

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

Increase State Flexibility
Opt out of the Highway Trust Fund

Dear Colleague:

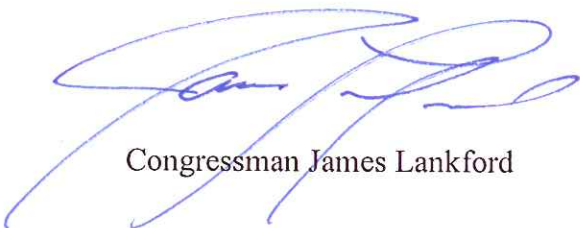
Since 2008, Congress has transferred nearly thirty five billion dollars from the General Fund to the Highway Trust Fund to ensure states have enough money to meet their transportation commitments and to comply with federal mandates. Despite the record level of spending, GAO recently concluded that “Large increases in federal expenditures for transportation in recent years have not commensurately improved system performance.” We believe it is time for Congress to enable states to manage their gas tax dollars without federal mismanagement.

While the Highway Transportation Fund continues to experience funding shortfalls, states also must navigate numerous bureaucratic obstacles, further impacting their ability to meet their transportation needs. In an effort to empower states, we have introduced H.R. 1585, the “State Transportation Flexibility Act.” This bill would give states the option to keep the funds they would otherwise be forced to contribute to the Federal-aid Highway Program and the Mass Transit Account (MTA). If a state chooses to opt-out of these programs, they would be able to collect, remit and manage their own gas tax dollars.

By allowing states to opt-out, they would also have the opportunity to be removed from the system that historically short-changed many states across the country. In previous years, these “donor states” received a lower percentage of formula funds that their states pay through the federal gas tax. Additionally, opting out would enable states to avoid numerous costly federal mandates and ensure more gas tax revenue is spent on maintaining and constructing transportation infrastructure. When it comes to transportation infrastructure priorities, states need the flexibility to use their money in the way they best see fit.

We urge you to cosponsor H.R. 1585, the State Transportation Flexibility Act, to give states flexibility and the power to spend transportation dollars on their highest priorities. If you have any questions or would like to cosponsor this legislation, please contact Brittnee Preston in Rep. Lankford’s office at Brittnee.Preston@mail.house.gov or 5-2132 or Sarah Towles in Rep. Flake’s office at Sarah.Towles@mail.house.gov or 5-2635.

Sincerely,



Congressman James Lankford



Congressman Jeff Flake