

1 **Proposed Policy Resolution for the AASHTO Transportation Policy Forum**
2 **Title: Increasing the Flexibility of the Federal-Aid Transportation Program to Mitigate the**
3 **Impacts of Sea-Level Rise and Extreme Weather Events**

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6 **WHEREAS**, Changes in sea-levels and the increased frequency and severity of extreme weather events
7 have adversely impacted every region of the United States; and

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9 **WHEREAS**, Many states and cities are implementing bold initiatives to improve transportation
10 infrastructure resiliency; and

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12 **WHEREAS**, Even without considering the impacts of climate change, the American Society of Civil
13 Engineers estimates that failure to make necessary investments in infrastructure will cost the United
14 States 2.5 million jobs and \$4 trillion in Gross Domestic Product between the period of 2016 through
15 2025; and

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17 **WHEREAS**, According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, in 2017, there were 16
18 weather and climate disaster events across the United States totaling \$306 billion in cumulative losses;
19 and

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21 **WHEREAS**, Developing climate resilient infrastructure will assist to ensure the economic security of the
22 United States; and now therefore be it

23
24 **RESOLVED**, That Congress is urged to amend existing federal-aid highway programs to provide states the
25 flexibility to address resilience; and

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27 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, That Congress should amend the National Highway Performance Program
28 (23 USC 119) to add eligibility for the construction, reconstruction, restoration, rehabilitation, and
29 preservation of a Federal-aid highway or bridge not on the National Highway System provided the
30 activity supports measures to increase the resiliency of critical transportation infrastructure from the
31 impacts of sea-level rise and extreme weather events; and

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33 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, That Congress should amend the National Highway Performance Program
34 (23 USC 119) to strike the performance penalties that adversely impact measures to increase the
35 resiliency of federal-aid eligible highway or bridge infrastructure either on or off the National Highway
36 System; and

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38 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, That Congress should amend the Emergency Relief Program (23 USC 125) to
39 make damages caused by sea-level rise eligible for Emergency Relief program funding and add the
40 following specific eligibilities:

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42 (i) raising roadway grades
43 (ii) relocating roadways to higher ground or away from slide prone areas or away from natural
44 threats
45 (iii) stabilizing slide areas
46 (iv) stabilizing slopes
47 (v) installing riprap

- 1 (vi) lengthening or raising bridges to increase waterway openings
- 2 (vii) increase channel cross-section and maintain channel conveyance toward stream equilibrium
- 3 (i.e. vertical channel stability)
- 4 (viii) maximize adjacent floodplain function with benching, berm removal, and/or increases in
- 5 channel bed elevation
- 6 (ix) increasing the size and number of drainage structures
- 7 (x) replacing culverts with bridges and replacing bridges with bridges with increased flow
- 8 capacity
- 9 (xi) installing seismic retrofits on bridges
- 10 (xii) adding scour protection at bridges
- 11 (xiii) adding spur dikes
- 12 (xiv) installing air convection embankments, thermosiphons, or insulation to delay or prevent
- 13 thawing of permafrost
- 14 (xv) adaptive engineering
- 15 (xvi) material modifications
- 16 (xvii) other as approved by the Secretary; and

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18 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That Congress should amend the Emergency Relief Program (23 USC 125) to
19 remove the prohibition of Emergency Relief program funding for damaged facilities on an approved
20 Transportation Improvement Program; and

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22 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That Congress should, at the discretion of the state, allow the federal share
23 payable (23 USC 120) for any project for the construction, reconstruction, restoration, rehabilitation,
24 and preservation of a Federal-aid highway or bridge to increase the resiliency of transportation
25 infrastructure from the impacts of sea-level rise and extreme weather events, to be up to 100 percent of
26 the total project cost.