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Editorial: Road Improvements

It's time to do something about the condition of South Carolina's highways and bridges

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Enough is enough. We believe it's time to do something about a problem in South Carolina that only gets worse with each passing day. The problem is the condition of the state's highways and bridges: crumbling asphalt, potholes, and structural deficiencies.

Four years ago, we delivered a similar editorial, talking about how woefully behind the state was in taking care of the roads that take us to work or to our homes and transport hundreds of billions of dollars of goods throughout the state.

Four years later, the situation has just gotten worse.

A national transportation research group released a report this week that says, among other things, that two thirds of our roads are in poor or mediocre condition, ten percent of our bridges are structurally deficient, and the state has the highest rate of fatal traffic crashes per miles driven in the nation.

Right now, the legislature is looking at various proposals for funding highway improvements.

In the past, lawmakers have not considered a gas tax increase to generate revenue, but this year, the mood has changed and a gas tax bump for highway work is being considered more seriously.

However, some will only consider that increase if tax reductions come elsewhere, and if the Legislature puts the Department of Transportation under the governor's control.

We know that deciding how to fund roads isn't easy, but we believe now is the time to act, and we call on our legislators to do the difficult work of figuring this out.

The residents of South Carolina deserve better than they are getting now.