

Sample Op-Ed for Commission Report

For more than a decade the needs of our transportation system in Pennsylvania have been growing faster than our ability to fund them. These needs are well documented: two state and two federal commissions have identified them in dollar terms stating that it will require \$3.5 billion per year in new revenues. In human terms the price is much greater as measure in terms of increased safety, convenience and economic competitiveness.

Policy makers have agreed that we need to find a way to get there. The Commission's Report shows us how to achieve this goal fairly and sensibly

Unlike other issues we face in Pennsylvania with transportation we know exactly how much it will take to achieve our goal of making travel safer and more convenient. The comprehensive solution the commission has recommended includes funding for roads, local government, public transit, ports, airports, and freight rail.

The winners are the residents of Pennsylvania who will benefit whether you drive, depend on public transit, ride a bike, or even if you never leave your home.

The formula for fixing the problem can be summed up in three words: "Shift, Reform, Uncap."

SHIFT: State Police funding back to the General Fund to free up \$300 million a year for transportation projects. And, shift Act 44 monies (failed tolling of I-80) to transit.

REFORM: Our outdated licenses and registration fees to make them more consumers friendly and adjust them for inflation.

UNCAP: The Oil Company Franchise Tax the calculation of which was established in the 1980s when gas prices were less than \$1 per gallon.

There are costs associated with this improvement. We estimate the user fees will grow from 70 cents per week in year one to \$2.50 per week in year five. The Secretary of Transportation is committed to demonstrating the value of this investment to every user of our transportation system throughout Pennsylvania. The new "E-Alert" system will enable every user to stay up-to-date on every project under construction.

What can you expect for your money? Safer and more convenient travel as a result of:

- Safer intersections
- Additional Turning Lanes
- Improved Safety Barriers
- Road Widening to Accommodate Bicycle Traffic
- New Traffic Signals
- Wider/Safer Roadway Shoulders

And, you will also see more Pennsylvanians working in family wage jobs preparing our state for a brighter economic future. The 21st century transportation network we will

build will position our Keystone Stone for growth over the coming decades by enabling us to take full advantage of our geography as the gateway to America.

We are calling on all Pennsylvanians to support our proposal to make Pennsylvania the best place to live, raise and family and find a family-wage job in all of America.
