message in the text box on the screen and then click the “Send Your Message” button to submit.

Follow these easy steps to contact your Senators:


2. In the top right corner, select your state and the names of your two Senators will appear.

3. Call your Senator’s office at the number provided, or click the links to the Senator’s “Web form” to send an e-mail.

4. Enter your message in the text box on the screen and then click the “send” button. Don’t forget to contact both Senators from your state.

Format for sending a letter:

Never underestimate the power of the written word! For letters you must use the proper forms of address as follows:

U.S. Senator
The Honorable Jane Doe
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510
Dear Senator Jane Doe:

U.S. Representative
The Honorable John Smith
US House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515
Dear Representative John Smith:

Be sure to include your return address on the letter.

It is important to “make the ask.”
Glossary

**Appropriation Act** — Legislation enacted annually by Congress to make funds available for expenditure with specific limitations as to the amount, purpose, and duration. For the highway program, the appropriation act specifies the amount of funds Congress will make available for the fiscal year.

**Authorization Act** — Basic substantive legislation that establishes or continues federal programs or agencies and establishes an upper limit on the amount of funds for the program(s). The current authorization act for the Federal-aid Highway Program is SAFETEA-LU, which expires on September 30, 2009.

**Federal-aid Highway Program (FAHP)** — An umbrella term for most of the federal programs providing highway funds to the states.

**Fiscal Year** — The accounting period for the budget. The federal government’s fiscal year is from October 1 until September 30. For example, Fiscal Year 2010 (which can be written as FY 2010 or FY 10) runs from October 1, 2009 until September 30, 2010.

Bibliography

The following resources were used in preparing this document:


