FOR OHIO
FIX OUR ROADS OHIO
*Better Transportation for Working and Living*

March 14, 2019

The Honorable Larry Obhof
Ohio Senate
Statehouse, Rm. 201
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Senator Obhof:

Ohio's roads, highways and bridges are critical factors to the safety of our citizens and to our state's economic prosperity. For years, Ohio has relied on short-term fixes for funding our roads to put off difficult decisions that we face today. Our ability to maintain a safe, efficient and economically competitive transportation infrastructure is in jeopardy.

We appreciate the House of Representatives' commitment to new funding for our roads and bridges, however House Bill 62, as passed by the House, falls significantly short. Rather than solve our funding shortfall, it simply creates a smaller shortfall.

We also appreciate that the House recognizes that counties, townships, cities and villages have gone underfunded for years, and has taken steps to increase local funding. Local governments, however, also rely on state investment in many local projects. At the levels proposed by the House, these local projects simply can't happen.

Ohio has the nation's fourth largest interstate highway system and the second largest inventory of bridges. We rank third in freight volume, with $1.1 trillion in goods shipped to and from sites in Ohio, mostly by truck. We're sixth in total vehicle miles traveled, with 118.6 billion miles annually. And nearly 2.4 million full-time jobs in Ohio in key industries like tourism, retail sales, agriculture, and manufacturing are dependent on the state's transportation infrastructure network.

The House-passed version of the transportation budget fails to cover even basic maintenance needs. There will be no revenue for improvements, large or small. In fact, the Transportation Review Advisory Council — the body that assists ODOT with major project selection and prioritization — has canceled its 2019 meeting due to lack of major new funding. This means that critical and long-scheduled major projects will not happen, and those that are scheduled in phases will remain only partially complete.

Governor DeWine's proposal to increase the state motor fuel tax by 18 cents per gallon and index it to inflation will keep Ohio's motor fuel tax in line with surrounding states while allowing for adequate roadway maintenance and improvement program for years to come. And we remind you that Ohio's motor fuel tax has the added fairness of being a true "user fee." Only those who purchase fuel pay the fee, and the Ohio Constitution mandates that motor fuel proceeds can only be used for state and local roadways.

We appreciate that the General Assembly does not take raising taxes lightly. But an inadequate increase will only compound an already difficult decision – taxpayers will pay for a tax that doesn't provide results, and lawmakers will be forced to revisit the issue all too soon.

Ohio needs bold leadership on this issue. Without adequate funding, our transportation system will continue to fall into disrepair, becoming more dangerous and increasingly expensive to repair and maintain. In the economic interests of all Ohioans and for the safety of our motorists, we strongly encourage the Ohio Senate to provide that bold leadership by passing Governor DeWine's proposed 18-cent motor fuel tax increase.

Sincerely,

## Fix Our Roads Ohio Coalition

AAA Clubs of Ohio
ACT Ohio
Akron Metropolitan Area Transportation Study (AMATS)
American Council of Engineering Companies of Ohio
American Society of Civil Engineers
Belomar Regional Council and Interstate Planning Commission
BIA of Central Ohio
Brooke-Hancock Jefferson Metropolitan Planning Commission
Buckeye Hills Regional Council
Buckeye State Sheriffs' Association
Central Ohio Mayors and Managers Association
Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber
Clark County-Springfield Transportation Coordinating Committee
Clean Fuels Ohio
Columbus Chamber of Commerce
COTA
County Commissioners Association of Ohio
County Engineers Association of Ohio
Cuyahoga County Mayors and City Managers Association
Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce
Dayton Area Logistics Association
Eastgate Regional Council of Governments
Emergency Management Association of Ohio
Erie County Regional Planning Commission
FedEx
Fix Our Roads Ohio
Flexible Pavements of Ohio
Greater Akron Chamber Of Commerce
Greater Cleveland Partnership
International Union of Operating Engineers Local 18
KYOVA Interstate Planning Commission
Licking County Planning Commission; Licking County Area Transportation Study
Lima-Allen County Regional Planning Commission
Logan-Union Champaign Regional Planning Commission
Maumee Valley Planning Organization
Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission (MVRPC)
Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC)
Mid-Ohio Valley Regional Council
Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA)
Northeast Ohio Four-County Regional Planning & Development Organization
Northeast Ohio Mayors and City Managers Association
Ohio Aggregates and Industrial Minerals Association
Ohio Association of Movers
Ohio Association of Public Safety Directors
Ohio Association of Regional Councils
Ohio Chemistry Technology Council
Ohio Concrete
Ohio Contractors Association
Ohio Council of County Officials
Ohio Equipment Distributors Association
Ohio Fire Chiefs' Association
Ohio Hotel and Lodging Association
Ohio Insurance Institute
Ohio Manufacturers' Association
Ohio Mayors Alliance
Ohio Mid-Eastern Governments Association
Ohio Municipal League
Ohio Prestressers Association
Ohio Public Transit Association
Ohio Restaurant Association
Ohio Rural Development Alliance
Ohio Township Association
Ohio Trucking Association
Ohio Valley Regional Development Commission
Richland County Regional Planning Commission
Stark County Regional Planning Commission
Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments (TMACOG)
Toledo Regional Chamber of Commerce
Transportation Advocacy Group of Northwest Ohio
UNITED Equipment Dealers Association
UPS
Wood-Washington-Wirt Interstate Planning Commission
Youngstown/Warren Regional Chamber of Commerce