WEST VIRGINIA CODE: §7-27-2

§7-27-2. Purpose and findings.

(a) The Legislature hereby makes the following findings:

(1) Roads maintained by the Department of Transportation include:

(A) Thirty-eight thousand six hundred eighty-four miles of public roads;

(B) Thirty-five thousand eight hundred ninety-three miles of state owned highways;

(C) Four hundred sixty-eight miles of state owned Interstate highway;

(D) Eighty-eight miles of West Virginia Turnpike;

(E) One thousand nine hundred seventy-two miles included in the National Highway System, twenty-three miles of which are connectors to other modes of transportation such as airports, trains and buses;

(F) Six thousand nine hundred fourteen bridges, thirty-three percent of which are more than one hundred feet in length;

(G) One all-American road;

(H) Five national byways;

(I) Fourteen state byways; and

(J) Eight backways.

(2) A 2012 road needs assessment prepared for Governor Tomblin's Blue Ribbon Commission by Wilbur Smith Associates reveals that:

(A) During the next seventeen years:

(i) Fifty-one thousand one hundred eight lane miles of road will need to be improved;

(ii) Ten thousand four hundred one lane miles will need modernization improvements including lane widening, road reconstruction, and shoulder improvements; and

(iii) Three thousand four hundred two lane miles will need to be constructed;

(B) Within the next twenty-five years:

(i) Eight hundred fourteen bridges will need to be replaced;

WV Legislature

(ii) Five hundred seventy-seven bridges will need to be widened;

(iii) Eight bridges will need to be straightened; and

(iv) One bridge will need to be raised;

(C) The funding gap for road construction and maintenance over the next twenty-five years is estimated to be $36.7 billion, excluding new road construction; and

(D) The funding gap for bridges construction and maintenance was $2.4 billion, excluding new bridge construction.

(3) Modern, safe roads are critical to economic development.

(4) Modern, safe roads and bridges are essential to the growth of our communities and to the public health, welfare and safety.

(5) Counties need greater ability to influence when and where new roads are constructed and existing roads and bridges are modernized or upgraded, including the ability to recommend to the Division of Highways road and bridge construction projects and to assist in the financing of those projects.

(b) The purpose of this article is to provide county commissions with a source of funding to finance the accelerated construction of new roads and bridges in their respective counties; and the accelerated upgrading or modernizing of existing state roads and bridges in their counties, by allowing them to impose transportation sales and use taxes as provided in this article.

WV Legislature