

Wednesday, March 22, 2017

## Report: Deficient roads cost South Carolinians \$5.4 billion per year

[Palmetto Business Daily Reports](#)



\$5.4 billion.

That's the total cost that driving on "deficient" roads costs South Carolina motorists each year, according to a [report](#) by national transportation research group, TRIP.

According to that group, Palmetto State motorists bear those costs in the form of "additional vehicle operating costs, congestion-related delays and crashes."

That translates to \$1,850 per driver in the Charleston metro area; \$1,716 per driver in the Columbia area; \$1,283 per driver in Florence;

and, \$1,789 per driver in the Myrtle Beach area.

The Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce is using the data as evidence of the need to pass H. 3516, a road funding bill pending in the legislature.

"The current condition of our state's roads places a significant cost on residents, both in time and money, but also puts them at risk each and every time they get in their car," said Mary Graham, Chief Advancement Officer for the Charleston Metro Chamber. "With the highest rate of traffic fatalities in the nation, we must urge our elected officials to pass the infrastructure funding bill, H.3516, to fix our roads. This issue is not only costing South Carolinians time and money, it is costing their lives. It is time to pass the funding necessary to make our roads safe again."

According to the report, about two-thirds of South Carolina's "major-locally and state-maintained urban roads" are in poor or mediocre condition. TRIP also points out that 4,406 people in South Carolina have died in traffic crashes from 2012 to 2016.

"With an economy based largely on manufacturing, corporate and financial services, agriculture, and tourism, the quality of South Carolina's transportation system plays a vital role in the state's economic growth and quality of life," according to the report. "An efficient, safe and well-maintained transportation system provides economic and social benefits by affording individuals access to employment, housing, healthcare, education, goods and services, recreation, entertainment, family, and social activities."

The report also states that the average Charleston-area motorist experiences an average of 41 annual hours of delay per year due to traffic congestion, which translates to \$1,047 per year in lost time and fuel costs.

"These conditions are only going to get worse, increasing the additional costs to motorists, if greater investment is not made available at the state and local levels of government," said Will Wilkins, TRIP's executive director. "Without adequate funding, South Carolina's transportation system will become increasingly deteriorated and congested, hampering economic growth, safety and quality of life."