



PENNSYLVANIA STATE ASSOCIATION OF TOWNSHIP SUPERVISORS

May 12, 2020

To: Members of the Senate Transportation Committee
From: Joseph H. Gerdes, III, Government Relations Director
Subject: COVID-19 Impact on Pennsylvania's Transportation System

On behalf of the 1,454 Townships of the Second Class represented by the Pennsylvania Association of Township Supervisors (PSATS), we would like to express our gratitude to the committee for examining the impacts of the COVID-19 disaster on Pennsylvania's Transportation system. Pennsylvania has more than 117,000 total road miles, and two-thirds of these, along with thousands of local bridges, are owned and maintained by local government. These local roads and bridges are a vital link in our transportation network and provide children with safe transport to school, workers with reliable access to jobs, patients with transportation to doctors, and farmers with a means to move food to consumers across the state and country. As this disaster continues to unfold, township officials have been and will continue to do their best to maintain this vital piece of Pennsylvania's transportation infrastructure.

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 outbreak, local governments have been forced to delay projects to focus solely on emergency maintenance to ensure that roads remain open to support the life sustaining movements of people and commerce that was allowed to continue under the Governor's order, particularly emergency services and agriculture. They often faced challenges in doing so like getting the materials needed to do such maintenance but have worked tirelessly to get this important work done.

Just as the Commonwealth and the state Department of Transportation were examining how to accommodate the substantial funding needs of our vast transportation network before COVID, many townships were also preparing for lower liquid fuels allocations this year. Then the bottom dropped out with this disaster and they are now having to re-prioritize again to account for projected decreases in revenues going into next year.

PSATS wholeheartedly supports requests to the Federal Government to help defray the fiscal impacts of this disaster on transportation and hopes that any funding received be allocated fairly with local governments in mind. We also believe there are steps that can be taken immediately to help ease the impact on all municipalities struggling to maintain transportation infrastructure during these difficult times. For example, forward thinking reforms to the prevailing wage system could save millions which could be redirected into local roads and save taxpayers from further distress at this difficult time in history.

We look forward to working with you as we all adjust to this ongoing emergency while making sure our vital transportation network remains viable. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you.