

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON
ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS
TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF REAUTHORIZING MAP-21**

FEBRUARY 25, 2015

**WALT ROWEN
PRESIDENT – SUSQUEHANNA GLASS CO.**

Good afternoon Chairman Inhofe and members of the Committee.

My name is Walt Rowen; I'm the owner of Susquehanna Glass Co., a 105 year-old glass decorating company based in Columbia, Penn. Thank you for allowing me to share my comments with you on the importance of reauthorizing funding for the Highway Trust Fund, and why this is important to small businesses.

My company provides decorated wine glasses and barware to major retailers, Internet flash sites, small retailers and other tabletop companies. We rely on the freight and trucking industry to ship our finished products all over the country to retailers and directly to their customers. Last year my business shipped over 57,000 small packages through UPS and FedEx and generated more than a million dollars in freight charges. Our success relies heavily on our ability to deliver products efficiently and cost-effectively to our customers. This is why it's vital to small businesses like mine to invest in America's roads and bridges.

Investment in our nation's infrastructure is an investment in America, pure and simple. Not only would this benefit businesses like mine that rely on the shipping industry and well-maintained roads, it would create new opportunities for small businesses. About 147,000 of our country's 605,000 bridges are failing. This is especially apparent in Pennsylvania, where we have the third-largest number of bridges in the U.S. (25,000), but we lead the nation in the number of bridges classified as "structurally deficient." And a mere 30% of Pennsylvania's roads have been labeled as "in good condition."

What's more, one-third of America's major roads are in poor or mediocre condition. There are 4,000 dams in need of repair and 36% of our urban highways are congested. Rebuilding America's roads, bridges and schools offers tremendous opportunities to small business. Not only do they participate in building projects and their supply chain, they run the hotels, coffee shops, restaurants and other businesses that serve people working on those projects.

In fact, Small Business Majority's polling found 59% of small business owners support the creation of a National Infrastructure Bank to help fund

infrastructure like roads, bridges and water systems, via private and public capital.

If the costs of freight continue to rise while our roads deteriorate, it will become harder and harder to move my product and make a profit. This would be detrimental to my bottom line.

Investing in our nation's roads, bridges and other physical infrastructure supports access to customers and vendors, while at the same time creating demand for the goods and services small businesses have to sell.

We need infrastructure investments that will be beneficial for business and the economy. I hope you will strongly consider small business support for reauthorizing funding for the Highway Trust Fund.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important issue.

Sincerely,
Walt Rowen, President
Susquehanna Glass Co.