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## **Governor's Transportation Cuts Shortsighted**

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"The Doyle Administration's proposed \$15 million cut to the transportation fund and \$7 million cut to WisDOT operations is shortsighted and won't solve the state's fiscal problem," said Bob Cook, Executive Director of the Transportation Development Association of Wisconsin.

Governor Doyle announced today that he would call the Legislature into special session to pass an emergency bill to address a revenue shortfall in the current fiscal year. According to the Legislative Fiscal Bureau, the state faces an estimated \$452 million deficit this year based upon the latest revenue projections. Included in the Governor's proposal to address the deficit is a \$15 million cut to the segregated transportation fund and \$7 million cut in WisDOT operations, which would be used to partially fund the shortfall. Initial estimates for the emergency bill are a savings of approximately \$161.5 million – well short of the \$452 million needed to fill the gap.

"WisDOT has acknowledged transportation funding shortfalls of \$250 million per year. For that reason, the Department has proposed borrowing to pay for the Marquette Interchange and other projects. These cuts will only increase the amount the state puts on its credit card and increase the overall cost of projects," Cook said. "The transportation fund is made up of user fees segregated specifically for transportation purposes. It is not intended to pay for shortfalls in general fund programs. It's a bad precedent," Cook stated.

"Governor Doyle has discussed the need to stimulate economic growth as a means to solving our budget problems. This proposal is exactly the wrong thing to do. We should be looking for ways to invest to stimulate economic growth, create jobs, and improve the quality of life in Wisconsin. Cutting transportation funding undermines a foundation of economic growth--our state's infrastructure," Cook said.

TDA is a statewide alliance representing over 400 transportation stakeholders committed to working together for the best in transportation. Membership is open to all those interested in the development, maintenance, operation or improvement of transportation facilities and services in Wisconsin, and TDA members include units of government, organizations, and businesses as well as individuals.

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