

Excerpt from the 2016 Republican Platform

America on the Move Our country's investments in transportation and other public construction have traditionally been non-partisan. Everyone agrees on the need for clean water and safe roads, rail, bridges, ports, and airports. President Eisenhower established a tradition of Republican leadership in this regard by championing the creation of the interstate highway system. In recent years, bipartisan cooperation led to major legislation improving the nation's ports and waterways. Our Republican majority ended the practice of earmarks, which often diverted transportation spending to politically favored projects. In the current Congress, Republicans have secured the longest reauthorization of the Highway Trust Fund in a decade and are advancing a comprehensive reform of the Federal Aviation Administration to make flying easier and more secure. The current Administration has a different approach. It subordinates civil engineering to social engineering as it pursues an exclusively urban vision of dense housing and government transit. Its ill-named Livability Initiative is meant to "coerce people out of their cars." This is the same mentality that once led Congress to impose by fiat a single maximum speed limit for the entire nation, from Manhattan to Montana. Our 1980 Republican Platform pledged to repeal that edict. After the election of Ronald Reagan, we did. Now we make the same pledge regarding the current problems in transportation policy. We propose to remove from the Highway Trust Fund programs that should not be the business of the federal government. More than a quarter of the Fund's spending is diverted from its original purpose. One fifth of its funds are spent on mass transit, an inherently local affair that serves only a small portion of the population, concentrated in six big cities. Additional funds are used for bike-share programs, sidewalks, recreational trails, landscaping, and historical renovations. Other beneficiaries of highway money are ferry boats, the federal lands access program, scenic byways, and education initiatives. These worthwhile enterprises should be funded through other sources. We propose to phase out the federal transit program and reform provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act which can delay and drive up costs for transportation projects. **We renew our call for repeal of the Davis-Bacon law, which limits employment and drives up construction and maintenance costs for the benefit of unions.** Recognizing that, over time, additional revenue will be needed to expand the carrying capacity of roads and bridges, we will remove legal roadblocks to public-private partnership agreements that can save the taxpayers' money and bring outside investment to meet a community's needs. With most of the states increasing their own funding for transportation, we oppose a further increase in the federal gas tax. Although unionization has never been permitted in any government agency concerned with national security, the current Administration has reversed that policy for the Transportation Security Administration. We will correct that mistake. Americans understand that, with the threat of terrorism, their travel may encounter delays, but unacceptably long lines at security checks can have the same impact as a collapsed bridge or washed out highway. TSA employees should always be seen as guardians of the public's safety, not as just another part of the federal workforce. Amtrak is an extremely expensive railroad for the American taxpayers, who must subsidize every ticket. The federal government should allow private ventures to provide passenger service in the northeast corridor. The same holds true with

regard to high-speed and intercity rail across the country. We reaffirm our intention to end federal support for boondoggles like California's high-speed train to nowhere.