

Good Evening Representative Bradley and Distinguished Members of the General Assembly. My name is Anna Bicanic Moeller and I am the Executive Director of the McHenry County Council of Governments (MCCG). On behalf of the McHenry County Council of Governments, I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony this evening regarding a comprehensive capital plan for the State of Illinois. We applaud your leadership and your efforts to pass a capital plan this year.

The MCCG represents 24 municipalities and several local governments with a total population of approximately 319,000 in McHenry County, which is located in Northeastern Illinois- approximately 40 miles northwest of the City of Chicago.

McHenry County, because of its proximity to Chicago, high quality of life and relative affordable standard of living has seen a 34% increase in its population over the past 15 years. The county's infrastructure- in particular our transportation network- has not kept pace with such growth. In fact, McHenry County has been identified as the seventh most congested county in the country and the most congested county in the state. This obviously negatively affects the quality of life for residents and visitors, threatens the county's economic vitality and is a detriment to the environment. Our local governments do their share in maintaining the transportation network, however the necessary resources are dwindling. Motor fuel tax allocations, the source of state funding for municipal, county and township roads and bridges, are only 10% higher than they were eight years ago. But the cost of construction on local roads is 90% higher than it was eight years ago. A state capital plan is absolutely essential to provide the necessary resources for maintaining and improving our transportation system.

The MCCG has identified 11 priority transportation improvements that have been endorsed by our municipal and local government members to enhance McHenry County's transportation network by reducing congestion through efficient access to central business districts, employment and commercial centers. These include the Western Algonquin By-pass- a bypass of the intersection of Route 62 and Route 31, which is one of the most congested roads in Illinois, partly because it is required to do double-duty as a street and as a highway. For example, Illinois Route 31 is also Main Street in Algonquin. \$19 million in federal funds have been designated to build this bypass and widen Illinois Route 31. State capital funding will ensure that this project is a reality.

Two additional transportation projects that are vital to McHenry County include the completion of a \$66 million full interchange at I-90 and Rt. 47 and widening of Rt. 47 from Reed Road to Price Road in Hebron. Finally, we also support additional funding for mass transit and have included the Union Pacific Northwest New Start Project as a priority for McHenry County as well.

The MCCG fully supports the passage of comprehensive capital program this year. Maintaining and expanding our road and transit systems as well as committing funds to build and maintain water and sewage treatment facilities, open space, and other necessary public infrastructure will stimulate the State's economy, create jobs and be a wise investment in our future. The MCCG urges the General Assembly to approve a capital plan that is large enough to meet state's current and forecasted needs. A limited program that meets very few of our capital needs will be detrimental to our State's long-term funding outlook.

The MCCG understands that a sizable, comprehensive capital plan will require new revenues to fund such a program. We are open to consider the various options available for new revenue that have been proposed over the past few months such as motor fuel tax increases and other revenue enhancements. We believe that any increases be obligated for funding a capital program and that the process for funding projects is transparent and based on merit.

Again, we thank you for your leadership on this issue. The MCCG is committed to working with you and the Illinois General Assembly to craft a capital plan that addresses our vital infrastructure needs, create jobs and spurs economic growth in McHenry County, the Chicago metropolitan region and State. We look forward to working with you on this issue in the coming weeks.