

## Senate Transportation Act 89 Hearing Statement

Chairman Rafferty, Chairman Sabatina, members of the Senate Transportation Committee, thank you for the opportunity to reflect on the impact of Act 89 on our joint goal of providing the people of Pennsylvania with a well-functioning transportation network.

We at PennDOT are grateful for the Act 89 benefits that have provided the department the resources to stay ahead of the challenges of managing a large transportation network that needs constant investment. PennDOT is working hard to deliver the promises of Act 89.

Utilizing these new resources, we have gained significant ground reducing the number of bridges in poor condition. From a high of 6,034 in 2008, we now are down to just over 3,000, and that progress comes in the face of the ongoing aging of our bridges that adds 200 to 250 bridges to the poor category every year.

Working with Act 89 resources, PennDOT has completed 2,519 construction projects worth \$5.5 billion and has an additional 796 projects worth \$5.7 billion underway. Last year, PennDOT improved the equivalent of 6,697 miles of two-lane road, resurfaced more than 2,100 roadway miles and fixed nearly 500 structurally deficient bridges.

Recognizing the backlog of pavement improvements needed across our system, Governor Wolf and Secretary Richards launched our Road Map program. This calls for allocating \$2.1 billion over ten years, with \$1 billion, starting in FY 18/19, to the counties and districts as well as another \$1.1 billion for interstate and major road reconstruction and rehabilitation across the state.

PennDOT is also focusing new resources on low volume rural roads which in some cases have significant issues. PennDOT recently strengthened and focused its RAP (recycled asphalt) Program to specifically address low volume rural roads. This program is made possible by follow-up legislative action ensuring more Act 89 resources are devoted to these critical pavement needs. In addition, we continue our multi-year, \$300 million initiative to address pavement conditions on low-volume rural roads as well as municipally-owned structurally deficient bridges. We estimate this will allow the improvement of more than 900 miles of roads and 85 to 100 bridges. This includes a \$200 million, five-year program to restore and repair rural commercial routes supplemented by an additional \$50 million from cost-sharing partnership agreements with industries that run heavy vehicles on these rural roads.

We also are undertaking a one-year, \$50 million program to improve an estimated 260 miles of lower volume traffic roads on the state-maintained system.

While restoring and maintaining what we have remains a core function for us, Act 89 did allow for important capacity adding projects that people have waited decades for. These include the Central Susquehanna Valley Transportation project in Snyder, Union, and Northumberland counties that closes a missing link on the important U.S. 15 north-south corridor, the U.S. 219

expressway addition in Somerset County, and the expanded U.S. 322 Conchester Highway in Delaware County. We also continue to rebuild Interstate 95 through Southeastern Pennsylvania, a massive multi-billion-dollar, multi-year program.

As the governor announced last month, PennDOT is tackling the thorny congestion problem on Interstate 76, the Schuylkill Expressway in southeastern Pennsylvania with an innovative program we call Transform 76. PennDOT plans to employ a series of smart corridor strategies and technologies over the next several years through this integrated corridor management initiative intended to maximize capacity on I-76, optimize traffic flow on adjacent roadways and incentivize transit, bicycle, and pedestrian travel throughout the corridor.

Act 89 also underwrites our ongoing Green Light Go program, which helps municipalities address a significant source of congestion -- mistimed and outmoded traffic signals. Governor Wolf just announced the fourth round of grants, \$31 million for improvements in 70 municipalities. So far, we have awarded \$77.8 million to 313 municipalities.

Another way local governments benefit from Act 89 is the increase in liquid fuels payments that help generate resources to maintain the nearly 78,000 miles of roads these entities manage. The 2018 distribution totaled \$489 million compared to the \$320.8 million municipalities received prior to Act 89.

And Act 89 provided the opportunity for counties to add \$5 to the annual vehicle registration fee that is generating much needed resources to attack the backlog of county bridge needs. Roughly 30 percent of county bridges are in poor condition and losing these connections due to weight restrictions or outright closings would play havoc with communities. Twenty-one counties have taken advantage of this Act 89 resource.

We keep seeing reports in the media about how our younger people are not as enamored with driving and using personal vehicles as we all were at that age. Fewer teens are getting their licenses, and young adults are choosing to live in urban areas and rely on public transit, ride sharing and bicycling to get where they want. Act 89 helped us address these emerging needs by putting all our transit agencies across the state on a firmer financial footing and dedicating funds for bicycling. The Multi Modal Fund created in Act 89 also supports crucial rail freight, passenger rail, aviation, and port investments.

Still, we are not without challenges ahead. The federal Highway Trust Fund, which generates roughly \$1.5 billion to \$1.6 billion a year for our highway and bridge network, will go insolvent in 2020 unless the federal government can find a way to achieve the consensus and added transportation investment that the General Assembly reached in Pennsylvania. We need a vibrant federal partnership if we are to continue to build on Act 89's successes.

In addition, PennDOT is carefully monitoring the effect of long term trends that erode the financial underpinnings of Pennsylvania's highway funding sources including more efficient vehicles, and decreased driving.

Regardless, as PennDOT's track record attests, Act 89 has been a resounding success and places us in the ranks of states that are advancing their infrastructure, an attractive selling point in the

battle for commerce and jobs. Our recent Eastern Pennsylvania Freight Summit highlighted the economic benefits in jobs that Pennsylvania is seeing as a result of the easy access to vibrant transportation links. In sum, Act 89 has laid the foundation for a brighter future for Pennsylvania.

Again, thank you for allowing us the opportunity to share our thoughts on Act 89.