

*NOTE TO RPC COMMISSIONERS: The following statement of policy was developed by the Associated General Contractors of New Hampshire. They are asking a number of organizations with strong interests in transportation programming and funding, including the RPCs and LGC, to "sign-on" to all or part of this policy.*

*Most appear consistent with our policies, although the last one may be too limiting regarding future transportation needs. In addition, an additional policy regarding the need to address the demand-side of highway capacity -- e.g. through transit and land use coordination, should be considered. We will discuss whether or not to sign on to this policy statement, and if to which what modifications, if any.*

### **State of New Hampshire Highway Fund Priorities AGC – September 13, 2007**

At or near the top of the list of basic duties of state government is the responsibility to ensure the well being of the public. And few, if any, elements of the public's day-to-day well being are more important than the timely maintenance of the state's highways and bridges. Commerce, safety, education, employment, shopping, emergency services, food, and virtually every other aspect of the citizens' lives and livelihoods are dependent on reliable roads and safe bridges.

New Hampshire has a long tradition of keeping its transportation infrastructure in good repair. An excellent example of this commitment is the state's Ten-Year Highway Plan. First instituted in the mid 1980s, the plan provides a flexible framework for scheduling and managing projects necessary for the upkeep and improvement of the state's highways and bridges. However, for many years now, the plan has not been adequately funded. Inflation has driven up highway construction/repair at a rate significantly higher than other segments of the economy. New Hampshire's Highway Fund, which provides revenue for the Ten-Year Highway Plan, has not kept pace with the times. In fact, revenues are trending downward for the first time in years. Meanwhile, the percentage of Highway Fund dollars actually spent on highway and bridge maintenance/improvement has slowly but steadily decreased over the past several years, due primarily to an increase in revenue diversions to other state agencies.

In light of the circumstances noted above, and in light of the fact that the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (DOT) is being asked each year to accomplish more and more, with less and less, be it resolved that:

- ▶ A comprehensive inventory and review of all projects already in the Ten-Year Highway Plan shall be undertaken, and non-essential items shall be removed from the plan.
- ▶ All diversions (aka "transfers") of Highway Fund money to agencies other than the DOT shall be reviewed biannually and shall adhere to the original intent of Article 6A of the New Hampshire Constitution.
- ▶ All existing fees and taxes used to generate revenue for the Highway Fund shall be carefully reviewed to ensure that they are at levels appropriate to meet the needs of the Ten-Year Highway Plan.
- ▶ All Ten-Year Highway Plan cost-projections shall reflect accurate estimates of inflation.
- ▶ New Hampshire's turnpike system shall be self-supporting with a financial plan to maintain the system over the long term.
- ▶ Review that all motor vehicles utilizing alternative fuels are contributing their fair share to the Highway Fund.
- ▶ All future increases to the motor fuel tax go to the highway fund excluding all transfers except the municipal percentage in accordance to state law RSA 235:23.