



**Russell R. McMurry, P.E., Commissioner**  
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April 29, 2020

The Honorable David Perdue  
455 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510-1007

Dear Senator Perdue:

On behalf of the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT), I want to inform you of the adverse impact of COVID-19 on transportation infrastructure funding. GDOT has been tracking traffic volumes and has seen a statewide decrease in volumes of 40% to 50%. Another data point we are watching, albeit a lag, is vehicle miles traveled. The Atlanta Regional Commission recently reported that vehicle miles traveled were down 62% statewide and 70% in metro Atlanta. The drastic reduction in traffic volume and miles traveled directly impacts transportation funding since both Georgia and federal funding are predominantly driven by excise tax.

Attached is a request made to Congressional leadership on April 6, 2020 by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) to provide \$49.95 billion as an immediate revenue backstop for state DOTs in the anticipated “Phase 4” of the COVID-19 response.

AASHTO’s \$49.95 billion request includes \$16.7 billion for the remainder of FFY 2020 based on an estimated 30% state revenue cut prorated over six months and \$33.3 billion for all of FFY 2021 based on an estimated 30% state revenue cut for a full year. Underpinning this projection is data from INRIX (a national leader on transportation data analytics) that shows personal travel dropped 47% nationally through the week ending April 3, 2020 and likely worsened in the following weeks.

Nearly 60% of GDOT’s budget are state funds. On closer examination, nearly 50% of the capital construction (new capacity & bridges) budget is state funded while the capital maintenance (resurfacing, major road and bridge maintenance) program is 40% state funded. GDOT’s routine maintenance is 97% state funded with nearly half of those funds administered as contract maintenance work for medium and small businesses throughout Georgia. Loss of state revenues will impact every aspect of GDOT’s mission to the people of Georgia.

A funding backstop is critical to ensure state DOTs can continue to maintain the state’s transportation network. Without this support, capital construction projects will be delayed with a cascading impact for years—including jobs in the engineering, maintenance, and construction industries. Preliminary engineering and right-of-way acquisition will be delayed with consequences that will impact the transportation program for years to come. A list of projects that may impacted throughout the state over the next 18 months due to the potential transportation revenue shortfalls is included with this letter.

A 2018 University of Georgia Carl Vinson Institute Study found that the construction, maintenance, and engineering sectors in Georgia account for over 11,600 jobs. **The study also found that every \$1 million invested in transportation projects generates an additional \$850,000 in economic activity.**

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I hope this information provides you with a more detailed awareness of the impacts of COVID-19 on a large sector of our economy. Our nation's transportation network has never been more important for the critical movement of freight during this pandemic. Shoring up our infrastructure investment will help keep Georgia and the nation moving forward and past this unprecedented time in history. Thank you for your leadership, service and for your consideration during deliberation of the next COVID-19-related legislation. I would welcome a dialog with your team regarding any questions or concerns. We are glad to provide any additional data you may need.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Russell R. McMurry". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'R' at the beginning.

Russell R. McMurry, P.E.

Attachment (AASHTO letter)

cc: The Honorable Brian P. Kemp, Governor of Georgia  
Tim Golden, Chairman, State Transportation Board