



## Invest in our Nation's Infrastructure

### Background:

NECA contractors play a crucial role in the building and maintenance of our transportation system. Our members power our nation's buildings, hospitals, and schools; light our highways and streets; connect transit and rail switches; install complex electrical systems at airports; operate and maintain the plants that keep our water clean, and much more. Unfortunately, a systemic failure to adequately invest in our infrastructure is taking its toll on the system. We must reverse course and properly fund investments in our transportation infrastructure. Economic studies show that every \$1 billion in infrastructure investment creates 28,500 direct and indirect jobs, providing our economy and the American taxpayers with a high return on investment.

### Key Points:

- *Highway Trust Fund.* Find a Sustainable Solution to Fix the Highway Trust Fund. Congress must enact a long-term sustainable revenue source for the Highway Trust Fund that makes the fund whole, and significantly increases our investment in transportation infrastructure.
- *Transit Transportation.* A growing populace, traffic jams, and high gas prices have lead many commuters to increasingly rely and utilize transit. Our nation's public transportation systems are owned and operated by state and local governments or governmental agencies, some in partnership with the federal government. Currently, there are over 7,700 transit providers operating in the U.S. NECA contractors nationwide provide design support, construction engineering, project management, installation, testing, startup and maintenance for transit systems in heavy rail, light rail, and automated people mover systems.
- *Rail Infrastructure.* Railroads are experiencing a competitive resurgence as both an energy-efficient freight transportation option and a viable city-to-city passenger service. Since 1980, over \$500 billion in private funding has been invested in our railroad lines without any federal infrastructure funding assistance. The U.S. rail network is made up of more than 160,000 miles of track, 76,000 rail bridges, and 800 tunnels across the nation that are shared by all operators moving freight and passengers. NECA contractors perform a variety of work for rail carriers nationwide, including: installing fiber optic communication systems, trolley poles and contact systems, overhead catenaries, rail switches, and switch yard and rail diamond reconstruction.
- *Federal Funding.* Ensure funding is increased for the Federal construction agencies. This should include increased funding for the military construction accounts at the Department of Defense, the Federal Buildings Fund account within the General Services Administration, and all other appropriate construction accounts for the other "civilian" agencies.

- *Support Our Nation's Military Personnel.* The Department of Defense construction agencies design and manage construction for homes, schools, hospitals, day care centers, office buildings, airfields, warehouses and training facilities for members of the military and their families. In addition to new construction, existing structures need maintenance and renovation.
- *Invest in "Civilian" Building Infrastructure.* The U.S. General Services Administration is responsible for all federal construction outside the Department of Defense. The vast majority of non-Defense federal construction activity is in dire need to address a serious backlog of needed repairs, alterations and project starts. Beyond federal buildings, funding is sorely needed for federal prisons, courthouses, border stations, and our embassies overseas.
- *Invest in School Construction.* School construction has generally been considered a state and local responsibility and the needs are not being met. According to the National Center for Education and Statistics, the unmet need for school construction and renovation is estimated to be \$127 billion or \$2.2 million per school and the average age of a public school building is estimated to be over 40 years old.

#### NECA Asks:

- Pass a robust, well-funded, comprehensive infrastructure funding bill that addresses needs in all sectors.
- Pass a six-year FAA reauthorization that increases funding for the Airport Improvement Program (AIP) and lifts the cap on the Passenger Facility Charge (PFC).
- Make passage of the Water Resources Development Act of 2018 a priority.
- Urge the House Appropriations Committee to fully fund the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act of 2015.
- Congress should also oppose efforts to arbitrarily cut the Federal construction accounts to help balance discretionary spending.
- Streamline the project permitting process across infrastructure sectors, with safeguards to protect the environment, to provide greater clarity to regulatory requirements, bring priority projects to reality more quickly, and secure cost savings.