

GIVE STATES MORE FLEXIBILITY DURING TRANSPORTATION EMERGENCY

Co-Sponsor the “State Transportation Emergency Flexibility Act”

Dear Colleague:

Over the last few months, we have heard numerous discussions about what should be done regarding our crumbling infrastructure. Our bridges and roads are in desperate need of repair and are raising safety concerns nationwide. In October 2011, Transportation for America ranked 1 of every 9 American bridges as “structurally deficient”.

Governors currently have very little flexibility in handling infrastructure needs during an emergency. If there was a hurricane, tornado, flood or a collapsed bridge, governors currently do not have flexibility to use funds we have already provided to them to fix this emergency. They will either be forced to use state money, which they may not have, or request additional money from the federal government. They should be allowed to use the money we already provide them as a first step. That is why I am introducing the “State Transportation Emergency Flexibility Act of 2011,” which will prevent governors from having to ask Congress for additional funds and allow them to use federal transportation dollars more flexibly in states of emergency.

When a transportation emergency happens in any state, the governor will provide written notice to the Secretary of the Transportation of the emergency. After written notice is provided, the governor will be able to use Title 23 money more flexibly to repair the emergency.

In the past, Title 23 dollars were appropriated only for programs such as bike paths, trail programs and highway beautification projects. Title 23 money comes from the Transportation Trust Fund and is paid for through the gas tax but governors have been prohibited from using it on highway projects. We should not be spending millions of federal dollars on floral scenery for highways when we have numerous bridges and roads that are structurally deficient and in need of repair. My legislation would allow governors to use Title 23 funds in a transportation emergency.

It’s time that we allow our nation’s governors to use all their federal transportation dollars more flexibly during an emergency. A few key points about this legislation:

- **NO NEW SPENDING**: This is not giving the governor’s additional money, this is simply allowing them to use the money they already receive for a transportation emergency.
- **STATE FLEXIBILITY**: In any transportation emergency or natural disaster, governors are prohibited from using the transportation money they already receive to repair the disaster. We need to be better stewards of tax payers money and use the Transportation Trust Fund for its intended purpose during an emergency.

Please join me in the becoming a better steward of taxpayer dollars during a transportation emergency and give some flexibility back to our Governors. To become a co-sponsor of this

important legislation, please contact Teresa Buckley in my office at 202-225-4636 or at Teresa.Buckley@mail.house.gov .

Sincerely,

/s/

Larry Bucshon, M.D.

Member of Congress