





P. MICHAEL STURLA, CHAIRMAN  
414 MAIN CAPITOL BUILDING  
P.O. BOX 202096  
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA 17120-2096  
(717) 787-3555  
FAX: (717) 705-1923



HOUSE DEMOCRATIC POLICY COMMITTEE

WEBSITE: [www.pahouse.com/policycommittee](http://www.pahouse.com/policycommittee)

EMAIL: [policy@pahouse.net](mailto:policy@pahouse.net)

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**House of Representatives**  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

**HOUSE DEMOCRATIC POLICY COMMITTEE HEARING**

**Topic: Infrastructure**

**Radnor Township Municipal Building – Wayne, PA**

**April 4, 2019**

**AGENDA**

10:00 a.m. Welcome and Opening Remarks

10:10 a.m. Panel One:

- Patrick McDonnell  
Secretary, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection
- Rob Traver  
Professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Villanova University

10:40 a.m. Panel Two:

- Robert Zienkowski  
Township Manager, Radnor Township
- Ken McClain  
District 6 Executive, Pennsylvania Department of Transportation

11:10 a.m. Panel Three:

- Anthony Lusi, Jr.  
Business Agent for Delaware County, Operating Engineers Local 542
- James Harper, Jr.  
Business Manager, Laborers' Local 413

11:40 a.m. Closing Remarks

Testimony on Transportation Infrastructure in Southeast Pennsylvania

Kenneth M. McClain

District Executive, Engineering District 6  
Pennsylvania Department of Transportation

House Democratic Policy Committee Hearing

April 4, 2019



**pennsylvania**

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Good afternoon committee members and staff. I am Ken McClain the District Executive for PennDOT's Engineering District 6. Thank you to Representative O'Mara for hosting this hearing and to the Policy Committee for the opportunity to testify before you and discuss transportation issues across Pennsylvania and how they relate to District 6.

PennDOT is broken up into 11 Engineering districts. District 6, which I represent, is comprised of five counties: Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery and Philadelphia. We are responsible for 3,553 miles of state highway, or 9,739 lane miles; 2,769 bridges; and 92 miles of interstate highway. While this heavily populated district only encompasses seven percent of Pennsylvania's land mass, it is home to 33 percent of the state's population; nearly 50% of the state's traffic signals; 11% of its bridges; 24 percent of all registered vehicles; and 24 percent of the daily vehicle miles traveled in the state.

Testimony from my counterparts to this committee have warned that the Commonwealth was operating on a \$3.5 billion gap between identified transportation infrastructure needs and the current funding allocation. In a 2011 report by the Transportation Funding Advisory Commission, transportation infrastructure needs in 2010 were \$8.3 billion. While \$8.3 billion was needed to properly maintain and address our transportation network, only \$4.8 billion was being invested in transportation. In 2019 that problem has only grown.

The Transportation Funding Advisory Commission reports that current funding needs have increased from \$8.3 billion to \$11.5 billion, a 38.5% increase since 2010. The increase is due to increased construction costs and the continued deterioration of our network as a result of inadequate funding. With current federal and state funding at \$8.6 billion, our unmet need for 2020 is now projected to be \$7.2 billion, more than twice the \$3.5 billion in unmet need from 10 years prior.

Currently, Pennsylvania has the second highest number of bridges in poor condition in the nation with nearly 2,900. Our bridges are a critical part of our state transportation system, with most over 50 years old and exceeding their design life. We must continue to invest in our bridge program to address bridges in poor condition and keep more bridges in good condition.

Another area that requires critical resources are our interstates and roadways, but the interstate system is funded at less than 50% of basic cyclic need. Each year approximately \$460 million is allocated to interstates, yet the funding needed to simply conduct cyclic maintenance and get to a state of good repair should be \$1.2 billion, more than double the current allocation. Even more funding is needed to address reconstruction needs, modernization, and to make strategic investments to address freight movement needs and capacity issues. Funding for the National Highway system is even more dire. Excluding the Interstate portion, the National Highway System roads are currently funded at \$742 million, but the cost of basic cyclic maintenance is \$2.2 billion, triple our annual investment.

Governor Wolf has recently proposed Restore Pennsylvania, a major infrastructure initiative which will begin to address some of these needs. Restore Pennsylvania will provide funding for local road upgrades and the repair of four-digit state roads; create new flexible funding options for businesses that need local infrastructure upgrades to enable development projects, and

multimodal and large-scale capital projects for transit. Restore Pennsylvania is an important first step in addressing the Commonwealth's infrastructure needs.

In Southeastern Pennsylvania, PennDOT faces transportation challenges due to aging infrastructure and the congestion motorists face daily when traveling in the nation's 5<sup>th</sup> largest metropolitan area. The infrastructure needs in District 6 significantly outweigh the financial resources available to meet them; however, we are utilizing and carefully managing available federal and state dollars to address the most pressing needs.

Of the 11 engineering districts across the state, District 6 is home to PennDOT's largest construction and design programs.

District 6 has let an average of \$576 million a year in transportation improvement projects over the past five years (2014-18), including the resurfacings of Interstates 76 and 95; reconstruction of sections of I-95; and major corridor improvements on U.S. Routes 1, 202, 422 and 322.

Today, there are 130 transportation improvement projects under construction in the region worth \$2.5 billion dollars. Among these projects in Delaware County are the \$62.6 million widening of U.S. 322/Conchester Highway; \$19.9 million replacement of the Route 452 Bridge over Amtrak & SEPTA; \$16.6 million rehabilitation of eight bridges over I-95; and the \$12.9 million replacement of the Route 252 bridge at the Springton Reservoir.

District 6's portfolio of transportation improvement projects currently in engineering design consists of 301 projects worth a total value \$6.8 billion. In Delaware County, there are 41 projects worth \$928 million. Among these future projects are the widening of the eastern section of U.S. 322; improving the U.S. 1/Route 352 Interchange; and instituting travel management improvements on I-476.

This investment has enabled District 6 to reduce the number of bridges in Poor Condition from more than 600 in 2009 to 398 today. In addition, the amount of bridge deck area in Poor Condition has been reduced from a high of nearly 20% in 2009 to 8.8% today. Improvements are steadily being made, but challenges remain because many older bridges move into the Poor Condition category each year.

District 6 has worked aggressively to resurface roads in the poorest condition with available funds; however, the massive size of the state highway system makes pavement conditions another difficult challenge. Act 89 has been extremely beneficial in increasing the size of the district's annual resurfacing program. From 2014 to 2018, the district resurfaced 1,010 miles of state highway, including 149 miles in Delaware County. In 2019, we plan to resurface over 285 miles, including over 60 miles in Delaware County.

Resurfacing to seal pavements is critical to provide smooth roads and combat difficult winters seasons, which often result in early and damaging outbreak of potholes.

Over the past three years (2016-2018), District 6 invested an average of \$6.5 million annually to place an average of 11,778 tons of patching material on state roads. Thus far in 2019, \$3.1 million has been spent to place 3,115 tons of patching material, including 509 tons in Delaware

County. Crews are working daily to fill potholes and we plan to take advantage of patching on Saturdays when asphalt plants are available.

As crews respond to road and bridge concerns in District 6, we also fight an uphill battle with litter and debris strewn along our roadsides. In 2018, \$5.2 million was spent to remove litter in the region, an amount that could have used to resurface 26 miles of poor pavement. Typically, within two weeks of completing a litter pickup operation, travelers cannot even tell our crews just cleaned the area.

Finally, regarding traffic congestion, District 6 is implementing the use of Active Traffic Management strategies within most congested corridors, such as I-76 and I-476, to enhance traffic flow.

Part of this innovative program is the I-476 "flex lane" project in Delaware County, which is starting preliminary engineering. Transforming the highway's shoulders into part-time travel lanes will reduce congestion by providing a third travel lane during certain times of the day along the four-lane section of I-476 between Route 3 and I-95, and along southbound I-95 from I-476 to the Commodore Barry Bridge interchange. The project is anticipated to move to construction in early 2023.

Complimenting this advanced technology will be PennDOT's new Regional Traffic Management Center, which will be built adjacent to the District 6 office building in King of Prussia. This 37,000-square-foot facility, which will replace the current, cramped center, will provide superior capability to best manage the expanding inventory of components in use today and in the future to enhance traffic operations and inform travelers on major highways in the region. We anticipate the new facility to open in late 2021.

Thank you for the opportunity to present on Pennsylvania and District 6 transportation issues and subjects. I welcome any questions the committee has for me at this time.