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EPA Survey Shows \$384 Billion Needed for Drinking Water Infrastructure by 2030

A recent survey by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) shows \$384 billion in improvements are needed for the nation's drinking water infrastructure through 2030 to continue providing safe potable water to 314 million Americans.

The EPA's Drinking Water Infrastructure Needs Survey and Assessment, required under the Safe Drinking Water Act to be submitted to Congress every four years, identifies investments needed over the next 20 years for thousands of miles of pipes and thousands of treatment plants, storage tanks, and water distribution systems.

The assessment shows improvements are primarily needed in:

- Distribution and transmission: \$247.5 billion to replace or refurbish aging or deteriorating lines
- Treatment: \$72.5 billion to construct, expand, or rehabilitate infrastructure to reduce contamination
- Storage: \$39.5 billion to construct, rehabilitate, or cover finished water storage reservoirs
- Source: \$20.5 billion to construct or rehabilitate intake structures, wells, and spring collectors

The EPA allocates Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (SRF) grants to states based on the finding of the assessment. SRFs help states provide low-cost financing to public water systems for infrastructure improvements.

The survey looked at the funding and operational needs of more than 3,000 public drinking water systems across the United States, including those in tribal communities, through an extensive questionnaire. In many cases, drinking water infrastructure was reported to be 50 to 100 years old.

The survey results demonstrate the tremendous need to invest in our nation's crumbling water management system. Visit ACPPA-action.org to urge lawmakers to make water infrastructure a top priority.

President to Slash Project Approval Timelines in Half

On May 17, President Obama issued a [presidential memorandum](#) ordering federal agencies to cut the aggregate timelines of major infrastructure projects in half.

The memo directs a steering committee to work with federal agencies to streamline the review and permitting process of major infrastructure projects while improving community and environmental

outcomes. Outlined in a previous [executive order](#), the committee is to be comprised of the deputy secretary or equivalent officer of the Departments of Defense, Interior, Agriculture, Commerce, Army, Transportation, Energy, Homeland Security, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Advisory Council on Historical Preservation.

Obama calls for the committee to foster greater coordination among state, local, and tribal governments, expand the use of information technology to increase intelligence sharing among key stakeholders, and identify opportunities to use alternative, non-appropriated funding sources to support early coordination and project review.

This modernization process would apply to the construction of highways, bridges, water infrastructure, and pipelines, among others.

ACPPA is pleased the Obama administration is working to reduce red tape and streamline the delivery of critical infrastructure projects that would create jobs and grow the economy.

ACPPA Presses Support for Bipartisan House, Senate Regulatory Accountability Bills

In June 4 letters to members of the House and Senate, ACPPA joined the business community in urging lawmakers to pass the Regulatory Accountability Act of 2013 ([H.R. 2122](#); [S. 1029](#)). Introduced by Rep. Goodlatte, R-Va., and Sen. Portman, R-Ohio, with bipartisan coalitions in their respective chambers, the bills aim to reform the current federal rulemaking process, lower costs, and improve the quality of new regulations.

The Regulatory Accountability Act would increase transparency and ensure the public has a greater role in the rulemaking process. The legislation would build well-recognized best practices for regulatory analysis into each step of the rulemaking process and require agencies to adopt the “least costly” regulatory alternative that would achieve the policy goals set out by Congress. Those affected by high-impacting rules (regulations priced at \$1 billion per year to implement) would have access to an administrative hearing to test the accuracy of the evidence and assumptions underlying the agency’s proposal. Courts would apply substantial evidence review – a slightly higher standard – to high-impact rules to ensure an agency’s justifications are supported by reasonable evidence.

A similar bill passed the House last Congress but died in the Senate.

Stay tuned for more on Congressional efforts to reform the regulatory system.

House to Consider Coal Residuals Legislation

On June 3, Rep. David McKinley, R-W.Va., introduced bipartisan legislation that would establish requirements for the proper disposal of coal combustion residuals.

In a June 11 [letter](#) to the House of Representatives leadership, ACPPA's Board urged support for the Coal Residual Reuse and Management Act ([H.R. 2218](#)), which would set minimum federal standards for regulating the management of coal ash, a byproduct of coal combustion used in concrete production and other construction materials. Importantly, the bill would give states the responsibility to implement coal ash disposal permit programs by certain deadlines, while identifying criteria to assess whether such programs are meeting established minimum requirements.

The Environmental Protection Agency, which is currently considering whether to regulate coal ash as hazardous waste, would have federal backstop authority to uphold the minimum standards if a state is unable or refuses to implement a coal combustion residuals permit program.

The current bill has 35 Republican and 11 Democratic co-sponsors and is expected to pass the House. A previous version of the bill passed the chamber last Congress but stalled in the Senate.

Stay tuned as ACPPA continues to follow the story.

Rep. Delaney's Innovative \$750B Infrastructure Plan

On May 22, Rep. John Delaney, D-Md., introduced the Partnership to Build America Act ([H.R. 2084](#)), which would finance transportation, energy, water, communications, and education projects through the creation of an infrastructure fund that uses repatriated corporate earnings and utilizes public-private partnerships.

The bill creates the American Infrastructure Fund (AIF), which would provide up to \$750 billion in private loans or guarantees to state and local governments to finance qualified infrastructure projects by leveraging \$50 billion in infrastructure bonds at a 15:1 ratio, to be paid back at the market rate. The AIF would also invest in equity securities for projects in partnership with the state and local governments.

Delaney's bill uniquely and creatively avoids the log-jammed appropriations process by providing funding through the U.S. Treasury. American corporations with profits overseas would be allowed to repatriate a certain amount of their earnings tax free for every dollar they invest in the bonds. A reverse auction would allow the market to determine the tax-free rate corporations would pay for each bond.

The bill would create a path of return for nearly \$1.7 trillion in American corporate earnings overseas, stimulating our economy and providing the capital to rebuild our nation's crumbling infrastructure. The legislation already has 26 bipartisan cosponsors.

As ACPPA takes a close look at Rep. Delaney's legislation, the association commends him for proposing an innovative plan to help solve America's infrastructure investment crisis.

Americans Need to be Educated on Infrastructure

Americans are largely clueless about how much they pay in gas taxes, according to a new [poll](#) released by the American Road & Transportation Builders Association (ARTBA).

When asked how much the average household pays in state and federal fuel taxes, 63 percent of respondents said that they either don't know or estimated the total amount at more than \$100 per month. According to Federal Highway Administration [data](#), however, the average U.S. household pays \$46 per month.

While nine percent of those polled responded in the correct range (\$40-\$59), infrastructure advocates are troubled by the public's unfamiliarity with a critical element of the infrastructure funding debate. Before expiration of the current highway bill (MAP-21) on Sept. 30, 2014, Congress must find new revenue streams, either through a politically difficult gas tax increase or another financing mechanism, to maintain the solvency of the Highway Trust Fund (HTF).

Fortunately, the poll also revealed most Americans believe the federal government should play an integral role in infrastructure investment; 74 percent of respondents supported this philosophy while 20 percent disagreed.

Pro-infrastructure lawmakers and transportation industry organizations are working to raise public awareness of the federal government's vital role in infrastructure investment and why Congress and the administration must work together to find a long-term solution to maintain the solvency of the HTF for decades to come.

Visit ACPPA-action.org to spread the message to your lawmakers on the Hill.

US, Canada Launch First Binational Border Infrastructure Investment Plan

On May 30, U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood and Department of Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano, along with Canadian Minister of Transport, Infrastructure, & Communities Denis Lebel and Minister of Public Safety Vic Toews [released](#) the first-ever joint United States-Canada Border Infrastructure Investment Plan (BIIP). The development and release of this initiative fulfills a commitment made under the 2011 binational *Beyond the Border Action Plan*.

The BIIP is an interagency and binational planning mechanism developed to establish a mutual understanding of recent, ongoing, and potential border infrastructure investments. The plan outlines the approach that Canada and the United States will take to coordinate plans for physical infrastructure upgrades at small and remote ports of entry.

The plan is designed to benefit the integrated economies of the United States and Canada, which depend on the fluid movement of commercial and non-commercial traffic across the shared border. The modernization of major border crossings will reduce wait times, increase reliability of just-in-time shipments, and decrease fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions. The United States and Canada enjoy the world's largest trading partnership, with two-way merchandise trade totaling \$570 billion in 2012.