



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE




Advocating for infrastructure investment—and more

Doubtless PCI members are well aware of proposals to invest much more in our nation's infrastructure in the years ahead, as much as \$1 trillion over 10 years. In this *PCI Journal* issue devoted to bridges, it is timely to report on PCI's efforts to help make these investments a reality.

For our part individually, PCI has retained the Smith-Free Group to represent PCI members' interests in Washington, D.C., not only on issues such as transportation and infrastructure funding, but also on regulatory issues such as OSHA rules on silica dust and fall protection. We also need to remain diligent against competing industries' efforts, most notably the aggressive activity of the wood industry. An ad hoc group of PCI members, led by PCI vice chairman Mason Lampton, has come together to help oversee our efforts in the nation's capital. I encourage any interested members to contact Mason or me to get involved.

While PCI is stepping up efforts in the government affairs arena, our efforts become even more effective when we can leverage our resources through partners and coalitions. On February 3, I joined 10 other CEOs in the cement and concrete industry as part of the North American Concrete Alliance (NACA) to participate in a briefing to congressional staff regarding our combined interests in long-term infrastructure funding. Formed in 2004, NACA is a coalition of 11 concrete-related associations that brings together the industry's collective strength in research, education, and advocacy to form a unified voice in the national discussion about America's infrastructure. Our group reminded the congressional-staff participants that with concrete being the second-most-consumed product on Earth, behind water, it is impossible to contemplate revitalizing our nation's infrastructure without putting concrete at the forefront of the discussion.

Cement and concrete product manufacturing directly or indirectly employs 500,000 people in our country, and our collective industries contribute \$100 billion to our economy annually. We are not only a critical construction material, we are also a primary driver of the nation's ability to build, maintain, and grow our vital infrastructure. NACA's position is that Congress must enact a long-term, robust, and sustainable funding mechanism that addresses the Highway Trust Fund shortfalls (including the Fixing America's Surface Transportation [FAST] Act), with durable solutions that both stabilize and increase critical highway investments now to position America's economy for future success. Infrastructure investment must be done wisely. It must include reforms to programs that will extend the impact of federal dollars, with a focus on long-term, nationally significant projects. Projects should address the need for a durable, long-lasting, and resilient infrastructure.

New funding and financing for long-term infrastructure investment are critical to public health and safety, as well as to economic growth. In recent years, federal infrastructure programs have faced unprecedented challenges. We are urging Congress to use any and all creative methods—including a portion of any tax reform—as a legislative vehicle to address the nation's infrastructure needs. I urge you as PCI members to get involved in this conversation and let your member of Congress know the impact of these efforts on your communities. 

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