



Transportation UPDATE

FROM STATE SENATOR JOE SCARNATI

WINTER 2010

Dear Friend:

This update is intended to provide you with information on issues, programs and services related to our state and local transportation system. Our roads, highways, bridges and airports are crucial to economic development, and we need to make investments in them to ensure that they are well-maintained and safe. I'm pleased to report that over the past six months, many road and bridge projects have been completed in the 25th District, including road resurfacing, safety projects, and bridge repairs that will help to improve our transportation system. I've also included information on some other transportation-related issues, including new military licenses plates and the state's 511PA Service. I hope you find this helpful. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact my office for assistance.

Sincerely,

Joe Scarnati
Senator Joe Scarnati

Scarnati Urges Transportation Secretary to Reject Proposal to Toll I-80

Late last year, I wrote to U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood urging him to reject the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission's application seeking to convert Interstate 80 to a toll road.

Not only would the tolling of I-80 have a negative economic impact on our state, but the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission has failed to provide an adequate response to the issues raised by the Federal Highway Administration when their initial application was rejected last year.

The tolling of I-80 would impose an additional levy on the people and businesses that are already paying for the construction and maintenance of

the highway through the Federal Gas Tax. This additional cost would most certainly discourage businesses from locating along the I-80 corridor. In addition, businesses throughout the Commonwealth that rely on I-80 to

transport their products and goods would be forced to pass these increased costs on to consumers.

At a time when our nation is attempting to recover from one of its worst recessions, we should not be placing this additional burden on the citizens of Pennsylvania.

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Congress and the State Legislature must go back to the drawing board and enact a more balanced and fair solution to our transportation funding needs.

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New PA License Plates to Honor Military Service

Honorably discharged veterans of the United States Armed Forces have a new way to proudly display their service as PennDOT announced the availability of a new series of military license plates honoring veterans of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps and Coast Guard.

The new plates feature the standard Pennsylvania license plate colors of blue, white and yellow along with the

applicable branch of service emblem or logo on the left side of the plate. Pennsylvania is printed at the top of the plate, with the name of the applicable branch of service at the bottom.

To obtain one of these plates, honorably discharged veterans must complete and mail Form MV-150, Application for U.S. Military Veteran Registration Plate, to PennDOT and include a certified copy of their DD-214, along with a \$20 fee.

Form MV-150 is available on PennDOT's Driver and Vehicle Services website, www.dmv.state.pa.us, via the Military License Plates link under the Military Personnel/Veterans Information Center or can be picked up at any of Senator Scarnati's district offices. Additional information and images of the new license plates are also available on this web page.

Driving Safely in Winter Weather

Winter weather can mean tougher driving conditions for motorists, so it's important to be prepared and obey state laws that are aimed at improving safety.

Motorists are required by law to clear their vehicles' windows of ice and snow before driving. Driving without full visibility can lead to accidents, and ice or snow that falls from your vehicle can pose a serious threat to others on the road.

Under state law, if snow or ice is dislodged or falls from a moving vehicle and strikes another vehicle or pedestrian causing death or serious bodily injury, the operator of the source vehicle is subject to a fine of \$200 to \$1,000 for each offense. Police may also cite motorists for not clearing their vehicles' windows.

State law also requires headlights to be turned on whenever windshield wipers are in use. When there is limited visibility, motorists should keep their lights on low beam, especially during heavy snowfall.

Because weather and road conditions can worsen abruptly during the winter, motorists should always check the forecast before traveling. Road conditions for interstates and

some limited-access highways are now available by calling 511 from home or while stopped in a safe location, or by visiting www.511pa.com.

511 PA provides free, 24-hour information services, including traffic delay warnings, weather forecasts, regional tourism information, and links to mass transit agencies and major airports.



Don't Hijack Federal Highway Funds for Mass Transit

I recently wrote to Congressman Glen Thompson urging him to push for federal legislation that will aid rural Pennsylvania by ensuring that federal highway dollars are not used to bail out mass transit systems in urban areas of the state.

Currently the federal government allows states to move federal funds allocated for highways to pay for mass transit. These funds were intended for road and bridge projects in each of the respective states. However, our Governor has consistently used these flex dollars to help fund mass transit. In fact, in 2005

and 2006, \$414 million was moved from fixing our highways to helping mass transit in our cities, consequently forcing the General Assembly to consider the tolling of Interstate 80.

This practice has shortchanged highway and bridge improvements for far too long and is authorized under the transportation funding authority provided by Congress. With the ongoing debate on how to adequately fund our deteriorating roads and bridges, now is the time to put an end to this irresponsible use of highway dollars.

Pennsylvania workers and busi-

nesses are struggling right now in this tight economy. It makes no sense for folks in this area to be targeted with higher tolls when the money will go to fund mass transit programs in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh.

I urged our Congressman to include in the next transportation bill restrictions on the ability of governors' use of those funds. Under no circumstances should these dollars be hijacked to fund mass transit when in this region we have many road and bridge projects in dire need of funding.



Senator Joe Scarnati

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