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## **Leaders Discuss Nation's Failing Grade on Roads, Bridges and Call for Action in Oklahoma City**

*Governor Rendell, Mayor Cornett, OK State Representative Joyner, ODOT Director Patterson and Leaders from Engineering and Business host forum*

**Oklahoma City, OK- Friday, June 28, 2013** - Today co-chair of Building America's Future and former Pennsylvania Governor Ed Rendell joined Oklahoma City Mayor Mick Cornett and leaders from the Legislature, engineering and business communities to praise efforts at the state and local level to address infrastructure and transportation challenges. At a forum in Oklahoma City co-hosted by the Building America's Future, the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber and the American Society of Civil Engineers, Rendell and Cornett noted that while leadership on the national level has stalled, governors and mayors across the country are making strides with new laws in four states designed to increase transportation funding this year. Speakers at the forum all agreed that Washington must act on a long-term infrastructure plan in order to keep the U.S. competitive and to improve the quality of life for all Americans.

"As a former Governor, I love that states and cities are tackling these tough issues. Prioritizing repairs, building smarter electrical grids, and creating private-public partnerships are all wise investments for communities. But cities and states cannot do it alone," said Rendell. "Make no mistake, we need the federal government to step up and fund the projects that are regionally and nationally significant. For far too long, the federal government has failed to act. That cost of inaction is tremendous and as a result, we're falling behind our global competitors."

"We know that to be a successful city, we have to keep commerce and commuters moving and our neighborhoods strong. Oklahoma City has worked hard to repair and maintain our streets and bridges," said Mayor Cornett. "We've undergone a remarkable revitalization in Oklahoma City. Our sidewalks, roads and utility systems strengthen our neighborhoods and draw people and businesses to our community. I am hoping Congress sees the wisdom of investing in our nation's infrastructure."

"Oklahoma has challenges like any other state in the country," said Mike Patterson, director of the Oklahoma Department of Transportation. "Many of our roads have fallen out of a state of good repair and our bridges need significant attention and maintenance, but we have focused our efforts and made

great improvements over the past few years. We're particularly proud that we've decreased the number of structurally deficient bridges in Oklahoma from 706 to 556 in the last two years."

"Our businesses are affected by local and national decisions on funding projects from ports to pipelines, not to mention the more common highways and bridges in need of repair," said Roy H. Williams, president and CEO of the Chamber. "We hope the dialogue today helps spur some action on making critically needed investments and improvements."

"Earlier this year, we released the 2013 Report Card for America's Infrastructure, which awarded our nation's infrastructure a D+," said Gregory E. DiLoreto, P.E., P.L.S., D. WRE, President of the America Society of Civil Engineers. "We know that poor roads and bridges drive up the cost of doing business. Likewise, our ailing ports and waterway systems hurt our ability to compete in a global marketplace. If we want to stay economically competitive, we must take immediate action."

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