

Contact: **Otis Greer**  
Director of Legislative and Public Affairs  
909.884.8276 | Office



## Op-Ed

# SANBAG Supports Sustainable Transportation Funding

*By Dr. Raymond Wolfe, Executive Director, San Bernardino Associated Governments*

The efficiency of government has a significant bearing on a region's competitiveness and economic growth. California is simply not investing adequately today in its transportation infrastructure, which if not corrected will damage future economic activity. Mobility is essential to sustainability and growth in all sectors of the economy. The San Bernardino Associated Governments (SANBAG), the County's Transportation Agency, strongly supports our State legislative representatives who continue to seek opportunities towards additional transparency, streamlining and funding for transportation.

Our proactive Board of Directors comprised of the five County Supervisors and elected representatives from each of our 24 cities and towns seeks innovative ways to serve the largest geographical county in the continental U.S., with a population of 2.1 million that is expected to grow 62 percent by 2060.

Several members of the California legislature have presented bills for consideration in the ongoing legislative special session on transportation funding. It is in the best interest of San Bernardino County and the State for legislators to work together on ways to solve our complex transportation issues to ensure our future economic viability. Let's build on this momentum to achieve sustainable transportation funding.

We know there is much interest from everyone in the legislature to fix our crumbling infrastructure and we trust they will craft a solution. Structural changes are needed sooner rather than later. Several proposals include some form of change to the state's environmental review process and revisions to how transportation contracts are awarded. To date, every dollar we're not spending on improving our infrastructure costs us \$9 in the future.

We support all collaborative efforts that aim to improve the existing \$57 billion backlog in repairs to California's crumbling state highway system. The problem is only getting worse. In May, the California Transportation Commission cut \$754 million to planned road projects over the next five years, as revenues from the state's gas tax have fallen along with gas prices. Those cuts translated to a loss of over \$63 million for San Bernardino County. That money would have advanced critical projects across the county.

I am proud of Assembly Transportation Chair Jim Frazier for championing infrastructure improvements, freight funding and local control. The partnership SANBAG has developed with the Chairman over the past few years has benefited our region tremendously. We agree with the Chairman, we need to keep these transportation projects funded – they make a huge impact on our quality of life and our ability to create and sustain jobs.

We applaud all of our members for their support of innovative transportation funding and strongly encourage them to continue the work of identifying solutions to solve one of our state's most pressing issues – investment in transportation equates to jobs and prosperity.