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Rhode Island Faces \$4.5 Billion Transportation Funding Shortfall Over Ten Years

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TRIP

PROVIDENCE, R.I. /PRNewswire/ -- A new report finds that Rhode Island faces a \$4.5 billion transportation funding shortfall over the next ten years. This occurs when nearly one quarter of state-maintained roads are in need of repair, nearly half of Rhode Island's bridges are structurally deficient or functionally obsolete, congestion is increasing and the rural traffic fatality rate is more than three times higher than on all other roads in the state.

The report, released today by TRIP, a Washington, DC based national transportation organization, finds that roadways that lack some desirable safety features have inadequate capacity to meet travel demands or have poor pavement conditions. These roadways cost the state's motorists nearly \$1 billion annually and the average Providence area motorist pays \$1,298 each year.

The report, "Future Mobility in Rhode Island: Meeting the State's Needs for Safe and Efficient Mobility," finds that a total of 24 percent of the state-maintained roads are in poor or mediocre condition, and that pavement conditions will deteriorate in the future under current funding levels.

In addition to deteriorated road conditions, 21 percent of Rhode Island's bridges are structurally deficient and an additional 27 percent are functionally obsolete. These bridges are inspected regularly and are safe for travel, but many are in need of rehabilitation. The state's roads are also becoming increasingly crowded, as commuting and commerce are constrained by growing traffic congestion on Rhode Island' major urban roads.

"Rhode Island's transportation system faces many challenges, including growing traffic volumes, harsh weather and even impacts from natural disasters such as the floods we experienced this March," said Rhode Island Department of Transportation Director Michael P. Lewis. "Economic support, such as the State bonds and Federal stimulus, enable the Department to continually reinvest in our vital infrastructure network of roads, bridges, rail and bike paths."

Report available at: www.tripnet.org