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July 10, 2009

AASHTO Board of Directors

Dear CEO,

Re: Using Safetea-Lu Core Highway Funds for Professional Development and Training

I know that every state is under budget difficulties and that travel funds are extremely tight. I also know that workforce development, training and education are keys to your organization's long-term success. Working closely with FHWA we have developed a strategy that can work for many of you. Using 100% federal-aid highway funds can help your employees' professional development, help your own scarce state dollars and help AASHTO at the same time. The attached presentation was recently made to both the SCOH and to the Board of Directors in Pennsylvania—I know many of you were not able to make that meeting so I am repeating the message here.

Core Federal-aid highway dollars can be used by the State DOTs for a variety of professional development and training of your workforce. They can be used for tuition and direct educational expenses, excluding salaries, in connection with the education and training of employees of State and local transportation agencies; employee professional development; student internships; university or community college support; and educational activities, including outreach, to develop interest and promote participation in surface transportation careers. These funds can also be used to pay for AASHTO training events such as our management training courses, webinars, and many committee meetings.

It is significant to note that Section 5204(e) of the Surface Transportation Workforce Development, Training and Education Act allows the federal share of the cost of professional development activities to be 100%. The savings and benefits to your state DOT are tremendous. Prior law limited federal-aid to ½ percent of STP funds with a 20% match. SAFETEA-Lu made it no limitation of all the core programs with NO STATE MATCH, and broadened eligibility to all workforce development concerns. The graying workforce was the rationale. You can support/convert your own state-run training efforts and save your precious state only funds, take advantage of NHI courses and you can support the AASHTO training courses as well as select committee meetings that have a central focus on learning/training/peer exchange. This year is crucial. There are many AASHTO committee meetings remaining as well as the various AASHTO management training courses that need you or your staff to attend.

For example, funds could be used to cover tuition and travel for the AASHTO National Transportation Management Conferences (NTMC). The Conferences are tailored specifically for new and mid-level managers in state transportation agencies and equip participants to make

the transition from technical responsibilities to roles in management. The conferences offer 30 Professional Development Hours (PDH) or 3.0 Continuing Education Units (CEU). There are three more one-week conferences planned in 2009.

Funds could also be used to cover tuition and travel for the AASHTO National Transportation Leadership Institute (NTLI), AASHTO's two-week graduate-level management training course, held at the Indiana University, designed to supplement engineering expertise with leadership and management techniques oriented to highway and transportation department operations. The NTLI offers 64.25 Professional Development Hours (PDH) or 6.4 Continuing Education Units (CEU).

FHWA has preliminarily determined that Professional Development Hours (PDH) or Continuing Education Units (CEU) as a determining factor for 5204(e) eligibility. Any activity that issues PDH/CEU credits can be considered as eligible for support by the 5204(e) core program funds. Division Offices have been alerted of this again on April 9, 2009. Further guidance will be forthcoming, however. Most AASHTO committee meetings will qualify for PDH/CEU credits.

As of November 2008, 30 states were using 5204(e) funds. Of those states using these funds, expenditures ranged from less than \$2,000 to nearly \$7 Million and two States (Virginia and West Virginia) indicate that they are already using 5204(e) funds to support participation in AASHTO committees. (See the attachment).

After the presentations in Pennsylvania, several CEO's said they would establish a single federal-aid project for professional development. For further information on this concept, talk to your FHWA Division Administrator. Each division administrator was already alerted to this concept in a letter dated April 9, 2009 which is attached.

We encourage you to take advantage of these funds and to strengthen your current workforce with the additional education and training they need to do the best job and create the best state DOT you can.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Horsley", written in a cursive style.

John Horsley  
Executive Director

#### Attachments

cc: Jeff Paniati  
Executive Director, FHWA  
Amy Lucero, PE  
Director of Technical Services