

# **SEMCOG** . . . *Shaping the Future of Southeast Michigan*

Southeast Michigan Council of Governments • 1001 Woodward, Suite 1400 • Detroit, Michigan 48226 • (313) 961-4266 • Fax (313) 961-4869  
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May 15, 2014

Honorable Randy Richardville  
Senate Majority Leader, Dist. 17  
Michigan State Senate  
PO Box 30036  
Lansing, MI 48909-7536

Dear Senator Richardville:

SEMCOG, the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments, has been advocating for a substantial increase of funds to address our state's transportation deficit for years. We believe an appropriately funded transportation system is crucial for Michigan's future.

We are pleased that the legislature is taking serious steps to address these issues and we hope that legislation to enhance the state transportation budget can be quickly resolved. Our review of the legislation passed by the House of Representatives, while encouraging, indicates it is lacking in scope. Even as House members were voting on the package, many members acknowledged that the legislation was only a first step. Frankly, we need a comprehensive solution today.

The House package raises \$450 million per year. If the legislature approves only this amount of additional funding we will see no noticeable improvement in our roads. Our roads and bridges will continue to deteriorate, albeit at a slower rate. The legislature has mandated that state and local road agencies evaluate the condition of our roads and develop management plans that make best use of our transportation revenues. That task is being done. However, local road agencies do not have enough money to implement the necessary maintenance plans which can significantly increase the life expectancy of our roads based on those studies. As a result of this lack of funding, our roads are deteriorating at an accelerated pace. This must be reversed.

Public transit also needs to be included in this package. SEMCOG is projecting that 24% of our region's population will be over the age of 65 by 2040 (Florida is currently at 18%); this means increased demands for alternative transportation programs to serve the needs of those citizens. Perhaps more significant is the fact that young people are relying on public transportation more than ever. We have found that many of our most educated young people leave Michigan for cities in other states that have robust urban centers and efficient public transit systems. If Michigan is going to compete for a talented and educated workforce, then public transportation is an important investment for our state.

We at SEMCOG are happy to meet with you to discuss these issues in greater detail. We believe that improvements to the transportation infrastructure are critical to the future of our region and state.

Sincerely,



Joan Gebhardt  
Chair, SEMCOG  
Treasurer, Schoolcraft College

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Chairperson  
Treasurer,  
Schoolcraft College

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Clerk,  
Green Oak Township

Kathleen Lomako  
Executive Director

# POINTS OF VIEW

## RAW DATA

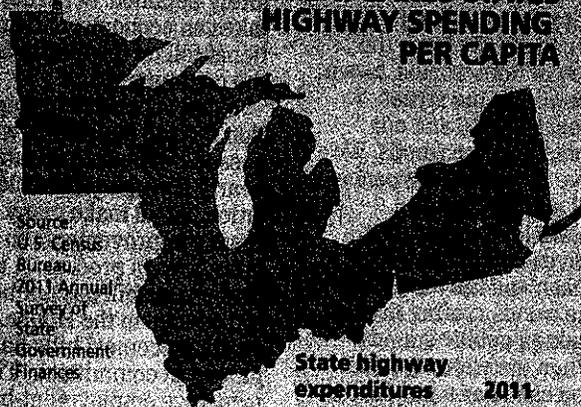


**KRISTI TANNER ADDING DATA TO DISCOURSE**

## 50th

Michigan ranks last among the 50 states in per capita road expenditures, with spending of \$135 per capita in 2011, according to the latest census data. That's down from 2010, when the state's highway spending was \$154 per capita. State spending on highways decreased by 12%, to \$1.3 billion, in Michigan in 2011. Nationwide highway spending among states declined by 1% during the same time period.

### GREAT LAKES STATES' HIGHWAY SPENDING PER CAPITA



Source:  
U.S. Census  
Bureau,  
2011 Annual  
Survey of  
State  
Government  
Finances

	State highway expenditures per capita	2011 rank
Pennsylvania	\$557	8
Illinois	\$336	25
Wisconsin	\$321	28
Indiana	\$288	33
Minnesota	\$275	35
New York	\$249	40
Ohio	\$234	43
Michigan	\$135	50

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