

November 18, 2009

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable John Boehner  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C., 20515

Dear Madam Speaker:

Dear Representative Boehner:

On behalf of the 144,000 members of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) I urge you to take immediate action to address the worst unemployment crisis in a quarter century. With job losses in the construction industry exceeding all other sectors, additional investment in infrastructure would create thousands of jobs nation-wide.

In addition to historically high unemployment, the nation faces a crisis with infrastructure. In January 2009, ASCE's *Report Card for America's Infrastructure* graded the nation's infrastructure at a "D" and estimated that it would require \$2.2 trillion invested over five years to bring it up to a good condition. Now is the time to put people back to work building and repairing infrastructure to make the economy stronger and improve public health and safety.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) invested a record sum in the nation's infrastructure, but it was only a down payment. The nation's leaders need to make long-term investments that improve our communities and promote economic growth. ARRA demonstrated that with the right level of investments, we can put people to work now. ASCE recommends a "one-two punch" to create jobs now. We would urge that any new legislation to create jobs does not add to the federal deficit.

First, enact a six-year authorization of the highway and transit program. The nation's surface transportation authorization, SAFETEA-LU, expired September 30, 2009, and is operating on a series of extensions, creating uncertainty in state DOTs. A new authorization, properly funded, would create immediate jobs and help shape the transportation system we need in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Second, provide extra funding above FY 2010 appropriations levels for other areas of the infrastructure that need attention and can help create jobs. ASCE recommends that the following additional infrastructure investments be made:

- Airport Improvement Program: \$2 billion
- Federal Highway Administration: \$20 billion
- Federal Transit Administration: \$8 billion
- Federal Railroad Administration for Amtrak and High Speed Rail: \$5 billion
- Clean Water Revolving Fund: \$4 billion
- Safe Drinking Water Revolving Fund: \$2 billion
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Civil Works: \$4 billion
- U.S. Bureau of Reclamation: \$2 billion

ASCE's Principles for Infrastructure Stimulus Investment recommends that all projects supported by an economic stimulus investment must meet the following fundamental criteria: Projects must create and sustain employment increases; investments must provide long term benefits to the public (such as congestion relief); long term maintenance and upkeep needs of all infrastructure projects – existing and new – must be taken into account; and accountability and transparency must be ensured.

Investment in much-needed improvements will help spur job creation and build a safer and more sustainable future. We ask you to invest in infrastructure immediately.

Please contact Brian Pallasch, Managing Director of Government Relations and Infrastructure Initiatives, in ASCE's Washington office at 202-789-7850 or [bpallasch@asce.org](mailto:bpallasch@asce.org) if you have additional questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Blaine D. Leonard". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Blaine D. Leonard, P.E., D.GE, F.ASCE  
President

## **Principles for Infrastructure Stimulus Investment**

The current recession has put hundreds of thousands of Americans out of work and left critical infrastructure improvements across the country incomplete. The American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) strongly supports the ambitious, long-term plan proposed by President Barack Obama to combat unemployment and foster continued economic growth through infrastructure investment. This investment will create and sustain jobs, and begin to address the nation's crumbling infrastructure if appropriately applied to areas that most require federal support. As an important step to bolstering our nation's economic stability, this short-term jobs package must supplement, rather than replace, long-term solutions such as regular appropriations and scheduled reauthorizations that will ultimately elevate America's infrastructure to its appropriate, world-leading level.

ASCE has long been an advocate for improving and maintaining the nation's infrastructure. The last ASCE Report Card for America's Infrastructure, issued in March 2009, rated the overall condition of the nation's infrastructure a grade of "D" and recommended spending \$2.2 trillion over five years to bring the condition up to an acceptable level.

As the investments are made, however, proper care must be paid in the prioritization and selection of these projects to ensure that the following basic principles are met:

- Projects must create and sustain jobs;
- Investments must provide long term benefits to the public (such as congestion relief); and
- An auditing program must be established to ensure accountability and transparency and achieve desired outcomes.

Additionally, ASCE recommends that all projects meet the following principles for infrastructure investment, which will help to identify the most suitable projects for inclusion in the stimulus.

- The project should improve public health, safety and quality of life.
- The project should provide an economic benefit.
- The project should be designed and built in a sustainable and cost-effective manner, and proper consideration must be given to life-cycle costs.
- The project should have a significant environmental benefit such as area restoration or reducing bottlenecks and vulnerabilities in a system.

Finally, ASCE recommends that consideration of federal funding for infrastructure projects also take into account the long term maintenance and upkeep needs of existing and new infrastructure.