The Concrete Reinforcing Steel Institute (CRSI) is a trade association proudly entering its 90th year as the authoritative resource for information related to steel reinforced concrete construction. CRSI represents over 80% of the U.S. manufacturers, fabricators and placers of steel reinforcing bar and related products, as well as the interests of thousands of design and construction professionals across the United States. Our more than 1,500 members including 172 corporations with 465 locations in 47 states represent tens of thousands of jobs. CRSI members are capable of producing over eight million tons of reinforcing steel per year which is used in over 95% of U.S. bridges, over 50% of the nation’s heavy-trafficked pavements, along with median barriers, pipe, sound walls, and many other products.

CRSI is the ANSI-approved standards developer for the industry and was awarded a cooperative agreement with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to increase the use of continuously reinforced concrete pavement (CRCP) as an effort to achieve long-life pavement performance.

Transportation Reauthorization 2014 – Priority for Congress and our Country

CRSI fully supports the federal government’s role in planning and delivering transportation services and projects to meet the needs of the country’s Homeland Security, commerce, daily living and recreational needs. We support the 2012 federal surface transportation law, MAP-21, and its essential contribution to the focus and effectiveness of highway and transit programs. The law will expire September 2014 and the revenue stream into the Highway Trust Fund (HTF) will be inadequate to maintain existing highway investment levels threatening economic growth, jobs, and our nation’s competitiveness.

To meet our critical transportation and economic needs, CRSI urges Congress:

- To pass fully funded reauthorization legislation this year
- To provide financial resources to support a multi-year/six-year program
- To enact legislation to preserve a dedicated highway transportation trust fund

Congress Should Consider All Options for Funding Surface Transportation Authorization and to Stabilize and Grow the Highway Trust Fund

A substantial Authorization Level and infusion of funding to the Highway Trust Fund. The MAP-21 reauthorization did not increase funding levels – only continuing the past funding level of $106B for its 2-year reauthorization. With the near term insolvency of the HTF, states and municipalities will not receive adequate funding from the federal government. Congress must decide on a funding mechanism to replenish the HTF and to enact a long-term authorizing bill. A multi-year bill and adequate funds in the dedicated Highway Trust Fund is absolutely critical for state transportation departments to plan and budget for projects and for our industry to prepare in response
to their needs. It is paramount that Congress invest in a long-term integrated 21st century transportation infrastructure system. The American Society of Civil Engineers estimates that $3.6 trillion is needed by 2020 to improve the nation’s public infrastructure to acceptable levels.

User-fee based funding:

- **Increase sales/excise taxes on fuels.** The current 18.5¢ per gallon gas user fee, not increased for 20 years, does not generate what is needed to support the national surface transportation program. As challenging as it may be, the best way to increase revenue is to gradually raise the fuel user fee by 15¢ per gallon, as recommended by key Congressional commissions.

- **Adoption/increase of other user-fee based funding options such as Freight Charges, Heavy Vehicle Use, Vehicle Miles Traveled.**

- **Expand innovative finance tools such as the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) to make critical investments in our transportation infrastructure.**

- **Ensure that all users of the highway system, including electric cars and more efficient automobiles, contribute toward its construction, maintenance, and rehabilitation and to maintain the integrity of HTF as a user-fee based funding mechanism.**

Additional needs:

- **Private Sector Financing.** Public–private partnerships and a Federal Infrastructure Bank to supplement fuel tax user fees.

- **Highway Trust Fund Dedication/Preservation.** It is imperative that Congress preserve the fire walls and funding guarantees which segregate highway user fees from general revenues.

- **Life Cycle Cost Analysis.** Support improving our bridges and pavements with high quality, long-life construction, rehabilitation, and preservation strategies and asset management principles.

- **Buy America.** Reauthorization must maintain existing Buy America requirements.

- **Research and Training.** Support innovative research, training, and general education of both the transportation workforce and the general public.

CRSI firmly believes in transportation investment as a way to improve our economy, our mobility, to add to manufacturing and production, to make us more competitive, to increase GDP and employment in good jobs and to secure our nation’s performance and success in the 21st century.

Please contact Barbara Burchett, CRSI’s Legislative Consultant, at bburchett@crsi.org if you needed additional information.