



THE SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION
WASHINGTON, DC 20590

April 20, 2026

Dear Governor:

Gridlock is not just an inconvenience; it is a massive economic burden. It's a tax on our families, a tax on our truckers, and a tax on our entire economy. Every hour an American spends staring at a car bumper is an hour they are not at the dinner table or on the job. Under President Trump's leadership, the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) commits to moving away from the "stop-and-go" policies of the past and toward the high-performance, high-efficiency solutions of the future.

As a Governor, you know the burden that traffic congestion has on our communities, our economy, and the quality of life for American families. Our future does not have to be gridlocked.

America has the greatest road network in the world. Over 4 million miles of public roads deliver 92 percent of commute trips and carry 72 percent of all freight. Yet America is home to 10 of the 25 most congested cities in the world. In 2024, the average urban auto commuter lost 63 hours stuck in traffic. That equates to \$269 billion in lost productivity. Over the next 25 years, vehicle travel will grow another 16 percent and freight shipped by truck is expected to increase by nearly 50 percent. While congestion is well-known in urban settings, its impact extends far beyond the city. Both urban and rural areas experience congestion and safety hazards due to traffic incidents, weather, work zones, and special events. A lack of alternative routes for diversion in rural areas can magnify the impacts of traffic breakdowns. Furthermore, freight bottlenecks near major distribution hubs create significant burden on national productivity.

Today, the Trump Administration is launching the Freedom to Drive Initiative. We are going to use every tool in the Federal toolbox to fix this, and we want you in the driver's seat with us. We will make our roadways the envy of the world again by maximizing existing roadway capacity, accelerating projects to alleviate congestion chokepoints, partnering with the private sector to leverage our infrastructure investments, and applying American technology and ingenuity.

You've already shown leadership through the Safe Roads for Everyone through Reliable Operations and Distraction-Reducing Strategies, or SAFE ROADS, initiative—which prevents crashes and reduces congestion. But the American people need more. Within the next 60 days, we ask you to partner with the DOT to address this congestion crisis and implement the following action plan:

1. **Identify Critical Bottlenecks:** Send us your two to five worst congestion nightmares. Tell us which local, State, or national roads are choking your economy.

- 2. Outline Actions:** Show us what actions you can take to address congestion. Focus solutions on expanding and maximizing roadway capacity for driving. This includes building new roadway capacity or applying operational strategies and technologies to maximize existing roadway capacity. You may also need to recover roadway capacity from other purposes to support driving.

DOT commits to partnering with you to support these efforts. Please submit these lists to your Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Division Office. FHWA will support your progress, provide access to additional tools and resources, and recognize meaningful achievements.

We can solve this, and for the sake of the American family, we must. We look forward to seeing your list and getting to work. Let's get America moving again.

Sincerely,



Sean P. Duffy

cc:

State Transportation Department Chief Executives

FHWA Division Administrators

FHWA Directors of Field Services