



# LOUISIANA GOOD ROADS & TRANSPORTATION ASSOCIATION, INC.

## GOOD ROADS ALERT

[www.louisianagoodroads.org](http://www.louisianagoodroads.org)

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Mailing Address:  
P.O. Box 3713  
Baton Rouge, LA 70821  
Phone: 225/408-8279  
Fax: 225/344-0458

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Huval & Associates

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### PRESTON EGGERS- LGRTA LOSES A KEY MEMBER

On January 19, 2011, Louisiana Good Roads lost a good friend and active member when Preston Eggers died at age 87. A native of Lake Charles and resident of Baton Rouge, he was a 1948 graduate of LSU where he had been the LSU Golden Band Major. He served in the Navy in the Pacific Theater of Operations. He worked on one of the first offshore drilling rigs in the Gulf of Mexico.

When the Highway Heavy Utility Chapter (now AGC) was formed in 1950, he became the Managing Director. In 1956 he started the effort to get the State Legislature to develop a licensing process for all contractors – State Licensing Board for Contractors. In 1964, he helped create the Good Roads Association in Alexandria. He retired from Louisiana AGC in 1989.

His retirement just made him more dedicated and active in the Good Roads Association. In 2010 he was designated “Director Emeritus”, the only person to hold that recognition. He was also awarded the LGRTA “Man of the Year Award” for his service to the group.

No one will ever be able to replace Preston, and he will not be forgotten nor should he be by anyone that becomes involved in the LGRTA in the future.

### DID YOU KNOW ?

Driving Louisiana Forward reports:

- 44 states pay higher truck fees
- 44 states pay higher gas taxes
- 46 states have higher auto registration fees

### GOOD ROADS ALERT NOW POSTED ON WEBSITE

This publication can be viewed on line at –  
[www.louisianagoodroads.org](http://www.louisianagoodroads.org)

### FEDERAL INCREASE GASOLINE TAX 15 CENTS

President Obama’s Federal-deficit Commission’s 59-page report entitled “The Moment of Truth,” outlined a sweeping plan to cut costs in an effort to nurse the country’s ailing economy back to fiscal health. The Presidential Debt Commission was charged with finding bi-partisan solutions to erase the United States’ \$13.8 trillion budget deficit. The commission co-chairmen are Erskine Bowles and Alan Simpson. The plan is intended to reduce the deficits and redirect the country from its “unsustainable” fiscal path. The end result is a report that its supporters touted as a good start to a tough problem.

One of the recommendations is - **FULLY FUND THE TRANSPORTATION TRUST FUND INSTEAD OF RELYING ON DEFICIT SPENDING.** Dedicate a 15-cent per gallon increase in the gas tax to transportation funding, and limit spending if necessary to match the revenues the trust fund collects each year.

The Commission plan reclassifies spending from the Transportation Trust Fund to make both contract authority and outlays mandatory, and then limits spending to actual revenues collected by the trust fund in the prior year once the gas tax is fully phased in. Shortfalls up until that point would be financed by the general fund.

The Commission recommends gradually increasing the per gallon gas tax by 15 cents between 2013 and 2015. Congress must limit spending from trust funds to the level of dedicated revenues from the previous year. Before asking taxpayers to pay more for roads, rail, bridges, and infrastructure, we must ensure existing funds are not wasted. The Commission recommends significant reforms to control federal highway spending. Congress should limit trust fund spending to the most pressing infrastructure needs rather than forcing states to fund low priority projects such as the infamous Bridge to Nowhere.

### LGRTA WELCOMES FIVE NEW BOARD MEMBERS

At the January 2011 Annual Board Meeting, five new Directors were added to the Board. Their extensive background, knowledge and experience expand the current Board and provide additional expertise to the LGRTA Board of Directors.

**COURTNEY FENET**  
Vice Pres. - R.E. Heidt Const.

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*Ken Perret (left) President, La Good Roads shown with Mike Schiro (center) LaDOTD Asst. Secretary for Multimodal Planning and Wes Bolinger; (right) FHWA Division Administrator, at a recent La. Good Roads Goals and Objectives Committee Meeting.*

## SAFETEA-TWO

A proposal for a two-year transportation-funding bill, which could be called SAFETEA-TWO, would give Congress time to figure out a new plan to implement for the next six-year federal highway bill. From the Brookings Institute "Moving Past Gridlock: A Proposal for a Two-Year Transportation Law," it is proposed that Congress needs to pass something more than highway funding extensions for a few months at a time and that will soon expire. The two-year interval would give Congress time to come up with a firm plan to implement as the next six-year federal highway-funding bill.

## FUTURE OF HIGHWAY FUNDING ?

Ken Naquin reported at the recent Annual Board Meeting that AGC of America had met with the new Speaker of the House John Boehner, R-Ohio to discuss various construction issues. AGC indicates that Boehner is not in favor of the Highway Trust Fund nor is he in favor of highway construction programs in general.

It is not known whether he is speaking for the Republican Party in general or this is just his own personal opinion. However, as Speaker of the House and presumably the head of the Republicans in the House, maintaining this position could make any increase in highway funding very difficult.

Naquin also reported that the future of Highway Trust Funding for the next few years will take a serious turn as General Fund money added to the Highway Trust Fund to keep it operating at the authorized level would have to be paid back to the General Fund from the Highway Trust Fund. This would mean a reduction in highway funds from an approximately \$40 billion level to a \$20 billion level. The result obviously would mean serious reductions in highway funding if no additional funding sources are developed.

## FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION NOTES

At the December 2010 meeting of the LGRTA Goals and Objectives Committee meeting, Wes Bolinger of the Louisiana Division FHWA made a presentation about Federal transportation activities.

- SAFETEA-LU extension ended on December 31. Congress passed a continuing Resolution that provides funds through March 4<sup>th</sup>.
- Congress passing a Continuing Resolution is making annual transportation appropriations. Under the Continuing Resolution, you get a prorated share based on days and prior year obligation levels. For example, a 2010 Continuing Resolution provided 64/365 of fiscal year 2010 obligation limitation that equals \$107 million for the period from October 1<sup>st</sup> to December 3<sup>rd</sup>.
- Victor Mendez, the FHWA Administrator, has focused FHWA on an Every Day Counts (EDC) Initiative aimed at shortening project delivery time and identifying and deploying innovative technologies. It is commonly stated that it takes fourteen years to deliver a major highway project. FHWA's goal is to cut that in half. The ten initiatives have been identified to shorten project delivery.

- Planning & Environmental Linkages
- Legal Sufficiency Enhancements
- Expanding Use of Programmatic Agreements
- Use of In-lieu Fee and Mitigation Banking
- Clarifying the Scope of Preliminary Design
- Flexibilities in Right of Way
- Flexibilities in Utility Accommodation and Relocation
- Design-Build
- Construction Manager/General Contractor

Five initiatives have been identified for Accelerating Technology/Innovation

- Adaptive Signal Control
- Geosynthetic Reinforced Soil Integrated Bridge Systems
- Prefabricated Bridges
- Safety Edge
- Warm-Mix Asphalt

The Louisiana Department of Transportation will determine the EDC initiatives that they want to pursue. For the chosen initiatives, teams involving FHWA and industry will be formed to develop and implement the specific initiative. More info on EDC can be found at: <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/everydaycounts/>

- All ARRA (Stimulus) funding was obligated in Louisiana prior to September 31 and currently 40% of the \$429 million has been expended.

For more information about the FHWA Louisiana Division Office you can go to: [www.fhwa.dot.gov/ladiv/](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/ladiv/)