

**Jay Timmons' Remarks at Infrastructure Week Kickoff (Washington, D.C.)
May 11, 2015**

Thank you, Don [Baptiste], for that kind introduction—and for bringing us together this morning to officially kick-off a week about drawing attention to a crisis, motivating lawmakers to act, and galvanizing support for the 21st century infrastructure manufacturers and all Americans need to compete in the global economy and secure our mantle of economic leadership.

I want to thank Secretary Anthony Foxx, for being with us today and for continuing to relentlessly fight for long-term solutions to our nation's infrastructure challenges.

It's great to also be joined by three leaders who consistently have championed the urgent need for America to stop resting on a legacy of past investments and to start making how we move commerce a priority. Governor Ed Rendell; my good friend Eric Spiegel, President and CEO of NAM member company Siemens America; and Paul Yarossi, President of HNTB Companies.

It's terrific to see so many NAM members a part of this effort and program, including Tamara Lundgren, CEO of Schnitzer Steel Industries and Chair of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, who is on the 10:30 a.m. panel.

Infrastructure Week is organized by a core steering committee of leading business, labor, and policy groups—traditional and non-traditional allies—focused on the broad competitiveness implications of infrastructure. The NAM is proud to lead this effort with our partners:

- Richard Trumka and The AFL-CIO;
- The U.S. Chamber of Commerce;
- The Brookings Institution's Metropolitan Policy Program;
- The American Society of Civil Engineers;
- And Building America's Future.

Over the last three years, Infrastructure Week has transformed from a handful of events planned by a small group of organizations into a nationwide initiative. This week, more than 80 affiliate organizations will host more than 40 events from Alaska to Washington, DC.

Scores of mayors and state legislators are raising this issue with their constituents and their Members of Congress; business executives and labor leaders from sectors as broad as manufacturing, finance, and the service sector are bringing their stories to national leadership; and we will hear from our highest elected and federal agency officials throughout the week on federal action to repair and modernize our aging infrastructure.

And the timing could not be more appropriate.

Twenty days. That is all that separates us from a highway shutdown unless Congress extends federal highway and other transit programs funding. Another short-term extension would be the 33rd time – 33rd time—in six years that Congress has failed, when faced with the need for a new transportation measure—not just highways—to take decisive action to build our future and renew our promise.

This is unacceptable—and unworthy of the country that created an infrastructure system that empowered us achieve the greatest period of prosperity in history. Yes, Congress will likely come up with temporary patchwork again. But we must insist on more. Our elected leaders have a choice: do we want America to be yesterday's story or tomorrow's?

We need a well-funded, multi-year surface transportation authorization—quite simply now.

That's why your voices are absolutely essential—to educate lawmakers, to build momentum, and to move us beyond measures for today but solutions for a better tomorrow.

Whether it's an engineer at a plant in Baton Rouge, a welder on a shop floor in Peoria, or a researcher in a lab in Pittsburgh—the more than 12 million people who make a living in manufacturing and all Americans are counting on this progress.

I know Secretary Foxx is counting on that as well, and is strongly committed to upgrading our ports and runways and restoring our roads and railways—to rebuild America.

Secretary Foxx has impressed both Republicans and Democrats with his tenacity and dedication to improving our transportation system. And it's pleasure to welcome him to the stage. Ladies and gentlemen, Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx.