



View from the Chair

Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission

Don't Blame Washington; This One's On Us

May 1, 2015



Dear Reader,

I had the pleasure this week to host Greg Nadeau, deputy administrator for the United States Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration. He is the top official over the nation's highway program. He came to Kansas City to talk about the importance of transportation infrastructure and President Obama's "Grow America" campaign, which calls for the investment of \$478 billion over the next six years.

Of course, he asked about Missouri. I had the sad responsibility to tell him that "Grow America" would mean nothing for Missouri, since we will be unable to match even the current federal funding unless action is taken this legislative session by the Missouri General Assembly. The passage of Senator Doug Libla's SB540, which would start the process of once again investing in ourselves, currently awaits a final vote in the Senate before it moves to the House of Representatives.

The consequence of failing to pass SB540 was made clearer later in the day, when the Deputy Administrator and I visited a road widening project on I-35 in Pleasant Valley and Liberty, near Ford's Claycomo plant. Tony Reinhart, regional director of government and community affairs for Ford Motor Company, was present and he underlined for us how important the investment in transportation infrastructure is to Ford's continued investment in the area.

Tony told me the Ford facility is its largest production center under one roof anywhere in the world. It produces Ford's two most profitable lines: the F150 pickup truck and the Transit van. It employs 7,500 employees. Good access is essential to the plant's efficient operation. A thousand trucks per day go in and out of the Ford plant making deliveries. That's 2,000 truck trips. Ford requires "just-in-time" delivery, so six suppliers have located within a few miles of the Ford

facility. It is all about the transportation.

We already know that 26,000 miles of our highways and 6,300 bridges are being sacrificed in the name of a pledge. Unfortunately, we may be adding good paying jobs and economic opportunities to the list.

It is not too late. Encourage senators to pass Senate Bill 540 and House leadership to take up the legislation and pass it. Only nine legislative days remain so time is of the essence!

Let's get going!

Stephen R. Miller
Chairman

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