



INFORMATION RELEASE

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NR 16-141
May 18, 2016

STATEMENT FROM ARKANSAS HIGHWAY COMMISSION REGARDING THE UPCOMING SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE SESSION

LITTLE ROCK (5-18) – The Arkansas Highway Commission is pleased that the call for the Special Session includes a plan from Governor Hutchinson to address our most critical, immediate need for additional highway investment. Passage of the Governor’s proposal would allow Arkansas to fully utilize and not forfeit available federal highway dollars, something that is clearly in the best interest of our citizens of the great State of Arkansas, the motoring public, and our highways. It should be noted that the vast majority of these federal funds available for improving Arkansas highways are generated from federal motor fuel user fees which are collected in Arkansas and paid by Arkansas’ citizens. While we have concerns about the sustainability of some of the proposed funding sources beyond the first year, we appreciate and support the Governor’s efforts on this critical, immediate issue.

Since adoption by the voters of Amendment 42 (the Mack-Blackwell Amendment) to the Arkansas Constitution in 1952, the Highway Commission has operated in an environment of greater stability with clear authority and responsibility. Part of that responsibility is to maintain open lines of communication with citizens and elected officials, especially members of the General Assembly. Establishing more formal review and communication procedures between the Commission and the Legislature promotes transparency and accountability for both bodies. We support efforts that help our elected officials and the public understand how we have been and are being good stewards of taxpayer dollars. Formal procedures for legislative review of Commission processes, as proposed for consideration in the Special Session, will be beneficial as long as they are applied within the confines of the Constitution.

While the proposals being debated in the Special Session are not the long-term solutions we all seek, we appreciate the willingness of the Governor and Legislature to address our most critical, immediate need of matching available federal highway funds. We look forward to continuing to work with the Governor and legislative leaders on finding and implementing a long-term, sustainable source of revenue for investing in safety, mobility, and economic development for the great State of Arkansas.