



For Immediate Release

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**Statement by NC Go! Chair Marc Finlayson (NC Highway 17 Association) on
Gov. McCrory's State of the State Address and Transportation**

Transportation has remained a priority for Governor Pat McCrory since he came to office, and we are pleased to see his commitment to improving North Carolina's transportation infrastructure and connectivity remains strong. *NC Go* commends Gov. McCrory for his proposed \$1.2 billion bond to fund much-needed transportation projects in our state, and for his calls on the NC General Assembly to seek additional transportation funding ideas.

A \$1.2 billion bond is a good first step to jump start projects. However, it is borrowing money against future revenue; revenue that is already uncertain due to projected decreases in gas tax revenue over the next 25 year. The gas tax represents the lion's share of transportation revenue in our state, and its future is precarious at best.

NC Go believes now is the time for bold ideas and action by our elected officials in order to address what many are calling a transportation crisis. In order to have a transportation network that puts safety first, reduces traffic congestion and encourages economic growth rather than bottlenecks, our state needs to invest more than \$114 billion by 2040. Best estimates show projected revenue to be only about \$54 billion. That represents a \$60 billion gap.

Inadequate investment in transportation results in roads that are less safe and which cost drivers more in vehicle repairs and maintenance. North Carolina already ranks 37th worst in bridge safety in the nation, with 30 percent of bridges rated as structurally deficient or functionally obsolete. And transportation investment means more than bridges, loops and extra lanes. The same transportation revenue which is at risk is used to maintain safety measures like guardrails, shoulders, lights, signage and more.

If we really want to grow North Carolina's economic base, *NC Go* recommends investing in the network that moves drivers, goods and services in our state and to points beyond.

Most importantly, the time to act is now. Because of our variable rate gas tax model, North Carolina stands to lose \$300-\$400 million after July 1, 2015. To avoid near-term disaster, we recommend:

- Impose a floor on the gas tax
- End all transfers of transportation revenue to the General Fund
- Raise the Highway Use Tax to a rate comparable to our neighbors'

NC Go! also strongly encourages our elected leaders to act now to address future needs; we can no longer kick the can down the road and hope for solutions. In addition to short-term measures, in our [2015 NC Go Report](#) we have included a number of transformative, long-term ideas to help North Carolina move away from the gas tax and find more stable funding sources. 2015 is the year to make North Carolina *the Good Roads State*, once again.

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