May 6, 2020

Senator Jeanne Shaheen
Senator Maggie Hassan
Representative Chris Pappas
Representative Ann Kuster

Dear Members of the New Hampshire Congressional Delegation,

As the coronavirus pandemic has taken its toll across the nation, New Hampshire’s construction industry has continued working to ensure the reliable maintenance and operation of our roads and bridges. This protection of critical infrastructure has been essential to keeping those on the roads safe and delivering critical goods for our residents. However, due to the significant decline in vehicles using the roads and state turnpike system, our state DOT is now facing a potential loss of approximately $55-$60 million over the biennium for the Highway Fund and approximately $40-$45 million in the Turnpike Fund. This crisis also extends to municipalities, which receive 12% of the revenues from those funds. The loss of these funds could greatly disrupt efforts to maintain the safe, efficient operation of our nation’s roads, highways, and bridges.

The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) has requested $49.95 billion in funding for state DOTs to offset the anticipated state revenue declines. AASHTO calculated this number by projecting a 30 percent decrease in state revenue collections for the remaining six months of FY 2020 and all of FY 2021. AASHTO also called on Congress to recognize the need for the funding to be available to states at 100 percent federal share. State DOTs are facing operational, maintenance, capital, and debt service obligations that cannot be met without federal funding eligibility for these urgent needs.

The Associated General Contractors of NH, the NH Municipal Association, American Council of Engineering Companies of NH, and the NH Good Roads Association strongly supports the AASHTO requests and urges your support as well. Our nation’s transportation systems, and the public and private workforces that operate, maintain, and build them must continue to function during this pandemic, as well as during the recovery that will follow. It is also important to remember the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act expires on September 30, 2020. We urge Congress to address this priority by passing legislation that funds the program for multiple years at annual levels that ensure reductions in investment backlogs. This investment will also provide the essential transportation reliability and capacity necessary to support the economic recovery that must follow this crisis. As we have seen in the past, infrastructure investment is a valuable tool to spur economic growth.

Recently enacted COVID-19 relief bills contained aid to states. The needs of states vary significantly, and additional flexibility is warranted to allow states to address those needs. We
urge adoption of language in any future relief or stimulus bill to provide flexibility to states allowing the expenditure of already enacted COVID-19 relief funds or future COVID-19 relief funds for any Essential Critical Infrastructure as defined in the Department of Homeland Security Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency Guidelines, Version 3.0 (April 12, 2020)(or as amended in the future).

We appreciate your leadership during these uncertain times. On behalf of the associations listed below, we thank you for considering these requests to strengthen and protect New Hampshire’s infrastructure, and promote economic recovery and growth.

Sincerely,

Gary Abbott, Executive Vice President
Associated General Contractors of NH, 48 Grandview Rd, Bow, NH

Brenda Clemons, Executive Director
NH Good Roads Association, 261 Sheep Davis Road, Concord, NH

Margaret Byrne, Executive Director
NH Municipality Association, 25 Triangle Park Dr. Concord, NH

Alex Koutroubas, Executive Director
American Council of Engineering Companies of NH, 17 Depot St., Concord, NH