



**For Immediate Release**  
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**ADVOCACY GROUP FEARS LACK OF FUNDING CONTINUES TO JEOPARDIZE  
NORTH CAROLINA'S TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS**  
*Failing bridges, roads and dams encourages group to continue pushing lawmakers*

**Raleigh, N.C.** – The recent bridge collapse in Minnesota is the final example lawmakers and the governor need to make transportation funding and infrastructure improvement in North Carolina a priority, according to transportation advocacy organization *NC Go!*

A study released in February 2007 by AAA said North Carolina's bridges are in the worst shape of any bridges in the Southeast. In addition, the North Carolina American Society of Civil Engineers gives the state's roads an F rating for funding and a D rating for bridge condition and bridge funding. All of these figures and ratings are reasons *NC Go!* believes lawmakers have a responsibility to explain their actions to the citizens of North Carolina.

This legislative session resulted in no increase in funding for the state's transportation system and left intact a \$170 million transfer from the Highway Trust Fund to the state's General Fund.

"To witness such a tragedy occur on Minnesota's roads is devastating. It is also a lesson that North Carolina's lawmakers and our governor need to recognize and take seriously," said Beau Mills, *NC Go!* chair. "Citizens want to know that when they get behind the wheel, they are driving on safe roads and are surrounded by solid infrastructure. Our lawmakers have a responsibility to stop transferring money out of the Highway Trust Fund and instead spend this money and their time implementing transportation policies that will improve our state's infrastructure."

North Carolina is already projected to face a major shortfall in transportation funding over the next 25 years. It is estimated that transportation needs will exceed available funding by \$65 billion. At the same time, the population is expected to grow by 50 percent by 2030.

The General Assembly also failed to address the need for gap funding to assist the NC Turnpike Authority. One of the projects under consideration by the Turnpike Authority is the 52-year-old Yadkin River Bridge on Interstate 85. The Yadkin River Bridge is an older bridge, on a major interstate, in a deteriorating condition, subject to heavy traffic volumes, and still it received no money for repairs or replacement.

"North Carolina is faced with a slew of obstacles as we continue to grow," said Mills. "Investing in our state's transportation system isn't just about avoiding traffic and congestion, it is also about public safety and ensuring people feel secure when they are on the roads."

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