

To All Ohio County Engineers – CONGRATULATIONS!!

Thanks to all your letters, phone calls, in-person meetings and contacts, we made a difference and achieved a positive outcome for County Engineers with this 2019 transportation budget bill.

We started this process last year by helping form a coalition – Fix Our Roads Ohio (FOR Ohio) - to bring attention to the lack of funding for Ohio's transportation infrastructure. It was CEAO's intent to not let our local roads get left out of the discussion during the bigger discussion of state roads and the 2019 ODOT budget process.

We were fortunate to be a part of Governor DeWine's Advisory Committee on Transportation Infrastructure, which concurred with the Governor on the funding deficit and real funding hole that Ohio's transportation agencies faced. That started the process rolling through the House, and then the Senate, with hearings, testimonies, committee discussions (repeat, and repeat again) and finally the multiple voting stages.

Our County Engineers were at the forefront of making those important contacts with the legislators, and that was tremendously instrumental in getting awareness out to the public and to the legislators themselves of our local needs. Photos of current bridges in critical condition and active road slips were invaluable.

To put it in perspective, we started this process with zero dollars and zero cents gas tax increase. We supported the Governor's proposal for a long-term funding solution and, in the final bill that was passed, we ended up with a solution that will help us immediately and will work for the next several years. We've gone from a "0" increase to an effective (gas + diesel) increase of around 13.8 cents.

While we are still reviewing all the details of the bill and its overall impact, here are some of the items passed in the final version:

1. Gasoline taxes will increase by 10.5 cents starting July 1, 2019
2. Diesel fuel taxes will increase by 19 cents starting July 1, 2019
3. There is no phase-in of the tax increases – they all take effect this July 1 (at one point they weren't going to take effect until October)
4. The new gas tax revenues will be split 55-45 percent between state-local governments (higher for locals than the existing 60-40 percent split)
5. Townships are given a greater share of fuel tax revenue by using the 2003 distribution formula
6. Electric vehicle registration fees of \$200 for roads and bridges
7. Hybrid vehicle registration fees of \$100 for roads and bridges
8. A five-year phase-in for compressed natural gas to get to the diesel rate

It is estimated that County Engineers will receive about \$1.3-1.4 million in additional revenue each year.

Once again, thank you for the County Engineer Teamwork to get us this additional funding. Now we can start real planning on what to fix next!