

**Testimony Before the Pennsylvania Senate Transportation Committee  
CCAC Boyce Campus  
May 30, 2013**

Introduction and Thank You

Good morning. My name is Frank Horrigan. I am the president of the Monroeville Area Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber is a diverse, member-driven organization, focused on being an advocate to promote and advance business excellence and business alliances, thereby strengthening our local communities. We are 700 members strong, with our membership focused in eastern Allegheny County and western Westmoreland County.

I would like to start by thanking Sen. Rafferty and Sen. Wozniak for convening this hearing in Monroeville, and to especially thank Sen. Brewster, who was instrumental in bringing Harrisburg to Monroeville, if only for a day. I have been telling our members that this is their chance to make their voices heard, and that no easier opportunity could be presented to them. I'd also like to thank the members of our Public Policy and Advocacy Committee, some of whom are in attendance today. They have been instrumental in helping the Chamber refine its goals and objectives with respect to statewide transportation policy.

The Issues

Pennsylvania's transportation funding needs have been well documented. In 2006, Governor Rendell's Transportation Funding and Reform Commission released a study concluding that Pennsylvania's transportation funding gap totaled \$1.7 billion. In 2010, the Pennsylvania State Transportation Advisory Committee calculated that the annual funding gap had grown to \$3.5 billion. And please note that this is not just a trend in Pennsylvania. In its 2013 Report Card for America's Infrastructure, the ASCE reported that the Federal Transit Administration has estimated that a maintenance fund of \$78 Billion is required to bring the nation's infrastructure into a state of "good repair," defined as scoring a 2.5 on a scale of 5.0.

As a Commonwealth, we now have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to correct our course. The bill before you represents an investment in Pennsylvania that will create jobs, ease traffic congestion and thereby reduce fuel consumption, and increase efficiency and productivity. The benefits to southwest Pennsylvania and the Monroeville Area in particular of adequately funding transportation will be profound. The completion of the Mon-Fayette Expressway will open up development opportunities in the Mon Valley and create a better link between the eastern suburbs of Allegheny County and the Pittsburgh International Airport. Joe Kirk, whose testimony you have just heard, has been particularly passionate and eloquent on this issue. The Monroeville Area Chamber of Commerce also fully supports funding of the Mon-Fayette Expressway.

However, the reason I have been invited to testify is not only to lend my voice in support of the Mon-Fayette Expressway, but to make the business case for more comprehensive public transportation in the Monroeville Area and its environs. As you know, in March 2011 the Port Authority of Allegheny County was forced to eliminate or curtail much of its service. Twenty nine routes were eliminated, including those serving Elizabeth, Forest Hills, and Plum. In addition, 37 routes were reduced, including Sunday service in Penn Hills.

These reductions have had at least two detrimental effects. First, it constrains employees who are trying to get from their homes to their workplace in the Monroeville area. Upon learning of this hearing, I received word from three of the area's largest employers in support of expanding public transit options. CVS Caremark, employing more than 1,500 people in two 24/7 help desk facilities, reported that the elimination of the weekend service in Penn Hills has created real hardship for many of their employees. Similarly, the Doubletree Hotel, employing more than 300, has reported that many of their housekeeping staff have been affected by the service reduction. Finally, Forbes Regional Hospital has reported that, not only have some employees been disrupted as a result of these cuts, but that many of their patients feel the loss of service most acutely, as they had relied on PAT bus service to get them to and from their appointments.

As you can see, the reduction or elimination of surface transportation alternatives predominantly affects low-income workers -- people who may not be able to afford a car, let alone a second car.

The other detrimental effect of reduced transit service deals with Monroeville residents who work in the City of Pittsburgh. Fully 50 percent of those who work in the city take public transit to their workplace. Transit cuts in the eastern suburbs have forced people to make difficult decisions. I personally know of one instance in which a two-income family had to purchase a second car as a direct result of these cuts in transit service. This is not the kind of economic stimulus this commonwealth needs.

From the perspective of my membership, the Monroeville area views our region's transportation problems as taking place over two time horizons. In the long term we favor the Mon-Fayette Expressway. However, it is equally important, if not more, that we have relief from the cutbacks of our public transit routes, and that this bill includes a stable funding stream for the Port Authority. This is a remedy that can be applied in the short term, and need not come at the expense of the Mon-Fayette project.

### The Costs

Everyone who has been following this issue is aware that the price tag for this investment is considerable, and that a vote in favor of this bill is politically fraught. No serious advocate for a bill of this size can ignore the reality of how it is to be paid for.

My membership is aware that there will be costs. But considering what the cost estimates are -- roughly \$2.50 per week at most, which is less than a gallon of gas --

they are willing to bear them. Moreover, this cost increase must be weighed against the costs that we all would incur if this bill is not passed into law. Increased traffic congestion wastes gas and time. Substandard surface transportation inhibits productivity and impacts low-wage employees disproportionately. The cost of deferred maintenance on roads and bridges may one day be measured in lives lost. And not enacting this legislation will have a direct cost in tens of thousands of fewer jobs and a less attractive economic development climate in Pennsylvania. Far from being some kind of "tax and spend" government program, this is an investment with a measurable return -- the kind of return that any competent, private sector CFO would make in a heartbeat.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, thank you again for bringing this hearing to Monroeville and listening to our business community with respect to transportation issues. I hope I have impressed upon you that this community regards transportation as critical to maximizing its economic development potential and quality of life, and that public transportation is every bit as critical as infrastructure development. I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.