



SPECIAL REPORT: The Presidential Candidates on Transportation

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As the 2016 presidential campaign season continues, ARTBA is carefully monitoring the candidates' positions on transportation policy. Nearly all the remaining candidates have made at least one substantive public statement on transportation, or have included it in policy documents posted by their respective campaigns.

As we have done for the last two presidential election cycles, ARTBA has drawn this report principally from debate transcripts, public statements, legislative votes, writings and the candidates' official websites and social media postings from recent years. ARTBA will continue to supplement this information during the campaign with new information and positions from the candidates. While a wider range of federal policies affect ARTBA members in various ways, this report focuses exclusively on policies directly relating to transportation infrastructure and investment.

Over the course of this year, as in previous election cycles, ARTBA and its leadership will be in contact with the major candidates' policy staffs and the two parties' platform committees. We will make sure they are fully briefed on current transportation infrastructure issues and provide them material on ARTBA's vision for long-term solutions to the nation's transportation challenges.



DEMOCRATS

Hillary Clinton

U.S. Secretary of State (2009-2013)

U.S. Senate, New York (2001-2009)

2015-16 Presidential Campaign

Nov. 30, 2015—“Hardhats for Hillary” Campaign Event, Boston, Massachusetts: Secretary Clinton proposed a 5-year, \$275 billion plan for federal infrastructure investment on top of existing levels, including roads, bridges, transit, airports, high speed rail, energy facilities and internet access. She would allocate \$25 billion of that amount to capitalize a national infrastructure bank, and reauthorize the Build America Bonds program. Secretary Clinton would fund these additional investments through “business tax reform.”

2007-08 Presidential Campaign

Aug. 7, 2007—Democratic Presidential Debate, Chicago, Illinois:

“We have to make investments in infrastructure... This will create jobs, not only if we once again focus on our bridges, our tunnels, our ports, our airports, our mass transit—it will put millions of people to work—but it is also part of homeland security.

“We need to have a better infrastructure in order to protect us. And it’s not only the physical infrastructure, it is the virtual infrastructure, like a national broadband system that our police and firefighters can actually access and use to be safe. So I think that we’ve got to look at this, with the disaster that we see, from the levees of New Orleans to the bridge in Minneapolis to what happened to us in New York City on 9/11, as the highest priority, and it will be at the top of my list when I’m president.”

Aug. 8, 2007—A week after the Minneapolis I-35W bridge collapse, Sen. Clinton released a “Rebuild America” plan, intended to address various infrastructure needs. Her plan encompassed a range of transportation and infrastructure investment proposals, including:

- \$10 billion over 10 years to address more than 60,000 structurally deficient bridges;
- \$250 million to assist states in conducting emergency reviews of critical infrastructure to ensure safety;
- A \$1.5 billion annual increase in mass transit investment;
- A \$1 billion annual increase for intercity passenger rail activities; and
- A \$200 million increase for the U.S. Department of Transportation’s congestion relief programs.

April 8, 2008—Because of rising gas prices and the economic slowdown at the time, Sen. Clinton proposed suspending the 18.4-cent-per-gallon federal gas tax during the upcoming summer travel season. Her proposal would replace the lost Highway Trust Fund revenue by raising taxes on the oil industry. This followed a similar proposal from Sen. John McCain (R-Arizona), the front-runner for the Republican nomination. Sen. Clinton’s principal Democratic rival, Sen. Barack Obama (D-Ill.) opposed a gas tax suspension. Their disagreement emerged as a key issue (complete with television ads devoted to this topic) in the Indiana presidential primary. Ultimately, Sen. Clinton defeated Sen. Obama in Indiana on May 6 by just over 1 percentage point.



DEMOCRATS

Bernie Sanders

U.S. Senate, Vermont (2007-Present)

U.S. House, Vermont (1991-2007)

2015-16 Presidential Campaign

May 26, 2015—Presidential Campaign Announcement, Burlington, Vermont:

“It begins with jobs. If we are truly serious about reversing the decline of the middle class we need a major federal jobs program which puts millions of Americans back to work at decent paying jobs. At a time when our roads, bridges, water systems, rail and airports are decaying, the most effective way to rapidly create meaningful jobs is to rebuild our crumbling infrastructure. That’s why I’ve introduced legislation which would invest \$1 trillion over 5 years to modernize our country’s physical infrastructure. This legislation would create and maintain at least 13 million good-paying jobs, while making our country more productive, efficient and safe. And I promise you as president I will lead that legislation into law.”

From www.berniesanders.com, “Creating Jobs Rebuilding America”:

“Our nation’s infrastructure is collapsing, and the American people know it. Every day, they drive on roads with unforgiving potholes and over bridges that are in disrepair. They wait in traffic jams and ride in railroads and subways that are overcrowded. They see airports bursting at the seams.

“For too many years, we have dramatically underfunded the physical infrastructure that our economy depends on. That is why I have proposed the Rebuild America Act, to invest \$1 trillion over five years to modernize our infrastructure. It would be paid for by closing loopholes that allow profitable corporations to avoid paying taxes by, among other things, shifting their profits to the Cayman Islands and other offshore tax havens.

“Importantly, the Rebuild America Act will support more than thirteen million good-paying jobs—jobs that our economy desperately needs.”

U.S. Senate Career

March 13, 2012— Sen. Sanders voted no on an amendment (No. 1756) sponsored by Sen. Jim DeMint (R-S.C.) that would “devolve” much of the responsibility for the national surface transportation systems to the states. (The amendment failed 30-67.) The Senate considered it during debate on the “Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century” (MAP-21) surface transportation reauthorization bill (S. 1813).

June 29, 2012— Sen. Sanders voted yes on the conference report for MAP-21 (H.R. 4348). (The bill passed—74-19)

July 29, 2014—Sen. Sanders voted no on an amendment (No. 3584) sponsored by Sen. Mike Lee (R-Utah) that would largely “devolve” much of the responsibility for the national surface transportation systems to the states. (The amendment failed 28-69.) The Senate considered it during debate on the *Highway and Transportation Funding Act of 2014* (H.R. 5021) which temporarily extended the federal surface transportation programs.

DEMOCRATS

Jan. 27, 2015— Sen. Sanders introduced the *Rebuild America Act* (S. 268). The bill would invest \$1 trillion over the next five years in the nation's transportation infrastructure. Sanders did not offer a specific funding mechanism in the bill itself, saying, "There are many ways to fund it ... we'll have the debate about how to fund it I'm sure in the weeks and months to come."

FAST Act—During the legislative process that resulted in passage of the "Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act in 2015, Sen. Sanders voted yes on a key motion and the final version of the Senate bill (July 22-30, 2015 - H.R. 22). Later, he was one of 28 Democrats and Independents in the Senate to sign a public letter urging maximization of investment levels in the bill. In December 2015, Sen. Sanders did not vote on the final passage of the FAST Act, the five-year reauthorization bill fashioned by the House-Senate conference committee. (The bill passed 83-16.)

Excerpt from Jan. 26, 2015 op-ed in *The Hill*, written by Sen. Sanders:

"For many years we have underfunded the maintenance of our nation's physical infrastructure. That has to change. It is time to rebuild America. A \$1 trillion investment to modernize our country's physical infrastructure would not just rebuild our country but create and maintain 13 million good-paying jobs that our economy desperately needs..."

"How bad is the situation? Almost one-third of our roads are in poor or mediocre condition, and more than 40 percent of urban highways are congested. One of nine bridges is structurally deficient, and nearly a quarter are functionally obsolete. Transit systems face major unfunded repairs, while 45 percent of American households lack access to any transit at all..."

"We now spend just 2.4 percent of GDP on infrastructure, less than at any point in the last 20 years. Europe spends twice that amount, and China spends close to four times our rate. We are falling further and further behind, and the longer we wait, the more it will cost us later. Deteriorating infrastructure does not magically get better by ignoring it."



REPUBLICANS

Donald Trump

Chairman and President, Trump Organization

Business Career

April 17, 2011—Interview on CNN’s *State of the Union* program:

“We are rebuilding China. I don’t know if you know it. They’re building bridges. They’re building airports. They’re building cities, brand-new cities. When was the last time you saw a bridge being built in the United States? We don’t have bridges being built. We have bridges that are falling down.”

2015-16 Presidential Campaign

April 22, 2015—From a video posted on Donald J. Trump’s Facebook page:

“I don’t like what I see happening to America...The infrastructure of our country is a laughingstock all over the world...Our airports, our bridges, our roadways—it’s falling apart...It’s a terrible thing to see.”

May 12-13, 2015—Tweets from Donald J. Trump’s Twitter account—Following the Amtrak train accident in Philadelphia, Mr. Trump sent a series of tweets:

“Amtrak crash near Philadelphia, trail derails – many hurt, some badly. Our country has horrible infrastructure problems. Pols can’t solve!”

“The only one to fix the infrastructure of our country is me – roads, airports, bridges. I know how to build, pols only know how to talk!”

“TRAIN WRECK just the beginning. Our roads, airports, tunnels, bridges, electric grid—all falling apart. I can fix for 20% of pols, & better.”

June 16, 2015—From Mr. Trump’s campaign announcement, New York City:

“[As president I’d] rebuild the country’s infrastructure. Nobody can do that like me. Believe me. It will be done on time, on budget, way below cost, way below what anyone ever thought. I look at the roads being built all over the country, and I say I can build those things for one-third. What they do is unbelievable, how bad...”

“We have to rebuild our infrastructure, our bridges, our roadways, our airports. You come into La Guardia Airport, it’s like we’re in a third world country. You look at the patches and the 40-year-old floor. They throw down asphalt...And I come in from China and I come in from Qatar and I come in from different places, and they have the most incredible airports in the world. You come to back to this country and you have LAX, disaster. You have all of these disastrous airports. We have to rebuild our infrastructure.”

Aug. 23, 2015—From an interview on ABC’s *This Week* program:

“There’s tremendous divisions throughout [Wisconsin]. The roads aren’t being built properly, you know, he stopped a lot of work because he doesn’t want to raise taxes so instead of raising taxes, [Governor Scott Walker]’s borrowing for help, and the state is very ‘over levered.’”

REPUBLICANS

2015—Excerpted from “*Crippled America: How to Make America Great Again*,” by Donald J. Trump, Threshold Editions:

“OUR INFRASTRUCTURE IS CRUMBLING

“Our airports, bridges, water tunnels, power grids, rail systems—our nation’s entire infrastructure is crumbling, and we aren’t doing anything about it. According to engineers, one out of every nine bridges in this country is structurally deficient, approximately a quarter of them are already functionally obsolete, and almost a third of them have exceeded their design lives.

“Some of these bridges have already collapsed. Our infrastructure is terrible, and it’s only getting worse and more expensive to fix. It’s already costing the American people an estimated \$200 billion a year in reduced productivity.

“Instead of being at the office or in the factory getting work done, Americans waste countless hours every day sitting in traffic jams or waiting for stalled trains. Our airports? Are you kidding me? A disgrace.

“Our power grid, the infrastructure for electricity that keeps everything operating, is way out-of-date. Our highspeed Internet access is only 16th best in the world. When I travel internationally, I see magnificent places you wouldn’t believe. I see properly maintained bridges, tunnels, and airports. I see great highways and unbelievably efficient power systems. Then I come home and I get caught in traffic, and when the car moves, it bangs over potholes.

“Why can’t we get these problems fixed? The answer is that the people we put in charge don’t know how to fix them.

“We’re spending billions of dollars protecting countries that should be paying us to do the job yet we can’t build roads in our own cities. We can’t build schools in our own communities. I’ve been to China numerous times, and everywhere you look there are cranes reaching toward the sky. The Chinese build new cities over there in about 12 minutes, while we take years to get the permits to add a dormer window to our own homes.

“The World Economic Forum ranks the US infrastructure as only the 12th best in the world. We don’t spend enough to fix, build, or maintain our “plant.” Europe and China spend as much as 9 percent of their GDP on infrastructure projects. We spend 2.4 percent.

“When you talk about building, you had better talk about Trump. There is no single builder in this country who has his name on as great a range of projects as I’ve constructed...

“Fixing our infrastructure will be one of the biggest projects this country has ever undertaken. There isn’t going to be a second chance to get it right. Let me ask you, if your own house was falling down and you had to hire someone to fix it before it completely collapsed, who would you hire? A guy who tells you what he’s planning to do, or a guy who has proven what he can do countless times before?

“In America, our house is falling down. Numerous times I’ve developed project after project. I raise the money, solve endless problems, bring in the right people, and get it done. Those are four words politicians can’t use: I get it done.

REPUBLICANS

“When you are getting ready to start the greatest long-term building project in American history, you’d better have the right person in charge. You need someone who knows how to deal with unions and suppliers and, without any doubt, lawyers. I deal with them all each day, and I don’t lose to them.

“For me, fixing the country’s infrastructure would be a major priority project. Before we build bridges to Mars, let’s make sure the bridges over the Mississippi River aren’t going to fall down. There is nothing, absolutely nothing, that stimulates the economy better than construction.

“A few years ago, Moody’s, the financial investment agency, calculated that every \$1 of federal money invested in improving the infrastructure for highways and public schools would generate \$1.44 back to the economy. The Congressional Budget Office said that infrastructure investments have one of the strongest direct economic impacts.

“You know why that is? Jobs.

“These projects put people to work—not just the people doing the work but also the manufacturers, the suppliers, the designers, and, yes, even the lawyers. The Senate Budget Committee estimates that rebuilding America will create 13 million jobs.

“Our economy needs more available jobs. Ask the construction unions and trade unions how many of their members are looking for jobs. Ask the unemployed electricians, plumbers, and masons how hard it is to find a good job.

“If we do what we have to do correctly, we can create the biggest economic boom in this country since the New Deal when our vast infrastructure was first put into place. It’s a no-brainer.

“The biggest questions are ‘How much is it going to cost?’ and ‘Where is that money going to come from?’ Financing a project is far too complex for most politicians to understand. These projects require real-world dollars, not figures on paper. Experience is required to understand how to budget properly.

“I think we can all agree, after watching our politicians waste our tax dollars, that the last thing we want to do is to put them in charge of a trillion-dollar rebuilding program.

“When I build a project, I watch the money. At least some of it is coming directly out of my pocket—and if I do the job right, a lot more is going back into that same pocket. I know what things cost, I know where the money goes, I know who is doing a good job, and I know who is just phoning it in. Our government should, too.

“On the federal level, this is going to be an expensive investment, no question about that. But in the long run it will more than pay for itself. It will stimulate our economy while it is being built and make it a lot easier to do business when it’s done—and it can be done on time and under budget.”

Feb. 23, 2016—*New York Times* article—“Donald Trump in New York: Deep Roots, but Little Influence”—“Mr. Trump revels in his reputation, boasting about not paying some of his outstanding legal and construction bills. ‘If they do a bad job, they have to suffer,’ he said. ‘If they overbill me or if they don’t do a good job, I take plenty of time to pay them and I negotiate with them.’”