

March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024



The Honorable Senator Mike Braun  
404 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington DC 20510

Dear Senator Braun,

The National Asphalt Pavement Association (NAPA) thanks you for your resolution recognizing National Work Zone Awareness Week next month. NAPA is the only national trade association exclusively representing companies involved in the production and application of asphalt pavement mixtures. The asphalt industry represents thousands of companies and over 350,000 hard working men and women across the nation producing and paving local, state and federal roads with asphalt. NAPA prides itself on safety and achieving the highest possible standards to protect our workers and the motoring public.

As you know, over 94 percent of the nation's roads are made with asphalt pavement, putting our industry in the crosshairs of work zone crashes from coast to coast. Last year, there were over 40,000 work zone crashes, many involving NAPA member companies and their employees. Unfortunately, during these crashes, over 900 lives were taken in 2023, a number that has been rising and has nearly doubled since 2012. Unfortunately, these incidents occur as motorists speed through work zones, drive distracted by their smartphones, or ignore visible signs and lane changes throughout active work zones.

NAPA is acting on this issue – in partnership with our State Asphalt Pavement Associations partners – exploring and supporting many legislative and regulatory enhancements to work zone safety policy. At the state level, these efforts include automated speed enforcement, more funding for additional law enforcement presence inside work zones, enhanced penalties for driving violations in work zones, funding for new/more safety equipment, such as delineator trucks, and new multi-colored warning lights to warn drivers of hazards ahead.

On the federal level, NAPA has been engaged, leading efforts to include language to the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) establishing the Work Zone Safety Contingency Fund. This fund is intended to serve as an account that State Department of Transportation agencies could utilize for additional safety related improvements in work zones. These funds are available on an as-needed basis once a public works contract for a certain work site is in place. This is a necessary improvement for the states, as well as the contractors, due to the low-bid environment; any safety measures previously not specified in the contract would be the contractor's financial responsibility.

Thank you for your leadership on work zone safety and putting forward a resolution recognizing Work Zone Safety Awareness Week. Please consider NAPA a resource and our industry stands ready to engage and collaborate with you on this immensely important topic going forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Nile Elam", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Nile Elam  
Vice President of Government Affairs  
National Asphalt Pavement Association