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Transportation Report Says Legislative Inaction Cost Michigan Taxpayers \$1.1 Billion in Two Years

LANSING – The deterioration of approximately 8,500 miles of roads in Michigan cost taxpayers an additional \$1.1 billion in just two years, according to a recent report released by the Michigan Transportation Team (MTT).

The report which was distributed to lawmakers and legislative candidates highlighted the condition of Michigan's federal-aid road system, the state's most-travelled roads. The MTT used data from the Michigan Transportation Asset Management Council (TAMC) to break down the condition of roads, and the cost to taxpayers as a result of legislative inaction, for each legislative district across the state.

"This is the first time road condition data has been broken down to show the cost of legislative inaction by legislative district," County Road Association of Michigan Director John Niemela said. "Legislators must understand that ignoring the poor condition of Michigan roads will not make the problem go away. Road conditions negatively impact our economy, quality of life, and have a direct impact on our ability to create and retain jobs."

TAMC collects data on the condition of Michigan's federal-aid road system. Road agencies use the data to prioritize road projects to best utilize limited funds. Road agencies attempt to keep roads from falling to poor condition, where they are at least twice as expensive to repair. Limited funding, however, prevents them from doing all of the necessary preventative maintenance.

In 2008, the TAMC warned legislators that continued deterioration and underfunding had allowed the cost of repairing Michigan's federal-aid eligible roads to double from 2004 to 2008, a \$3.5 billion loss in road assets and a sign that Michigan roads are deteriorating faster than they can be repaired or replaced.

"While planned construction projects are delayed, lawmakers still have not addressed the state's inability to match federal transportation aid," said Mike Nystrom, executive vice president of the Michigan Infrastructure and Transportation Association (MITA) and co-chair of MTT. "This report should be a wake-up call to legislators as they continue to fail Michigan citizens by ignoring Michigan's transportation funding crisis."

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In 2008, the Transportation Funding Task Force (TF2), an assembly approved by the legislature and the governor, recommended that Michigan at least double its current investment in transportation.

“We are at the tipping point, where we can’t afford to bring our road and bridge network back to good condition – lawmakers must consider what kind of future they want for their district,” Niemela said.

The reports shared with legislators are available on-line at <http://www.micountyroads.org/rdcond.htm>. Michigan residents can voice their concerns about road funding by calling a toll-free number – **888-719-3087**. Callers simply enter their five-digit ZIP code to be connected, at no cost to them, with their legislator.

The Michigan Transportation Team (MTT) is a broad-based, bipartisan partnership of business, labor, local government, associations and citizens with the common goal of improving Michigan’s transportation infrastructure. The DriveMI campaign is committed to promoting the development and maintenance of a safe, convenient and efficient transportation network that serves the public, private and economic development needs of Michigan. Please visit www.drivemi.org or www.facebook.com/fixmichiganroads for more information on transportation funding. Citizens can also follow MTT on twitter @drivemi or visit our YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/user/FixMIRoads .

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