



REAUTHORIZATION OF FEDERAL HIGHWAY BILL INCHES FORWARD

House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman James Oberstar (D-Minn.) has pushed aggressively for swift action on the reauthorization of the federal highway bill. Although the budget resolutions are moving forward, a final budgetary solution is still a long way off.

The House Budget Resolution provides a baseline level of funding at \$324 billion for the authorization of highway, highway safety, and transit programs from FY 2010 to FY 2015. The Senate Budget Resolution provided a baseline of only \$242 billion; for a difference of \$82 billion over six years.

The \$324 billion baseline funding established in the House Resolution is crucial to attain the \$450-\$500 billion lawmakers are seeking in the authorization bill. While legislators believe they can gain support for a transportation funding bill 40 percent over baseline recommendations, it will be much more difficult to secure votes as this index increases.

Negotiators appear to be near an agreement to adopt the higher budget figures established by the House Committee, but many points of difference remain.

The House Budget Resolution allows the Chairman of the House Budget Committee to increase funding above the base level of annual funding if the Highway Trust Fund (HTF) remains solvent (positive cash balance). The Senate Budget Resolution allows funding to be increased only if the new budget authority is offset by an increase in HTF receipts and the legislation does not increase the deficit.

Under the terms established in the Senate Budget Resolution, a short-term extension of the program could not be continued at current funding levels without increasing revenues.

This would lead to a 35 percent reduction in federal funds or an increase in the federal gas tax! The House Resolution would allow short-term extensions of the program to continue at current funding levels.

The language contained in the Senate Resolution requiring that every dollar of funding authorized be matched by increased revenue to the HTF is problematic. Not only does it force the discussion of a federal gas tax increase, it also will lead to the creation of a balance within the HTF. The trust fund will grow due to the lag time between obligation and expenditures, meaning we would be required to “over-achieve” the increase in revenue to get contract authorities to an acceptable level—thus requiring a larger increase in federal gas tax revenue.

CRAM and other members of the Drive Michigan Coalition will fly to Washington D.C. later this month to meet with Michigan’s Congressional Delegation and leaders of the House and Senate Transportation standing and budgetary Committees. The reauthorization will be at the forefront of these policy discussions. Stay tuned for an update following this opportunity to lobby Michigan’s Congressional Delegation.

ASSET MANAGEMENT ALLOWS ROAD AGENCIES TO LEVERAGE AVAILABLE RESOURCES TO MAXIMIZE THE BENEFIT FOR THEIR CITIZENS. THIS SPRING THERE ARE THREE OPPORTUNITIES TO STRENGTHEN YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF THIS VALUABLE TOOL

MICHIGAN TRANSPORTATION ASSET MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP

Implementing an asset management program goes a long way toward maximizing invested road funds, but there is no "one-size-fits-all" solution for asset management. Every agency has unique needs, goals, and resources. This workshop is designed to help you understand the basic concepts of asset management so you can design a program that makes the most of your resources, and provides the greatest benefit to your agency. The workshop also provides techniques for explaining asset management concepts to constituents and peers.

This workshop is intended for agency managers, finance professionals, elected and appointed officials, as well as engineers and DPW maintenance managers. It will be of interest to anyone who is responsible for making pavement management or project selection decisions and is interested in learning what an asset management program can do for their agency. Agencies that send elected officials and management personnel along with engineering and maintenance personnel will benefit the most from this workshop.

Two dates and locations are available:
June 2 at the Genoa Woods Conference Center in Brighton and June 3 at the Holiday Inn in Big Rapids

The cost for this workshop is \$20.00 for employees of public agencies and \$50.00 for others. Registration includes coffee/break refreshments and lunch. To register or for more information, call Michigan LTAP at (906) 487-2102 or e-mail: ltap@mtu.edu . Space for each session is limited; please register early.

MICHIGAN TRANSPORTATION ASSET MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE

The Michigan Transportation Asset Management Conference will be held at the Kellogg Hotel & Convention Center in East Lansing on May 19, 2009.

This daylong event will focus on the relationship between asset management, pavement management, and road funding, using various examples from road agencies in Michigan and across the country.

The cost for this Conference is \$30.00 for the first employee from a public agency and \$20.00 for each additional employee from that agency. Consultants and private companies can register at a cost of \$100.00 per person. Registration includes a continental breakfast, break refreshments and lunch. To register, or for more information, call Michigan LTAP at (906) 487-2102 or e-mail: ltap@mtu.edu . Space is limited; please register early.

Please note that the session scheduled for June 4 in Marquette has been postponed until Fall 2009. We will relay any new information to you as soon as we have it.

"The way a team plays as a whole determines its success. You may have the greatest bunch of individual stars in the world, but if they don't play together, the club won't be worth a dime."

~ Babe Ruth ~



Political Action Committee

CRAM RUSH-PAC



Political Action Committee

With the new legislative session, RUSH-PAC has been keeping very busy. It's been involved in over 60 fundraisers giving over \$14,000 to legislators involved in leadership positions, legislators sitting on the Transportation Committees and the Appropriations Committees. In this time of funding crisis, it is imperative to help legislators understand that road commission revenues have declined to the point of necessitating reductions in services and impacting quality of life and safety for Michigan residents. We will intensify our sustained efforts to increase transportation funding. We will work diligently and ask for your renewed commitment.

RUSH-PAC has received over \$9,000 in membership dues with 139 contributors. Thank you to all who have contributed, but we all know we can do even better! For your convenience, there will be a RUSH-PAC table at most of the CRAM seminars and regional conferences. Annual contributions are accumulative and add up to life membership:

- \$50-\$99 Annual Contributing Member
- \$100-\$499 Team Player
- \$500-\$999 Life Member
- \$1,000-over Second Life Member

RUSH-PAC is proud to sponsor a series of golf events, and it is time to get the golf clubs out! Come join the fun and help raise funds to support our "local road friendly" candidates. Four golf outings are held at beautiful golf courses around the State. These reasonably priced outings include lunch and door prizes and offer an opportunity to build relationships with colleagues and vendors. This year's events:

Southwest Golf Outing - Wednesday - June 10 - 9:00 a.m.

L.E. Kaufman Golf Course in Wyoming - Hosted by Kent

Registration is included with this newsletter. If you need more information, please contact the CRAM Office or Diane Martin at 616.242.6960 or e-mail dmartin@kentcountyroads.net.

Southern Mid-Michigan Golf Outing - Friday - July 31

Cascades Golf Course in Jackson - Hosted by Jackson

Southeast Golf Outing - Friday - August 7

Selfridge AFB Golf Course in Harrison Township - Hosted by Macomb

Northern Golf Outing - Tuesday - September 8

Black Bear in Vanderbilt - Hosted by Cheboygan

The kick-off golf outing will be held on June 10 at the beautiful L.E. Kaufman Golf Course in Wyoming.

L.E. Kaufman Golf Course is one of the finest public golf facilities in west Michigan. The course opened for play in 1965 and has an outstanding reputation as a challenging golf facility. Rated 4 stars by Golf Digest, the course features rolling fairways, perfect greens and picturesque scenery. L.E. Kaufman is the home course for the highly regarded Kent County Amateur Golf Tournament.



CRAM PRESENTS A NEW RESOURCE FOR YOUR USE

A Quick Guide to
**Roads &
Road Funding
In
Michigan**



Provided by:
The County Road Association of Michigan
Township Relations Committee

The Township Relations Committee, in conjunction with the Public Relations-Education Committee, has updated *A Quick Guide to Roads & Road Funding In Michigan*. The intent is that you would distribute copies of this document to your townships along with your Act 51 Reports.

This twelve-page document is included with today's mailing for offices and commissioners. The CRAM Office will not be printing or distributing the file otherwise. Your office is welcome to copy or print as many copies as you may need for distribution.

The document will also be made available on the CRAM Web site in the very near future. The decision to update the document was largely due to the fact that it has been the file most frequently downloaded from our site.



Remember that MCL 247.665 Sec. 15. (1) requires that "before May 2 of each year, each county road commission . . . shall file with the

director of the state transportation department, each township in the county, and the clerk of the county, . . . a report showing the disposition of funds appropriated, apportioned, or allocated under this act to the county road commission . . . including the funds expended for road construction and heavy maintenance in each township in the county . . ."

MIS/CRAM

With fiscal year 2009 under way, it is time to remind everyone of the need to add your county's data to the MIS/CRAM system. A few road commissions have yet to enter data for 2007 and 2006. Please do so at your earliest convenience. Those counties with 2008 data outstanding will be listed in the June edition of *CRAM News*. Thank you to those who have entered your data in a timely manner.

GOING GREEN AND SAVING MONEY

With Earth Day fresh in our memory and an impending increase in the cost of postage, now is an excellent time to make the transition to electronic versions of CRAM mailings.

You are probably aware that effective 5-11-09 the United States Post Office is increasing the cost of postage for many types of mail. What you may not be so aware of is that the new law allows the Post Office to increase rates every three months without seeking permission from Congress, as long as the increase is less than the rate of inflation.

Continued increases in postage, coupled with ever-increasing costs of paper and copies, strain our available resources. YOU can make a difference in that equation.

If you have not yet opted to switch to electronic mail, please do so. Those who receive electronic versions typically get all of the content being sent to offices. Future mailings may see an increase in the office-/e-mail-only content as we work to reduce costs associated with our weekly mailings.

If you wish to sign up for the electronic versions, simply send an e-mail to teldred@localroads.net indicating your name, company/county and the e-mail address where you would like the mailings sent.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND CONSERVATION BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM

FUNDING TO HELP YOU REDUCE FOSSIL FUEL AND IMPROVE ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Over \$2.7 billion in formula grants are now available to U.S. states, territories, local governments and Indian tribes under the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) Program. To see a list of entities eligible for formula grants and allocation amounts, or to download a copy of the Funding Opportunity Announcement which contains complete information for grantees on the Program and application process, visit <http://www.eecbg.energy.gov/#lc1>. Information on downloading required files is below.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 appropriated \$3.2 billion for the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) Program. The Program was authorized in Title V, Subtitle E of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (EISA), and signed into Public Law (PL 110-140) on December 19, 2007. The Program provides federal grants to units of local government, Indian tribes, states, and territories to reduce energy use and fossil fuel emissions, and for improvements in energy efficiency. The EECBG Program is administered by the Office of Weatherization and Intergovernmental Programs in the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy of the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE).

Frequently asked questions and answers can be found at <http://www.eecbg.energy.gov/#lc1>. If you have additional questions regarding the EECBG program, please contact the EERE Information Center via toll-free phone at 877.EERE.INFO (877.337.3463) or submit questions via the web submission form. The EERE Information Center is open Monday - Friday 9AM to 7PM EST.

ACCESSING THE FUNDING OPPORTUNITY ANNOUNCEMENT (FOA)

Due to the increase in Federal funding activities, the FOA document and the application package are located on two different Web sites. These instructions were created to assist applicants in locating all essential documents needed to apply for the EECBG Program.

Accessing the application package in grants.gov

The application package is located on <http://www.grants.gov/>. You can find it there by clicking on "Apply for Grants", then on "download a grant application package" - use CFDA number 81.128. Once you download the application package, save it on your computer. This is the only step needed at grants.gov.

Accessing the FOA in FedConnect

The FOA is located on <https://www.fedconnect.net/FedConnect/>. On the main page, click on "Search Public Opportunities and Awards". Under "Search Criteria", select "Issuing Office" and type in "NETL". Click on "Search" - a listing of NETL issued opportunities will come up. The EECBG FOA is titled "Recovery Act - EECBG Program". Click on the hyperlinked title to open the FOA. On the right-hand side of the page, click on "BODY" (underneath "BASE") to view the FOA document. All the attachments are also listed under "BODY."

While you do not need to be registered in FedConnect to view the FOA, you must register in FedConnect to apply under the FOA. Click the "Register As A Vendor" button on the main screen to begin your registration process. If you have questions about the process or want to check the status of your registration, e-mail FedConnect at support@FedConnect.net or call them at 800-899-6665. This is not a Department of Energy system, so you must contact FedConnect directly for registration problems or questions.

Once you are registered and you navigate to the FOA page, you will be able to click "Register to Receive Notifications". By doing this you will have access to the FOA message center where questions and answers are posted. This is the desired method of communication for all technical questions. Applicants are encouraged to do this step as soon as possible as technical questions and answers are being posted every week.

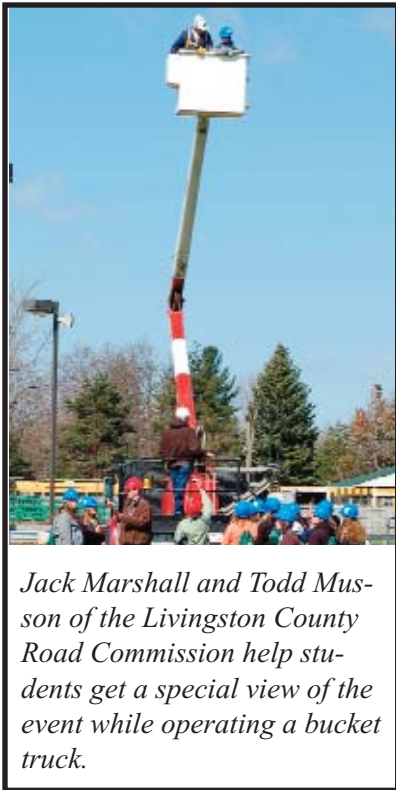
Your application for the EECBG Program will be submitted through FedConnect. Please read the following pdf guide published by FedConnect to understand how to navigate the system and submit your application, which is referred to as a "response." https://www.fedconnect.net/FedConnect/PublicPages/FedConnect_Ready_Set_Go.pdf

**Application deadline for
local governmental units is
8:00 PM EST June 25, 2009.**
*Applicants are strongly encouraged
to submit their applications well be-
fore this date.*

2009 MICHIGAN CONSTRUCTION CAREER DAYS

Michigan Construction Career Days (MICCD) is part of a national Construction Career Day effort to show today's youth the incredible career opportunities available in the construction industry. CRAM serves as a member of the MICCD Advisory Board which oversees this annual event.

On April 21 & 22, 2009, hundreds of dedicated construction professionals endured rain, wind, cold and mud to show more than 2500 Michigan students they can build a life for themselves with a career in construction at the second annual Michigan Construction Career Days.



tremendous success.

Plans are already underway for the 2010 Michigan Construction Career Days and CRAM encourages road commissions from across the state to consider participating. The event may be expanded next year to include an evening career fair coordinated to match those seeking construction careers and internships with potential employers.

MICCD allows young people to see, experience and learn by not only hearing about and observing construc-

tion. Students are given the chance to try these jobs out in safely designed settings. The event included a unique combination of information booths, hands-on activities, and hands-on equipment operation.

During these two days, middle and high school students from across the state were given the opportunity to operate front end loaders, bulldozers, graders, pavers, rollers, cranes, excavators, and several other pieces of heavy equipment, working side-by-side with construction professionals. Equipment and operators for the event were provided by contractors from across the state, as well as the Ingham, Jackson and Livingston County Road Commissions.

On behalf of the MICCD Advisory Board and the thousands of young people who came, thank you to the road commissions who helped to make this event a



2010 HIGHWAY CONFERENCE UPDATE

At their April 27 meeting, the CRAM Board of Directors voted to return to the property formerly known as the Holiday Inn-South/Convention Center. Now called Causeway Bay Hotel and Convention Center, the facility has undergone substantial renovations and the staff is anxious to welcome us back.

The Conference is scheduled for March 9-11, 2010, and WE WILL LET YOU KNOW IN THE NEAR FUTURE WHEN RESERVATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED, so watch for the announcement!

We are working to plan an exciting and informative program. If you have suggestions for topics, please contact Sandy at the CRAM Office, 517.482.1189 Ext. 11.

A PORTABLE FIELD GUIDE FOR BRIDGE INSPECTORS

Both convenient and easy to use, a new pocket guide available from the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) Resource Center offers a portable reference for bridge inspectors. *Stream Instability, Bridge Scour, and Countermeasures: A Field Guide for Bridge Inspectors* provides tips and guidance on what to look for with regard to both stream instability, including lateral instability, degradation and aggradation, and scour at bridges, including contraction scour, pier scour, and abutment scour. Also covered are plans of action and countermeasures, such as monitoring, flood watches, bridge closures, and river training countermeasures.

To obtain a copy of the guide or for more information, contact Larry Arneson of the FHWA Resource Center's Geotech and Hydraulics Team, 720-963-3200 (email: larry.arneson@fhwa.dot.gov). Copies are also available from the FHWA Research and Technology Product Distribution Center, 301-577-0818 (email: report.center@fhwa.dot.gov). For more information on additional resources offered by the team, including training opportunities, best practices, and publications, visit www.fhwa.dot.gov/resourcecenter/teams/geotech/index

"Our opportunities to do good are our talents."

~ Cotton Mather ~



MARK CRAFT ELECTED NACE SECRETARY- TREASURER

Mark A. Craft, P.E., was elected Secretary-Treasurer of the National Association of County Engineers at their 2009 Annual Technical Conference held last week.

The National Association of County Engineers (NACE) is a professional association representing county engineers and professional road managers. Craft has served NACE on the membership committee, and for the past two years has served as the Michigan State Director and a member of the Board of Directors.

Mark Craft has served as the Engineer-Manager of the Gratiot County Road Commission since January 2006. Before that time, Craft held various positions including Director of Engineering for the Eaton County Road Commission.

"Craft has twenty years of experience serving the engineering needs of Michigan's county road agencies," County Road Association of Michigan Director, John Niemela said. "We are pleased that his experience and leadership was recognized in this manner."

"As a member of the executive committee, Craft will have the pulse of what is happening in other states," Niemela said. "NACE is an excellent forum for the exchange of ideas and information aimed at improving service to the public. Craft will be in a unique position to advance Michigan's concerns on federal transportation policy."

2010 COUNTY ENGINEERS' WORKSHOP

The 2010 Engineers' Workshop will be held February 23-25, 2010 at the Soaring Eagle Hotel and Convention Center in Mt. Pleasant.

Please save the date. Additional information will follow closer to the Workshop.



THE ROAD AHEAD



May

- 4 Southeast Council
Monroe County Road Commission, Monroe

- 5-7 Finance and HR Business Sem.
DoubleTree Hotel, Bay City

- 7 Great Lakes Council
Baraga Lakeside Inn, Baraga

- 9 NMARC Skeet Shoot
Cheboygan Sportsman's Club, Cheboygan

- 11 Southwestern Council
Kalamazoo County Road Commission
Kalamazoo

- 12 37th Senatorial District Council
Audie's Restaurant, Mackinaw City

- 19 Michigan Transportation Asset Management
Conference
Kellogg Center, East Lansing

- 25 CRAM Office Closed - Memorial Day

June

- 10 Southwest Golf Outing
L.E. Kaufman Golf Course, Wyoming

- 17-19 UPRBA Summer Meeting
Kewadin Hotel & Convention Center
Sault Ste. Marie

**2009 NATIONAL TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT
& WORK ZONE SAFETY CONFERENCE
MATERIALS NOW AVAILABLE ON-LINE**

July

- 31 Southern Mid-MI Golf Outing
Cascades Golf Course, Jackson

August

- 7 Southeast Golf Outing
Selfridge AFB Golf Course, Harrison Twp.

September

- 8 Northern Golf Outing
Black Bear Golf Club, Vanderbilt

- 9-11 NMARC Annual Conference
Boyne Mountain Resort, Boyne Falls

- 30-Oct 2 Superintendents' Seminar
Kewadin Hotel & Conv. Ctr.
Sault Ste. Marie

December

- 7-9 ASMRC Annual Conference
Bavarian Inn Lodge, Frankenmuth



The acclaimed Traffic Management & Work Zone Safety Conference managed by the ARTBA - Transportation Development Foundation was held March 9-13 in Orlando, Florida, in conjunction with World of Asphalt! This joint event connected transportation leaders with people at all levels of government and private industry to discuss challenges and cutting-edge solutions to help improve the safe and efficient movement of traffic under many different roadway conditions. Visit http://www.workzonesafety.org/news_events/wz_conferences/2009 to download.