

# THE POST-STANDARD

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## NY's highways, bridges rated among worst in nation



A view of the Interstate 81 viaduct in Syracuse from the roof of the Smith Restaurant Supply building at 500 Erie Boulevard East. (Mike McAndrew | [mmcandrew@syracuse.com](mailto:mmcandrew@syracuse.com))



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SYRACUSE, N.Y. -- New York's highways and bridges are among the most deteriorated in the nation, according to [a new report](#) released Monday by TRIP, a national transportation organization.

Eight percent of New York's interstate bridges are structurally deficient, the fourth-worst rate in the nation, TRIP concluded. Only Rhode Island (15 percent), West Virginia (9 percent) and Wyoming (9 percent) had a higher percentage of bridges rated structurally deficient.

Seventeen percent of the pavement on New York's interstate highway system is in poor or mediocre condition, the tenth-worst rate in the nation.

"The long-term vision that helped establish the current Interstate system 60 years ago is needed again today," said Will Wilkins, TRIP's executive director. "In order to maintain personal and commercial mobility, transportation investment and a sustainable, long-term funding source for the federal surface transportation program must remain a priority."

President Barack Obama signed into law in 2015 a five-year, \$305 billion highway improvement plan that will provide a boost of approximately 15 percent in highway funding and an 18 percent boost in transit funding through 2020.

But Congress has had to appropriate general tax dollars to pay for highway improvements because the 18.4 cents-per-gallon federal motor fuel tax and the 24.4 cents-per-gallon federal diesel fuel tax - the primary sources of funding for the federal Highway Trust Fund - have not been adequate to support transportation spending since 2008.

"These latest figures from TRIP are beyond disappointing and should serve as a wake-up call to policy makers at all levels of government," said Heather Briccetti, president and CEO of the Business Council of New York State. "We need to increase our infrastructure investment and we need to do it now."

Greg Biryla, executive director of Unshackle Upstate, applauded Gov. Andrew Cuomo and the state Legislature for including \$27 billion for infrastructure in Upstate New York in the state budget passed this year.

But Biryla said it is clear from TRIP's report that continued attention and funding for New York's infrastructure assets are necessary.

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