



CONSTRUCTOR

■ The Voice of the Kansas City Construction Industry

■ SUMMER 2014

Crucial Missouri Vote Aug. 5th!

Lives and Livelihoods Depend on Passage of Amendment 7

In the face of ongoing challenges, the Heavy Constructors Association of Greater Kansas City and our allies are determined to mount a successful campaign for approval of the Missouri transportation sales tax increase, which is coming up for a vote Aug. 5.

We were relieved when the General Assembly approved a ballot measure for a proposed constitutional amendment that would impose a three-fourth-cent sales tax to pay for transportation improvements. The increase would provide nearly \$5 billion over 10 years for Missouri's critical transportation needs.

If approved, Missouri officials say I-70 will be widened to three lanes in each direction between the Kansas City area and suburban St. Louis. The Kansas City area would receive about \$775.7 million. Much of the money would go toward improvements of interchanges and bridges,



including a \$73.8 million replacement of the Broadway Bridge.

We have found common cause with many groups that support this proposal - largely because of the jobs it would create.

Missouri Sen. Mike Kehoe, R-Jefferson City, says the work generated by the sales tax increase would generate more than

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It's About Safety and Fueling Missouri's Economic Engine

Missouri's roads and bridges are bad and getting worse, with nearly two-thirds of all Missouri bridges rated in "poor" or "fair" condition.

More than 2,000 bridges in Missouri are structurally deficient; 9,290 miles of highway are in need of immediate improvement; and 20,000 miles of Missouri roads lack shoulders.

In the next 2-3 years, hundreds of Missouri bridges will have to close unless additional funds can be generated to replace or repair them.

Missouri's transit systems, airports and ports also need upgrading.

MoDOT funding has been cut to bare minimum amounts that allow only for

current maintenance and no new projects.

Businesses want to be located in states with a modern, reliable transportation system, and upgrading Missouri's roads and bridges is vital to the growth of Missouri's economy.

Amendment 7 will keep Missourians safe and move our economy forward. ■



MAKING IT BETTER

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A Word From the President

Missouri Can't Afford Not to Pass Amendment 7

By Trey Bowen, HCAGKC President

With the Aug. 5 election fast approaching, I cannot over-emphasize how important it is for our membership to go all out for the passage of Amendment 7.

You have been reading and hearing about this election and the issues behind it for months. Just to recap, the proposed Amendment 7 to Missouri's constitution would establish a three-fourth-cent sales tax that would raise more than \$5 billion over 10 years. The money would fund transportation improvements that Missouri desperately needs.



We can take encouragement from the knowledge that Missouri has a history of rolling up its sleeves and getting the job done on transportation infrastructure. It was only 10 years ago that Missouri voters approved Amendment 3, which required all revenue from the motor vehicle sales tax and most of the revenue from the fuel tax to be put toward Missouri roads. The revenue generated from Amendment 3 helped to fund massive improvements. According to The Road Information Program, a national transportation research group, Missouri's roads improved from third worst in the country in 2004 to ninth best in 2007.

Problem Bridges

But the money from Amendment 3 is long gone, and so is Missouri's ability to keep up with its transportation infrastructure needs. We see the needs every day. According to Missouri's 2013 Infrastructure Report Card prepared by the American Society of Civil Engineers, 31% of Missouri's roads are in poor or mediocre condition, and driving on roads in need of repair costs Missouri motorists \$1.6



billion a year in extra vehicle repairs and operating costs, which calculates out to \$380 per motorist. The report also declared that 14.5% of Missouri bridges are structurally deficient, and 13.8% are functionally obsolete.

Dwindling Repair Budgets

Meantime, Missouri's transportation construction budget has been cut in half and will quickly fall to levels that will make Missouri ineligible to receive federal matching funds, creating an even larger funding crisis.

In January, MoDOT Director Dave Nichols said the state's construction budget would fall from \$685 million to \$585 million in the next budget year, before dropping to \$325 million in 2017 and beyond. Nichols blamed factors such as depletion of the buying power from Missouri's share of the state and federal gasoline tax, and the rising cost of construction materials.

Nichols said it cost roughly \$485 million a year just to maintain the status quo on state highways and bridges. But by 2020, Nichols warned, there won't be enough state money to match federal funds, resulting in the loss of already-scarce dollars from Washington.

Amendment 7 offers us the best chance we've seen in years to move Missouri's transportation system forward. It will ramp up every mode of our transportation network and create more than 100,000 jobs over the 10-year period.

Short-sighted Opposition

While the facts make a strong case for passage of Amendment 7, there is much opposition to it. That's why proponents have

been working to raise \$5 million statewide. Of that amount, about \$1.25 million to \$1.5 million needs to come from the Kansas City area. Our association has made a major contribution, and we have been hard at work raising funds from our specialty contractor, major supplier, supplier and affiliate members. ■

Need Your Support NOW

Passage of Amendment 7 is every bit as important as passage of Amendment 3 was, if not more so. The economic development game is more competitive than it was 10 years ago, and good-paying jobs that can support families are scarcer than they were 10 years ago. We urge you to send your checks in now to help keep Missouri's transportation system in good condition and pave the way to a healthy future for our industry, employees and fellow citizens.

Please make your checks out to: Missourians for Safe Transportation and New Jobs, Inc. Mail them right away to: P.O. Box 1933 Jefferson City, MO 65102

Or you can contribute electronically at fixmorroads.com

Congested, Truck-Tangled I-70 Top Priority

Message From MoDOT Director Dave Nichols

There is one statewide project on the 10-year list that is funded off the top, before the new revenue is distributed to each region. That project is the reconstruction and expansion of busy and often-crowded Interstate 70.

We will be able to make progress on safety, capacity and condition needs by expanding I-70 to six lanes across the state from Independence to Wentzville which will enable the efficient operation of the corridor to meet the conditions of today and tomorrow. We will accomplish this by utilizing \$500 million of the new revenue to get started, and bonding the remainder of what will be a \$1.5 billion project with bonding authority provided by the voters in 2004.

The amendment to House Joint Resolution 68 that reduced its provision from 1-cent to 3/4-cent meant that the scope of any I-70 project would be affected.

We won't be able to afford everything we'd like to see on I-70, but in order, the goals of the improvements will be:

1. Six lanes across the state (I-470 to I-64) and new pavement.
2. Bridge replacements (as many as absolutely necessary).
3. Safety.
4. Access/interchange improvements.



“Additional revenues from Amendment 7 would enable MoDOT to reconstruct Interstate 70 across the state and add one lane in each direction. I-70 has been a need for many years that we were simply unable to afford. This project would enable us to make significant improvements that will improve safety, create jobs and boost the economic vitality of Missouri.”

Unclogging Missouri's 'Main Street'

- I-70 is Missouri's 'Main Street,' connecting our two largest cities and serving as the state's economic engine.
- The I-70 corridor is home to almost one-fourth of all Missouri jobs and generates nearly \$90 billion in economic activity each year.
- I-70 carries more than 10,000 trucks per day—a figure that is projected to double by 2030.
- Designed to carry 12,000–18,000 vehicles per day, it now carries anywhere from 20,000 to more than 100,000 vehicles per day depending on the location.



The safety and economic prosperity of Missourians depends in part on an I-70 that grows along with the state and the nation.

MoDOT is committed to all of Missouri's interstate corridors. We will be launching an Environmental Impact Statement to determine improvement strategies for the Interstate 44 corridor. We will also begin looking at the future needs of the other interstates in Missouri.

The Cost of Living with Bad Roads

- Driving on roads in need of repair costs Missouri motorists \$1.6 billion a year in extra vehicle repairs and operating costs—\$380 per motorist.
- 31% of Missouri's roads are in poor or mediocre condition.
- Missouri has 130,360 public road miles.
- Missouri's highway vehicle-miles traveled in 2009 was approximately 11,819 per capita, ranking it 7th in the nation.
- Missouri's gas tax of 17.3 cents per gallon has not been increased in 16 years.

Making it Better— Missouri Amendment 7 Would Accelerate Progress

One Bridge, One Road at a Time

Heavy Constructors chipping away at backlogged infrastructure projects around Kansas City. Clarkson at work replacing old Manchester Bridge.



Everyone Benefits From Better, Safer Roads and Bridges

By Stephen Miller, Chair of the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission

Constitutional Amendment 7 acknowledges that everyone benefits from transportation and establishes a stable way to deliver a modern transportation system that can foster economic growth, lead to job creation statewide and make needed safety improvements that will save lives. We're not just talking about jobs in the construction industry, but jobs with businesses that rely on a safe and reliable transportation system to get their goods to market.

From previous outreach efforts conducted across the state in recent years, the Commission has continually heard that Missourians want a better connected transportation system and are opposed to the system decaying from disrepair.



An investment in transportation from all Missourians is going to be needed to close the funding gap we have today and the gap that will continue to grow in the very near future, and to provide a bright future for our children and grandchildren.

Dangerous Funding Gap

Currently, the stark reality is that MoDOT's available funds do not provide the necessary resources to maintain the existing system. It takes \$485 million annually to keep the current system in the condition it

is in today. By 2017, our construction budget will fall well below that at \$325 million.

By 2020, I am concerned that we will not be able to match federal funds, meaning that revenue will be distributed to other states and lost to Missouri forever.

The Commission took strong and unprecedented action in January because of our uncertain funding situation. We froze the STIP (Statewide Transportation Improvement Program). In a normal year, 300–500 projects are added each year. This year—just 25. We also suspended the popular cost-share program.

We will never have enough money to deliver all the things that people want, but the new revenues that would result from Constitutional Amendment 7 would enable us to make significant improvements across all modes of transportation. ■

Area Needs are Real

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100,000 jobs over the 10-year period.

But opposition has plagued this proposal from the beginning.

A Common Cause

Gov. Jay Nixon's perplexing decision to place the sales tax proposal on the Aug. 5 ballot instead of the November ballot became clearer on June 2nd when he announced his opposition to the tax. August elections tend to draw far fewer voters and some experts say opponents are more likely to vote in an August election. Holding the election in August also shortens the time we have available to mount a campaign.

On June 12, the Missouri Association for Social Welfare filed a lawsuit contending that the summary and cost estimate prepared for voters was misleading and unfair. Our association strongly disagreed with that contention. Fortunately, on July 1, a Missouri judge rejected that legal challenge, and the Social Welfare group said it was ending its fight to remove the sales tax question from the ballot.

But Jeanette Mott Oxford, director of the Social Welfare group, made it clear that the bigger fight is not over when she said, "We

are going to put our energy into defeating this at the polls."

Amid these challenges, the HCA is suiting up to do our job: get the necessary information out to voters, so that they will understand the need for these additional funds to improve Missouri's transportation system.

Falling Behind

We must make sure voters realize that Missouri is falling behind in terms of meeting its transportation infrastructure needs. We have not been keeping pace. It's very expensive to fix roads, but Missouri's transportation construction program has fallen from \$1.2 billion to less than \$700 million in recent years.

Voters also should be made aware that the sales tax increase would fund much more than roads and bridges, and would include transit programs that would benefit seniors in rural areas, for example. Also included would be improvements to Missouri ports along our rivers, and airports in small communities. Indeed, this tax increase would enable Missouri to establish a comprehensive, multi-pronged transportation program to improve all modes of transportation in all areas of the state.

One can make rational arguments in favor of other methods to fund transportation. But Missourians have said they oppose



toll roads, gasoline tax increases and higher vehicle registration fees.

And while no one likes to pay higher sales taxes, it should be emphasized that this proposed tax increase would not apply to purchases of groceries and medicine.

This proposal came out of seven or more years of discussions with Missourians. With help from our members, we will do everything possible to see that it passes, for the good of all. ■



MAKING IT BETTER

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Want more information on our Association, members and issues?

Check out our website, **KCHeavyConstruction.org**. Regarding membership, contact Ed DeSoignie at (816) 753-6443

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photography by Jeff Roberts and compliments of MoDOT

SAVE LIVES, CREATE JOBS. VOTE YES AUG. 5

YES Vote will Make Critical Repairs and Upgrades Possible

As part of the first true—and long overdue—transportation program for Missouri, local communities across the state were asked to prioritize their most immediate transportation and infrastructure needs. The Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission has approved funding for more than 800 improvement projects—contingent upon passage of Amendment 7. Approved projects include:

STATEWIDE

- A six-lane Interstate 70 across the state
- Some 330 bridge projects including 5 major river crossings
- 3,255 miles of roadway resurfacing
- 750 miles of new shoulders on rural highways
- 29 interchange improvements

- 7 upgrades to port facilities
- 14 railway projects
- 23 airport improvements
- 61 sidewalk and non-motorized transportation projects

KANSAS CITY AREA

Amendment 7 includes funding to create a much-needed and often-asked for Max bus line on the busy Prospect Street corridor in Kansas City, as well as other public transportation improvements, congestion mitigation, and non-motorized transportation enhancements, such as bicycle/pedestrian facilities, sidewalks and intermodal connections.

Cass County

- Interstate 49/Missouri 58 interchange improvements

Clay County

- Interstate 29/35 interchange improvements
- U.S. 169/Richards Road interchange upgrade at Wheeler Downtown Airport

Clay/Jackson counties

- New Broadway Bridge over Missouri River on U.S. 169

Clay/Platte counties

- Expansion of Kansas City SCOUT

Jackson County

- Interstate 70/435 interchange reconfiguration
- Interstate 435, additional lanes and improved bridges from Kansas to Interstate 49
- Interstate 70, additional lanes from Blue Ridge Cutoff to Interstate 470

- Interstate 470/U.S. 50 interchange improvements
- Interstate 70/35 and U.S. 169 interchange connecting to new Broadway Bridge
- Lee's Summit Airport improvements
- Railroad crossing improvements near Manchester Trafficway at 12th, 15th, 17th, 37th and 39th streets
- Intermodal railroad connection at the Kansas City Port

Platte County

- Interstate 29/Missouri 45 interchange improvements

NOTE: Should Amendment 7 fail at the polls on Aug. 5, it will likely be 2018, at the earliest, before another transportation funding proposal could be considered. ■