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Top Transportation Experts Endorse Wider Use of Toll Roads To Ensure Adequate Road Funding

*Transportation Funding Alternatives, Including Toll Roads, Are Needed
To Make Up for Shortfalls in Federal Fuel Tax, Says Federal Panel*

WASHINGTON – A national panel of experts this week endorsed the expanded use of toll roads and road pricing as solutions to the United States’ transportation funding crisis.

The recommendations on tolling and other options appear in a new study by the nonprofit Transportation Research Board (TRB) entitled, “The Fuel Tax and Alternatives for Transportation Funding: Special Report 285,” available at www.national-academies.org.

“Our highways are crumbling and there is not enough money to maintain our existing roads – let alone fund new projects,” said Patrick D. Jones, executive director of the International Bridge, Tunnel and Turnpike Association in Washington.

“This new report – by an independent panel of some of the nation's most respected transportation experts – endorses the expanded use of toll roads and should help policymakers recognize the benefits of tolling in helping to alleviate congestion and solve our nation’s highway funding crisis,” Jones said.

“Tolling has proven to be a fair and efficient mechanism to fund, develop and operate roads in the U.S. and all over the world,” Jones added. “We salute the findings of this study and encourage public officials and policy makers at every level of government to embrace its conclusions.”

For more than two years, the TRB committee responsible for the report studied the long-term viability of fuel taxes as a funding source for future road construction and maintenance. The TRB released its much-anticipated conclusions last Monday in Washington.

“Travelers and the public would benefit greatly from a transition to a fee structure that more directly charged vehicle operators for their actual use of roads,” the report concludes. “The transition could proceed in stages, starting with closer matching of present fees to costs and

expanded use of tolling. Ultimately, in the fee system that would provide the greatest public benefit, charges would depend on mileage, road and vehicle characteristics, and traffic conditions, and they would be set to reflect the cost of each trip to the highway agency and the public."

The study was sponsored by the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration, state departments of transportation and the TRB. Rudolph Penner, senior fellow at the Urban Institute in Washington, chaired the 14-member TRB committee that wrote the report.

*The **Transportation Research Board** is a division of the National Research Council, the principal operating arm of the National Academies of Sciences and Engineering, which is chartered by Congress to provide research to policymakers on national public-policy questions.*

*The **International Bridge, Tunnel and Turnpike Association (IBTTA)** is the worldwide alliance of toll operators and associated industries that provides a forum for sharing knowledge and ideas to promote and enhance toll financed transportation services. IBTTA's more than 280 members own, operate, or support toll facilities in 35 states in the U.S. and in 25 countries on six continents around the world.*