



Wisconsin Department of Transportation
Office of the Secretary
4822 Madison Yards Way, S903
Madison, WI 53705

Governor Tony Evers
Secretary Craig Thompson
wisconsin.gov
Telephone: (608) 266-1114
FAX: (608) 266-9912
Email: sec.exec@dot.wi.gov

April 17, 2020

The Honorable Ron Johnson
328 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
709 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bryan Steil
1408 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mark Pocan
1421 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Ron Kind
1502 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Gwen Moore
2252 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jim Sensenbrenner
2449 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Glenn Grothman
1427 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mike Gallagher
1230 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

To the Honorable Wisconsin Senators and Congressional Delegation:

I am writing to follow up on the [request made by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials \(AASHTO\)](#) on April 6, 2020, to **provide \$49.95 billion as an immediate revenue backstop for state DOTs in Phase 4 of COVID-19 response.**

This crucial action will prevent major disruptions in state DOTs' collective ability to operate and maintain our Nation's transportation system during this unprecedented emergency. And it will also prevent cancellations and delays of projects as well as potential job losses both in the state DOT workforce and the private sector around the country.

Compared to \$111 billion in state transportation revenues in FY 2019 according to the National Association of State Budget Officers (State Expenditure Report [PDF Page 123](#)), preliminary projections from AASHTO show an estimated 30 percent decline on average for the next 18 months. In addition, [most recent data](#) from INRIX shows that personal travel dropped 47 percent nationally through the week ending April 3, 2020, and may worsen in the coming weeks.

AASHTO's \$49.95 billion request is composed of 16.7 billion for the remainder of FY 2020 based on an estimated 30 percent state revenue cut prorated over six months and \$33.3 billion for all of FY 2021 based on an estimated 30 percent state revenue cut for a full year.

While it is too early for us to have reliable figures on the exact numbers or true extent the reduced travel and economic activity will have on the fund in Wisconsin it will undoubtedly be significant. By mid-May we should have enough data to give us more accurate projections. With that being said, AASHTO is estimating a downturn of around 30% for state DOT's. A 30% reduction in revenues for Wisconsin would mean \$270 million less in the current fiscal year and result in a significant budget shortfall

Given the urgent nature of states' needs in the coming weeks and months, we request these backstop funds to be essentially treated as state revenues that would otherwise have been collected for a wide range of state DOT activities without the COVID-19 pandemic. This broad funding eligibility would recognize the fact that state transportation revenues are used for any and all transportation activities undertaken by state DOTs.

For Wisconsin this federal assistance is urgently needed in order for us to be able to perform these critical functions:

- State Transportation Expenditures to Include:
 - Capital expenditures including capital projects and construction;
 - Administrative expenditures including salaries, expenses, travel, employee retirement, compliance, legal, business support;
 - Operational expenditures including system operations, planning, safety, technology and innovation, information systems, traffic and congestion management, design and engineering, and;
 - Maintenance expenditures including system maintenance, equipment management, repairs, garages, fleet services.
- Protect against jobs impact both in-house and contractors in a time of already high employment.
- Prevent project impact in terms of delays and cancellations, which would not only have a detrimental ripple effect on the transportation system into the future but would also increase future costs.

Thank you for your bold leadership during this unprecedented crisis and for your consideration of our request for the next COVID-19-related legislation.

Thank you for your consideration, and for all the work you are doing during this difficult period.

Sincerely,



Craig Thompson, Secretary
Wisconsin Department of Transportation