

H.J. Resolution 1, Resolution Proposing a State Constitutional Amendment to Protect the Resources of the Special Transportation Fund

February 29, 2016

Public Hearing, Transportation Committee

The Associated General Contractors (AGC) of Connecticut is the building division of the Connecticut Construction Industry Association (CCIA), representing 150 commercial, industrial, and institutional construction contractors, subcontractors, material suppliers, and professionals serving the Connecticut construction industry. AGC of Connecticut is a chapter of AGC of America.

Transportation infrastructure plays a critical part in supporting the state's economy, and the construction industry, as a whole, performs an integral role in constructing, maintaining, and improving our highway, road, bridge, and transit systems. AGC of Connecticut supports H.J. Res 1 because it would ask the voters of Connecticut to ensure the integrity of the Special Transportation Fund by providing that revenues deposited into the fund would be used only for transportation purposes, as intended.

According to a recent Council of State Governments analysis, there are currently 29 states with a provision in their state constitutions protecting their transportation funds from being spent for non-transportation purposes. The fact that so many states have felt it necessary to adopt such so-called lockbox protections demonstrates not only that transportation funds have become an all-too-tempting target for public officials across the country but also that the only real, effective safeguard against the taking of transportation funds for non-transportation purposes is a constitutional amendment.

The problems associated with the lack of transportation investment in Connecticut – corroding bridges, crumbling roads, crippling congestion on highways, to name a few – will continue to have ramifications throughout our economy and quality of life unless the state commits to a wholesale transportation improvement plan, one which includes all modes of travel. Part of that commitment must include a constitutional transportation lockbox, without which the public will lack the confidence and trust that is necessary for the massive investment that it will take to bring our state's transportation system up to a standard that we can all be proud of.

The Connecticut Department of Transportation has estimated that it will take \$60 billion over the next 30 years to maintain the level of service on the state's transportation systems that exists today. So in order to improve and modernize the system, we will need to spend twice as much over that period. Without a constitutional protection, any diversion of resources from the Special Transportation Fund, regardless of the reason, will result in a set-back which will delay progress and erode public confidence in the ability of the state to effectively manage our transportation systems.

We urge you to support this Resolution and send the question of adopting a constitutional lockbox for the Special Transportation Fund to Connecticut voters in November.

Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions, please contact AGC of Connecticut Executive Director, John Butts, at 860-529-6855.