



TRANSPORTATION ADVOCATES of TEXAS

Moving People. Creating Jobs.

Legislative Platform for the 82nd Texas Legislature

I. Adequate, Reliable & Sustainable Transportation Funding – The current funding streams for transportation in our state are not sustainable, do not address future population growth, and are insufficient to cover maintenance and reconstruction of the existing system. Recommended legislative solutions:

- a. Phase in a ten cent increase in the motor fuels user fee and increase the vehicle registration fee; constitutionally dedicate 100 percent of the revenue to fund transportation only; once fully phased in, index the motor fuels user fee to inflation.
- b. Reinstate on a limited basis authority for local regions to pursue private investment for projects that cannot otherwise be funded.
- c. Assure integrity and transparency of funding process by TxDOT.

II. Phase Out Diversions of Transportation Funding – More than \$20 billion in gasoline tax revenue has been diverted from its intended use over the past two decades. Current diversions total \$1.2 billion per biennium. To restore public confidence in our transportation funding system, it is essential that this practice end. Recommended solution:

- a. Phase out diversions by at least twenty percent per biennium as specific budget thresholds or targets are met and constitutionally remove the eligibility of motor fuel tax revenue to be used for policing.

III. Provision of Additional Local Funding Tools and Options – Even with recommended user fee increases and phase out of diversions, Texas will not have enough revenue to fund its identified transportation needs. Providing local governments additional revenue authority to fund transportation investment would help bridge the resource gap. Recommended solutions:

- a. Allow counties to use a mobility improvement fee payable annually upon vehicle registration renewal and a local motor fuels user fee to fund projects specifically approved by their voters.
- b. Expand options for local governments to pursue Transportation Reinvestment Zones (TRZs);
- c. Authorize creation of county toll authorities for all counties in our state;
- d. Capitalize the Texas Rail Relocation & Improvement Fund authorized by voters in 2006 in order to provide a source of funding for rail relocation to improve safety and enhance movement of freight and passengers in our state.

IV. Authorize the issuance of additional Proposition 12 bond funds approved by Texas voters.

These general policy statements should not be construed as an endorsement of any particular legislation.