



## LEGISLATIVE ALERT

March 5, 2014

Dear Senator Shaheen:

On behalf of the AFL-CIO, I applaud your effort to address our country's enormous infrastructure deficit by introducing S. 2063, the "Strengthen and Fortify Existing Bridges Act of 2014" or SAFE Bridges Act. This legislation tackles one of our nation's most visible infrastructure problems – deficient and obsolete bridges. For years the American Society of Civil Engineers report has highlighted the U.S. investment deficit in our infrastructure, most recently giving the U.S. an appallingly low overall infrastructure rating of "D+".

Unfortunately, it often takes tragedies like the I-5 bridge collapse in Washington or the I-35W bridge collapse in Minnesota, to remind us that we have simply not made the necessary investments to keep our roads, bridges and other critical infrastructure in a state of good repair.

The passage of MAP-21 provided only a short window of time to decide what kind of surface transportation system we want to have in the future. We need a system that makes us competitive, allows efficient movement of people and products, and puts people to work. Yet without serious funding the system will continue to deteriorate, making us less competitive, less efficient and at risk of lagging behind in a global economy.

The current level of funding going into the Highway Trust Fund (HTF) is woefully inadequate and without drastic changes it will face insolvency later this year. No single proposal can replace a robust long-term, dedicated funding stream for the HTF. However, we need to start heading in the right direction and your legislation takes that step.

This legislation will allow us to jump start the repair, maintenance and replacement of deficient and outdated bridges. Just as importantly, this legislation will create jobs for unemployed workers in the still struggling construction sector of our economy. We look forward to working with you as this legislation moves forward.

Sincerely,

William Samuel, Director  
Government Affairs Department