



BUSINESS LEADERS FOR®
MICHIGAN

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May 20, 2014

The Honorable Roger Kahn
State Senator
P.O. Box 30036
Lansing, MI 48909-7536

Dear Chairman Kahn:

Business Leaders for Michigan strongly supports additional funding to maintain quality roads and bridges in our state and commends you for your consistent leadership to find a long-term solution to this problem.

At \$154 per person, Michigan ranks last among all states for spending on roads. We rank 45th in urban road condition and we have 1,354 bridges that are considered structurally deficient. Right now, the price tag to bring our roads and bridges up to good condition stands at \$2 billion. That number grows every day we do not act. We have temporarily plugged the hole using general fund monies, but this is not sustainable and crowds out other important priorities including public safety, higher education, and our communities.

Fixing our roads is central to our economic competitiveness, both to protect the jobs we already have and bring more jobs to the state. Today, Michigan contributes over a quarter of the output of the entire U.S. automotive industry, which is more than twice as much as its nearest competitor. We are the home of the office furniture industry, the world's largest chemical company and some of the world's largest food manufacturers. Business executives rank access to and condition of highways as one of the top factors in making site location decisions. In the Area Development Online 2013 Top States for Doing Business Survey, Michigan was not among the top states for infrastructure and global access. That honor went to states such as Texas, Tennessee, Georgia, South Carolina, Indiana, and North Carolina – states that have aggressively tried to take what we have.

Existing Michigan companies and prospective businesses look at Michigan's declining infrastructure and wonder about the state's commitment to take care of itself. To defend our strong base of manufacturing businesses and compete for new jobs and investment, we need to invest in our roads and bridges. We believe the need for a long-term solution is urgent, and we respectfully urge the committee's support.

Sincerely,

Doug Rothwell
President & CEO

Cc: The Honorable Rick Snyder, Governor
The Honorable Randy Richardville, Senate Majority Leader
The Honorable Jase Bolger, Speaker of the House
The Honorable Wayne Schmidt, State Representative