



Principles for Transportation Funding

Pennsylvania's roads and bridges need repair. But before taking one more dollar from working men and women through higher prices at the gas pump, lawmakers must work to ensure every cent of the billions of dollars in taxes and fees we currently spend are used efficiently.

The problem isn't simply a shortage of transportation dollars:

- Pennsylvania spends more than \$94,000 per road mile, the **10th-highest road spending in the country**, according to the Federal Highway Administration.
- State highway spending exceeds \$880 per person, **more than 41 other states**.
- Over the past 17 years, state transportation spending more than doubled.

Five ways to find funding for roads and bridges without taxing Pennsylvania drivers:

1. **Prioritize Every Transportation Dollar:** Transportation projects, like all government appropriations, must be prioritized. Beautification, streetscaping, bike trails, parking garages, and new maintenance buildings eat up funding that could be used for vital repairs. Every dollar spent on unnecessary aesthetics is one dollar that cannot be spent fixing our more than 5,000 deficient bridges.
2. **Utilize Public-Private Partnerships:** Recently enacted legislation will allow the Department of Transportation and local transportation agencies to enter into public private partnerships (P3s) that bring private sector expertise and financing to transportation. P3s are contractual agreements between a government agency and a private entity to build or manage a project. P3s minimize costs and maximize accountability as private contractors put their own capital on the line while government retains ownership and oversight.
3. **Users Pay:** To the extent possible, users should pay for the transportation they use. This includes tolling that is limited to maintenance of the road being tolled. Lawmakers should stop sending Turnpike toll money to mass transit systems in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, and make transit systems rely on user fees, not taxpayer subsidies. This would free up Turnpike revenue to repair the roads motorists are paying to drive on.
4. **Prevailing Wage Reform:** Archaic mandates that force private employers to pay workers inflated wages on government-funded construction projects increase the cost of road work, and limit the number of projects state and local governments can complete. Redefining prevailing wage rates on state-funded construction projects can free up funding that could be used on other badly needed projects.
5. **Give Transportation Priority over Nonessential Spending:** Fixing roads and bridges is a core government responsibility and should take priority over other state programs, such as the billions of dollars in handouts and subsidies for sport stadiums, corporate headquarters, and Hollywood film productions. Redirecting state borrowing to transportation would make better use of taxpayers' dollars.