OBAMA-BIDEN TRANSITION PROJECT

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Recommendation to President-elect Obama Transition Team from the International Bridge, Tunnel and Turnpike Association (IBTTA)

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A strong transportation system is a fundamental asset for the U.S. economy and its global competitiveness. But the system is in crisis because of a lack of funding, deteriorating infrastructure, and growing congestion, which wastes time and fuel and boosts greenhouse gas emissions. We need an historic new vision for transportation that reflects the historic nature of the new presidential administration. Road user charging is one of the tools that will help solve our mobility challenge. IBTTA toll operators and business partners are leaders in providing customer-driven mobility through their expertise in transportation finance, technology, management, and operations. The next generation of surface transportation legislation should, rather than modify existing laws, chart a new course that embraces the following aims:

Establish clear goals. Since the completion of the Interstate highway system, the federal transportation program has focused on petty squabbles over "equitable" distribution of scarce funds, congressional earmarking, and firewall mechanisms to protect transportation funds within the federal budget. We must establish a clear purpose and mission for federal involvement in surface transportation. This mission should include the development and improvement of strategic national transportation interests such as freight transportation corridors and regional passenger transportation programs. We should tie federal funding for surface transportation to specific results and we should direct funds to those projects that most efficiently serve strategic national needs.

Focus on customers. Transportation providers should focus on customer service, safety, quality, and guaranteed levels of performance – values that toll operators and their partners deliver every day. We must consider transportation a vital utility similar to electricity, water, and telecommunications along with the expectation that it performs predictably. Users, including motorists and freight haulers, must be ready to pay for their consumption of the system and must receive guaranteed levels of performance and predictability.

Expand the funding toolbox. Because the fuel tax is not sustainable as a long-term funding source and we want to reduce our dependence on carbon-based fuels, we must move swiftly and aggressively to adopt a ubiquitous system of road user charging (tolling and pricing) for all vehicles on every mile of every road. A charge of one penny per mile for all vehicles on all roads would raise more than $30 billion per year. The technology to do this currently exists; now we need the leadership and political will to make it happen. We should solidify existing revenue sources by ending diversion of transportation funds to non-transportation purposes. We must either increase federal funding to support transportation needs or accept a much-reduced federal role in directing how states, counties and metropolitan areas address their own needs. We should eliminate provisions in existing law that limit the use of tolling and road pricing on federal aid highways.

Streamline project delivery. We must streamline project review and delivery processes. It takes an average of 13 years to get a project from drawing board to reality. We must shorten this process to remain competitive in the world economy. We must move with deliberate speed with equal emphasis on "speed" and "deliberate."

Encourage partnerships and innovation. The federal government should allow states and regions more flexibility in finding solutions to the current transportation crisis. We should encourage and reward states and regions that are innovative in finding those solutions. We should address congestion

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relief with a systems approach where seamless and interrelated financial relationships among modes are the norm. We should allow private investment in public infrastructure where appropriate. We should clarify in federal law a fair method to allow both the public and private sectors to unleash their full potential to deliver transportation infrastructure.