



GTP Advocacy Center
1 Arundel Road
Greenville, South Carolina 29615

February 25, 2015

Good Day Senator:

We believe many in the legislature are moving much too fast trying to pass an increase in the gas tax without first reforming the process by which SCDOT distributes those dollars to all 46 counties in the state. Furthermore, it appears many members of both chambers are also ignoring our State Treasurer's common-sense call for a comprehensive audit of the revenues collected, borrowed and spent for roadway maintenance and repair, **BEFORE** we add more money to what seems to be a seriously flawed system. Mr. Loftis believes neither SCDOT, nor anyone else in state government, knows how much money state and local officials actually spend on maintaining and repairing our roads.

The lines of authority within the SCDOT are too complex. The result is little transparency and poor accountability! Moreover, there is no objectivity and no merit-based algorithm for approving road projects throughout the state. Neither is there a mechanism for providing road repair funding to local municipalities based on the actual condition of their roads. Instead, SCDOT uses its "C Program" to distribute about 17% of the gas tax revenue to each of the state's counties. It employs a rigid, 3-element formula that isn't based on "need" or any other pre-determined roadway maintenance requirements.

Furthermore, much of the time, the "bureaucracy" diverts the remaining **83%** of the gas tax revenue to things like: construction projects for new roadways, expanding and subsidizing mass-transit projects, building and marking bicycle lanes, expanding walking and hiking trails, or funding projects that have nothing to do with "transportation." It's no wonder our roads are deteriorating more with each passing day!

We urge you to be very cautious in your discussions with your colleagues on bills that increase the gas tax without first reorganizing the SCDOT. Governor Haley, and State Treasurer Loftis are correct - **the labyrinth-like structure within SCDOT must be simplified and clarified before we consider raising taxes to pay for roadway repairs!** To do otherwise is folly!

This is not the time for hyperbole or pettifoggery. It's the time for Columbia to begin to rebuild trust in government.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely yours,

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Your vote affects all of us. Please use it to protect us from a gas tax increase!