



**WCRHCA WESTERN CANADA ROADBUILDERS &
HEAVY CONSTRUCTION ASSOCIATION (WCR & HCA)**

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November 10, 2003

Hon. Gary Doer,
Premier
Province of Manitoba
204-450 Broadway
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R3C 0V8

Hon. Lorne Calvert,
Premier
Province of Saskatchewan
Room 226
2405 Legislative Drive
Regina, Saskatchewan
S4S 0B3

Hon. Ralph Klein,
Premier
Province of Alberta
307 Legislative Building
10800-97th Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
T5K 2B6

Hon. Gordon Campbell,
Premier
Province of British Columbia
P.O. Box 9041 Stn. Prov. Govt.
Victoria, British Columbia
V8W 9E1

Dear Premiers,

Re: Dedicated Funding for a National Infrastructure Strategy (NIS)

The Western Canada Roadbuilders & Heavy Construction Association (WCR&HCA) urges you to support the allocation of a portion of federal fuel taxes towards the funding of Canada's core municipal infrastructure and transportation including a National Highways Program (NHP) as part of a broader National Infrastructure Strategy (NIS).

Canada's quality of life, economic prosperity and international competitiveness, depend upon her core municipal infrastructure (streets, bridges & structures, water distribution and waste treatment systems) and an efficient, seamless multi-modal transportation system including a national highways system linking all modes of transportation.

Canada's core municipal infrastructure deficit has been estimated by the Conference Board of Canada, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, the Canada West Foundation and the TD Economics Group as hovering in the vicinity of \$57 billion and growing at a rate of \$2 billion annually.

The investment deficit for the National Highways System (NHS) is estimated to be in the range of \$19 billion. In addition, it is estimated that the remaining provincial highways systems investment deficits cumulatively range in the vicinity of \$40 billion.

In total, the national infrastructure investment deficit could be \$116 billion, a number that will grow exponentially without a national effort to redress this alarming statistic.

The WCR&HCA Board is encouraged by the announcement on May 31, 2003 at the FCM Conference in Winnipeg by incoming Prime Minister, Paul Martin, and often repeated and recommitted to since, that his government would allocate five cents of federal fuel taxes towards core municipal infrastructure and transportation.

Public polling by Pollara, Western Opinion Research, Canada West Foundation Environics and the Big Cities Mayors' Caucus over the last two years has demonstrated: public dissatisfaction with the condition of roads, highways and infrastructure; the public's concern that its quality of life will deteriorate without sustained investment in the infrastructure; and the public's support for the allocation of federal fuel taxes.

On October 7, 2003 the House of Commons voted 202 in favour to 31 against (only the Bloc Quebecois did not support the motion) in support of a resolution encouraging the federal government "*to initiate immediate discussions with the provinces and territories to provide municipalities with a portion of the federal gas tax.*"

The above shifts in public policy, the hardening of public opinion, and the House of Commons vote, all support a strong message that a national infrastructure approach is required and that federal gas tax allocation to these purposes is worthy of support.

The Western Canada Roadbuilders & Heavy Construction Association represents the heavy construction and related industries in western Canada. We endorse for your consideration, a National Infrastructure Strategy (NIS) as outlined in the enclosed position paper.

As leaders of the four western provinces, you will have a unique opportunity to meet with the incoming Prime Minister during the Grey Cup festivities.

We urge you to support a national initiative to begin the process of rebuilding Canada's infrastructure, which has platformed our economic competitiveness and quality of life cherished by Canadians, and aspired to by the international community.

We respectfully submit that whatever political sensitivities may surround the initial announcements, those should be set aside in favour of the national good.

We remain,

Yours truly,
Western Canada Roadbuilders &
Heavy Construction Association (WCR&HCA)



Frank Rizzardo
Board Chair



Chris Lorenc, B.A., LL.B.,
President

cc. Canadian Construction Association (CCA)
WCR&HCA Board of Directors