

SUMMARY OF FHWA'S ASSESSMENT RESOURCE GROUP WORKSHOP HELD DECEMBER 3-4, 2008

On December 3 and 4, 2008, a workshop sponsored by FHWA was held in Washington, D.C. John Garner of Florida, Jimmy Isonhood of Mississippi and Gus Cannon of Texas represented the states as the regulators of outdoor advertising. In addition to Federal Highway representatives, participants included representatives from the Outdoor Advertising Industry and Scenic America. The Osprey Group of Boulder, Colorado, acted as facilitators. The workshop focused on the issue of defining a destroyed non-conforming sign. The need to formulate a working definition was based on the following factors:

- Lack of clarity about what constitutes a destroyed sign. Lack of consistency in state regulations. Difficulty in addressing destroyed signs based on value.
- State needs for clear expectations from the FHWA

The State and FHWA representatives arrived at a draft definition. While the Scenic America representatives expressed support for the definition, it was not endorsed by the outdoor advertising industry representatives. After considerable discussion, it was agreed that the draft definition was to be discussed at the AASHTO Right of Way & Utilities Subcommittee Outdoor Advertising Technical Council with participation by NAHBA. The goal is to have this as an agenda item at the annual meeting of the AASHTO Right of Way & Utilities Subcommittee which will occur in April, 2009, in Oklahoma City. This will allow for a full exchange of ideas and input from all interested parties before FHWA determines the proper approach to take in issuing direction to the states. The Draft definition which will be discussed is:

Draft -- Guidance definition for destroyed signs:

"Destroyed" means that (a specified percentage*) or more of the upright supports of a sign structure are physically damaged such that normal repair practices would call for: in the case of wooden sign structures, replacement of the broken supports or, in the case of metal sign structures, replacement of at least (a specified percentage**) of the length above ground of each broken, bent, or twisted support. The repaired sign must be at the original location and substantially the same as the original sign. *A range of 40 to 60% would be considered effective control. **A range of 20 to 30% would be considered effective control.