



CONGRESSIONAL 'PROBLEM SOLVERS CAUSUS' PROPOSE INFRASTRUCTURE SOLUTIONS

Last week, the Problem Solvers Caucus, a bipartisan group of 24 republican and 24 democrat U.S. House Members released “[Rebuilding America’s Infrastructure](#),” a report detailing points of bipartisan consensus on policies to improve the nation’s infrastructure. Rep. John Katko (R-NY) and Rep. Elizabeth Esty (D-CT) led the Infrastructure Working Group that identified places of agreement to address infrastructure needs across sectors. Congressman Katko commented that we “Can’t have a 21st Century economy with 20th Century infrastructure,” when describing why this report was needed. In his remarks, he specifically mentioned the recommendation to require life cycle assessments in projects over \$20 million.

The report includes recommendations on broad challenges including funding and financing, and regulatory reform, as well as sector-specific solutions for surface transportation, ports and inland waterways, water and wastewater, energy, broadband and communication networks, and aviation.

Among the recommendations:

- Designate a rural liaison within each infrastructure agency to provide technical assistance
- Implement reforms to the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) and Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA) that expand eligibility criteria and encourage more small system applications in rural communities
- Adapt FAST 41 streamlining provisions to other infrastructure legislation
- An immediate or phased in modernization of the federal gasoline user fee that fully and sustainably funds the Highway Trust Fund
- Strengthen and increase access to the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds
- Maintain funding for the Department of Energy’s power grid modernization efforts

Congresswoman Esty, who is the daughter and granddaughter of civil engineers, offered the rallying cry that “America needs to do something. Congress needs to do its job.” She added that this report’s bipartisan buy-in shows that she and her colleagues can and should pass an additive infrastructure package.

Source - ASCE