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Fatalities on Colorado interstate highways rank 14th highest in the nation



COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. (KRDO) -- New research from the transportation research group "TRIP" says that the number of fatalities on Colorado's Interstate Highway system is the 14th highest in the nation.

They're also the third busiest and the eleventh most congested interstates in the U.S., and experts at TRIP say the problem lies in the fact that highway use has grown much faster than construction on new lanes.

They're now hoping a stimulus relief package from Congress will give the state the funding it needs to make the interstate safer, but time is of the essence.

Research shows pavement and bridges are also deteriorating quickly and are in the eighth-worst condition in the nation.

The setback to fixing them has been funding, which could be even more difficult to secure amid the pandemic.

With the federal service program expiring in September, experts say it's vital that Colorado gets a long-term plan in place soon.

"We've also seen a 16 billion dollar decrease in state transportation revenue because of the pandemic," says Rocky Moretti, Director of Policy and Research for TRIP. "It's absolutely vital that Congress in their stimulus package makes sure states like Colorado are reimbursed for those lost funds."

If you find yourself sitting in traffic on the interstate often, you can blame that on Colorado's booming population.

From 2000 to 2018, experts at TRIP say there was a more than 50 percent increase in vehicle travel on the interstate.

But before you jump states, experts say the design of the highway actually makes it twice as safe as other roadways in the U.S.

An estimated 99 lives in 2018 were saved because of its minimum four-lane design.