



Fund Essential Investments Now and Create Jobs

From crumbling bridges that put motorists at risk and raise transportation costs for business, to mold and asbestos in schools that threaten the health of our children and teachers, to failing levees that raise the chances of homes and businesses being destroyed by floods, the United States has massive unmet needs in every state and community.

America isn't investing enough in the foundations of the economy. Spending on public infrastructure projects is at the lowest levels in 20 years.

The need is huge and growing. Much of our modern infrastructure was built in the decades after World War II. The American Society of Civil Engineers released a report card that gave the state of America's infrastructure a barely passing grade. Their conclusion: to repair, maintain, and build the public infrastructure the nation needs would require an extra \$1 trillion be spent on airports and aviation systems, bridges, roads, dams, levees, schools, energy production and distribution, drinking water systems, wastewater treatment, hazardous waste disposal, ports, inland waterways, rail, city transit, and other public structures between now and the end of the decade.

If we don't invest, we'll lose business and jobs. Poor infrastructure makes our economy less competitive and causes us to lose jobs to other nations. Countries from Germany to China, Australia to Canada are investing much more in their transportation and communications structures. We need to invest in America's basic distribution systems.

Our decaying infrastructure is already increasing costs and risking lives. Take bridges: 13 people died in the 2007 when an I-35W bridge collapsed in Minnesota. One of every nine bridges is considered "structurally deficient," which means heavier vehicles may be prohibited. Businesses have to pay more for transportation when restrictions on structurally deficient bridges force 18-wheelers to go on long detours. This can lead to delays in shipping and higher prices for consumers and/or smaller profits for companies.

A *Wall Street Journal* article recently quoted the owner of a trucking company in Smithton, PA, who said restricted bridges will add 100 miles to a 600-mile trip from Pittsburgh to Boston, increasing the cost of that trip by 10 percent, to \$1,100 from \$1,000; he anticipated recovering some, but not all, of the additional cost from his customers.

Investing in infrastructure builds a foundation for the future and could create millions of jobs now, especially in construction and at the companies that supply materials for these infrastructure projects. These jobs are needed. As of October, construction employment remains 22 percent below pre-recession levels. Overall, 11 million are unemployed and looking for a job, and half of these jobseekers have been looking for over six months – the highest portion since World War II. The United States still has an acute jobs deficit.

Government programs that pay for the repair and building of roads, bridges, levees, schools, clean water systems, and other types of infrastructure create jobs in construction and engineering directly. Those engineers, construction workers, carpenters, painters, glaziers, plumbers, electricians, roofers, people who work in concrete plants, and those who drive trucks to deliver supplies to job sites use their earnings to take their families to dinner, out to the movies, and shopping for groceries. In addition, they pay taxes that allow us to employ teachers and first responders. Along with their salaries, employers often provide health insurance, which in turn pays for more doctors, nurses, and administrative assistants in health care facilities. In other words, every dollar spent on repairing and building infrastructure gets recycled through local economies, providing jobs outside of the construction project itself. The infrastructure built and/or repaired creates jobs in the construction industry, leaves a resource in the community, and supports other businesses serving the workers on the project and in the larger region.

Here are just a handful of examples of how many jobs would be potentially created and supported throughout the U.S. if the estimated infrastructure needs were funded:

	Annual Increased Investment Needed	Estimate of Construction and Supplier Jobs Created	Estimate of Jobs in Communities Indirectly Supported	Job Creation Potential of Public Investments
Bridges	\$8.0 Billion	109,600	41,600	151,200
Schools	\$10.0 Billion	140,000	53,000	193,000
Levees and Dams	\$11.5 Billion	196,100	73,600	269,700
Clean Water	\$15.9 Billion	203,000	79,000	282,000
Roads	\$79.0 Billion	1,200,000	410,800	1,610,800
Total	\$124.4 Billion	1,848,700	658,000	2,506,700

Funding infrastructure projects is broadly supported across the ideological spectrum. Many policymakers and interest groups want expanded investments in critical infrastructure. From the White House to the Congressional Progressive Caucus to a number of labor, community, and advocacy organizations, a host of groups have pointed to the needs detailed in the civil engineers’ report card to argue for new investments now. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce has stated, “Long term underinvestment in transportation infrastructure is having an increasingly negative effect on the ability of the United States and its industries to compete in the global economy.”

Congress needs to invest in America today to create a platform for economic growth for tomorrow, and to make job growth more robust.