



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
Hon. Stephanie A. Miner, Mayor

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
DATE: April 9, 2015

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**MINER CALLS ON CONGRESS TO REPLENISH
FEDERAL HIGHWAY TRUST FUND, THE CRITICAL
FEDERAL FUNDING STREAM FOR
INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS INCLUDING I-81**

*Federal Fund is Scheduled to Run Out Of Money on May 31, Congress
Has Yet to Act to Replenish Funding Which Goes To Road and Highway
Construction and Mass Transit*

*Miner: With good infrastructure investments today, we can make a level
playing field where the private sector can grow and prosper*

SYRACUSE, N.Y. – Mayor Stephanie A. Miner today called on Congress to pass a bill replenishing the Federal Highway Trust Fund. This federal fund, which is used for road and highway construction, as well as mass transit projects, is scheduled to run out of money on May 31. Mayor Miner made her announcement today in front of the David Falk College of Sport and Human Dynamics, in the shadow of Interstate 81, the future of which will be dependent on financing from the Highway Trust Fund.

“Infrastructure is critical to our communities and it is imperative that we receive federal support,” said **Syracuse Mayor Stephanie A. Miner**. “It has always been a bipartisan issue—Democrats and Republicans can agree that cities need these important investments. With good infrastructure investments today, we can make a level playing field where the private sector can grow and prosper.”

Built in the 1950s, 1.4 mile stretch of elevated highway runs directly through the center of Downtown Syracuse. This elevated viaduct, part of Interstate 81, will reach the end of its useful life in 2017 and a solution will need to be implemented. The New York State Department of Transportation is currently studying alternatives to the existing viaduct. Currently proposed alternatives cost hundreds of millions, if not billions of dollars, and this project is expected to require extensive federal funding.

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The Federal Highway Trust Fund was established in 1956 as part of the development of the interstate highway system nationwide. It is divided into two silos, one highway account which funds road construction projects and a mass transit account, which was created in the 1980s to help fund public transportation projects.

Infrastructure throughout New York State has suffered from lack of investment. According to a [2013 report](#) from the American Society of Civil Engineers, 27% of the over 17,000 bridges in New York State are considered functionally obsolete and 11% are structurally deficient. Additionally, the report states that 23% of New York's 16,000-plus miles of major roads are in poor condition.

Mayor Miner added: "We are trying to create a twenty first century city on nineteenth century infrastructure. Now is the time for each party in Congress to lead and replenish the Highway Trust Fund for our construction and mass transportation needs."

Budgets recently passed in the House of Representatives and Senate created even deeper spending cuts on transportation infrastructure. According to analysis compiled by the [Center for Budget Policy Priorities](#) based on data from the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office, the House-passed budget would cut transportation spending by 90% in 2016, from \$54 billion to only \$6 billion, and only slowly restore those amounts to pre-2015 levels.

Mayor Miner has been a nationally-recognized advocate on infrastructure issues. In 2014, she submitted testimony to the U.S. Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works urging increased federal funding for infrastructure project. She has attended the Clinton Global Initiative's CGI: America conference and been a member of their infrastructure working group.

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