

CCIA HIGHLIGHTS *of the week*

A weekly information bulletin for members of the Connecticut Construction Industries Association

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CONNECTICUT HAS THE SECOND WORSE rural roads in the nation, according to a TRIP report released on Tuesday. The report, [Rural Connections: Challenges and Opportunities in America's Heartland](#), evaluates the safety and condition of the nation's rural roads and bridges. It finds that 39 percent of Connecticut's rural roads are rated on poor condition, the second highest rate in the nation; and 34 percent are rated in mediocre condition. Eight percent of Connecticut's rural bridges are rated as structurally deficient. The rate of traffic fatalities on Connecticut's non-Interstate, rural roads - 1.45 fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles of travel - is nearly double the fatality rate on all other roads in the state.

CONNECTICUT WILL SHUT DOWN transportation projects across the state under the House Democrats' budget that was released on Thursday. The [budget](#) diverts the sales tax revenue that was dedicated to the Special Transportation Fund, driving the fund into insolvency next year. The budget also caps bonding over \$500 million short of what ConnDOT has programmed for next year. This comes the same week as Stanley Black and Decker and Aetna warned the state about its failing transportation systems, and TRIP ranked Connecticut as having the second worst rural roads in the country.

STOP THE TRANSPORTATION CUTS! Click on the following [link](#) to CCIA's Action Center and tell your legislator to Vote NO on the House Democrats' Budget. It's easy and effective.

WITH THE END OF THE STATE FISCAL YEAR looming, Governor Malloy offered a [proposal](#) to the General Assembly for a short-term budget. Early in the week, in order to avoid having to run the state by Executive Order on July 1st, Malloy proposed nearly \$320 million in revenue increases to prop up a temporary budget, according to an [article](#) in *CT Mirror*. Even considering the additional revenue, Malloy outlined deep cuts to municipal aid, social services, hospitals, and public colleges in the short-term measure to keep the state running in a fiscally-balanced manner. At that point in the week, both the Democratic and Republican caucuses signaled that they were more interested in a full budget plan for the fiscal year starting July 1.

BUDGET DISCUSSIONS BROKE DOWN between the House and Senate Democrats on Tuesday evening, which means that the General Assembly will not vote on a state budget before the new fiscal year begins on July 1st. An [article](#) in *CT Mirror* explains that if the General Assembly is unable to approve a state budget or the Governor's short-term budget proposal that he proposed earlier in the week, the Governor's [12-month resource allocation plan](#) will be the default measure to keep the state government operating. The resource allocation plan consists of only cuts with no new revenue increases, since it is effected through Executive Orders.

THE MIANUS RIVER BRIDGE COLLAPSE on Interstate 95 in Greenwich, which killed three drivers and shocked the state and the nation, reached its 34th anniversary on June 28th, as [reported](#) by *CT Post*. The collapse was caused when two pin and hanger assemblies that held sections of the 25-year-old bridge in place broke, causing a 100-foot segment to fall into the river below. "Structures like the original Mianus would not be built today," said Kevin Nursick, a spokesman for the state Department of Transportation. "Today we build in redundancies, so that no one item can lead to a critical failure." In response, Connecticut changed the way it inspected, funded and repaired bridges and roads, and the legislature created a Special Transportation Fund, which now stands close to bankruptcy.

UCONN IS POSTPONING PLANNING and construction on \$334.1 million of its construction spending initiative in the fiscal year that begins next week according to an [article](#) in *CT Mirror*. Work on a new \$83.5 million dorm for honors students and a new \$62.6 million research lab are included in the list of projects being pushed back due to a lack of state support to hire teachers and other staff necessary to accommodate more students. Four years into UConn's Next Generation Connecticut initiative is falling short of projections for adding students. The university's budget chief has indicated that the projects will be delayed, but not cancelled, until the state can commit to additional spending.

DECD COMMISSIONER CATHERINE SMITH is touting good news in the June issue of [Business Edge](#). Smith's list includes: [Amazon's plans](#) to create a new 855,000 square-foot fulfillment cent in North Haven, creating 1,800 jobs and injecting \$255 million into the local economy. She continues that [United Technologies](#) just opened its new, expanded \$60 million R&D Center in East Hartford and announced it will spend an additional \$115 million on new advanced manufacturing and engine research centers. Smith also notes that Xerox, Pitney Bowes, Sikorsky, AQR, Vineyard Vines, and Blue Sky Studios have recently announced their intention to grow their presence here.

LABOR LAW DECISIONS that have favored employees and labor unions are likely to be rolled back under the Trump Administration, and Connecticut employers will have to figure out the different federal and state regulations and the interplay between the two. Daniel Shwartz writes on the [Connecticut Law Blog](#) that Obama-era rule changes might have helped level the playing field for state employers who have had to comply with Connecticut's strict rules. With the rollback of some of these labor regulations at the federal level, Connecticut's higher standards may come back into play.

MORE THAN \$15.1 MILLION IN GRANTS are being awarded to fifty Connecticut nonprofit organizations with one-time infrastructure improvements by the state's Nonprofit Grant Program, Gov. Malloy [announced](#) this week. Projects receiving grants include: Beckerle Street improvements in Bethel for Ability Beyond Disability; Maple Street improvements in Bridgeport for CT Renaissance; and Road Safety Initiatives in East Windsor for Allied Community Resources.

CONNDOT BID RESULTS for June 28, 2017: [Project No. 0138-0211](#), Route 1 Operational Lane Improvements (Stratford): Colonna Masonry Concrete and Asphalt Paving LLC: \$2,034,989.15; Empire Paving, Inc.: \$2,407,160.10; Dayton Construction Company, Inc.: \$2,592,275.50.

STATES ARE NOT WAITING for help from the Federal Government for transportation and other infrastructure needs, according to an [article](#) in *The Washington Examiner*. The article explains that a record 77 transportation measures made it onto ballots in 23 states last year. Fifty five of those were approved for a success rate of 71 percent. Since 2013, 22 states have raised their gas tax. In the article, Kerry O'Hare, a former US DOT official in the George W. Bush Administration, explains that states and localities on average fund 75 percent of their infrastructure needs on their own. She said that states, counties, and cities have come to see the federal government's financial contribution as unreliable.

US DOT ANNOUNCED the Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) discretionary grant program that is replacing the FASTLANE grants through a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) in the Federal Register on June 29. The INFRA [program](#) will make approximately \$1.5 billion available to projects that are in line with the Administration's principles to help rebuild America's crumbling infrastructure which is a top priority for the Trump Administration.

CURRENT AIRPORT CONSTRUCTION funding levels are only half of what is necessary to make safety improvements and help reduce runway congestion, according to an [analysis](#) released by ARTBA. The analysis shows that grants were awarded to 1,398 airports through the Airport Improvement Program (AIP) in 2016, accounting for 41 percent of the nearly 3,400 airports that

are eligible for AIP funding. These airports have identified a total of about \$6.5 billion annually, or \$32.4 billion over the next five years, for projects that could be eligible for AIP grants, according to FAA. Current AIP funding will only cover half of the cost of all potential projects.

A CONTROVERSIAL PROPOSAL to separate air traffic control from the federal government was approved by a U.S. House panel this week following a lengthy debate, *The Hill* [reports](#). In a 32-25 vote, mostly along party lines, the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee advanced legislation that would reauthorize the FAA and transfer the agency's air navigation system to a nonprofit organization. Transportation leaders hope the FAA bill will be considered on the House floor next month.

THE U.S. EPA ANNOUNCED this week that it is repealing the "waters of the United States" (WOTUS) rule, which threatened to force transportation construction firms to get a permit every time a roadside ditch filled with water. In a [press release](#), the agency stated that it was repealing in order to provide "regulatory certainty." Industry trade associations, including AGC and ARTBA, and state governments sued the regulatory agencies, and the federal courts have stayed the WOTUS rule nationwide. It is unclear how the repeal process will impact those proceedings.

FEDERAL RAILROAD OFFICIALS oppose President Trump's budget proposal because it eliminates Amtrak's ability to upgrade the Northeast Corridor and blocks funding to the New Jersey-New York Gateway project, as [reported](#) by *Mass Transit*. "From a practical standpoint, the president's budget would effectively eliminate capital funding for Northeast Corridor, and that's a bad thing," Amtrak's president and CEO, Charles W. "Wick" Moorman told the House railroad subcommittee.

A CHRO TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE session is scheduled from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Tuesday, July 11, 2017, at 450 Columbus Boulevard, Hartford. The session is offered to assist in complying with Connecticut's contract compliance laws. Although there is a fee to park in the garage, the sessions are free of charge. Registration is required. To register, please email Jill.Guerrera@ct.gov.

FLIERS INCLUDED IN HIGHLIGHTS, 6/23/17: 1) [YCF Golf Tournament](#), 7/17; 2) 2017 [CCPC Annual Summer Picnic](#), 8/10

FROM THE INTERNET: On June 30, 1936, Margaret Mitchell's book, "Gone with the Wind," was published. One in five people in France have experienced depression making it the most depressed country in the world. The average Facebook user has over 130 friends. The Australian airlines QANTAS stands for Queensland and Northern Territorial Aerial Service. People with higher IQ's dream more.