

**Written Testimony of Congressman Ryan Mackenzie (PA-07)**  
**House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure Member Day Hearing**  
**May 14, 2025**

Chairman Graves, Ranking Member Larsen, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to present the transportation and infrastructure priorities of Pennsylvania's 7th Congressional District, encompassing the Greater Lehigh Valley—a region experiencing rapid growth and serving as a critical logistics and manufacturing hub in the Northeast.

**1. Highway and Bridge Modernization**

Pennsylvania's infrastructure challenges are well-documented. Statewide, 13% of bridges are rated in poor condition, nearly double the national average of 7%. In Lehigh and Northampton counties, 10% of bridges are rated as being in poor condition, and those bridges are an average of 93 years old. My constituents continue to express frustration over persistent congestion and deteriorating roadway conditions.

Interstates 78 and 476 are vital corridors for commerce and daily commutes. However, they frequently experience congestion which impacts economic productivity and quality of life. I urge the Committee to support federal programs aimed at expanding highway capacity, enhancing safety, and accelerating bridge replacement projects to address these pressing needs.

**2. Passenger Rail Restoration**

Restoring direct passenger rail service to the Greater Lehigh Valley is a critical step towards unlocking new economic opportunities and relieving congestion on some of the region's busiest roadways. Connecting our communities to New York City and Philadelphia by rail would strengthen our economy, reduce highway congestion, and give residents and businesses the transportation options they deserve. I support the ongoing efforts to expand Amtrak service from New York City to Scranton, and I urge the Committee to build on that progress by prioritizing passenger rail connections that bring service directly to the Greater Lehigh Valley.

**3. Freight Rail Safety and Efficiency**

As a major freight corridor, the Greater Lehigh Valley relies on a safe and efficient rail network. Federal support for grade crossing safety improvements, track upgrades, and technologies to prevent derailments is essential to protect our communities while supporting the economic benefits that freight rail provides.

**4. Prioritizing Community Safety Through Targeted Federal Programs**

In the Greater Lehigh Valley, transportation challenges impact more than just traffic—they pose serious safety risks for families in communities like Allentown and Bethlehem. That's why I am

encouraged by the structure of the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) program, which empowers local governments to develop data-driven safety action plans designed to reduce traffic fatalities and serious injuries.

These federally authorized safety planning efforts are already helping our local leaders identify high-risk corridors and design commonsense solutions—such as safer intersections, pedestrian infrastructure, and traffic calming improvements—that directly respond to the needs of our residents. This program stands apart because it puts local safety priorities first, rather than pushing top-down federal mandates that often miss the mark for communities like ours.

As the Committee considers future surface transportation reauthorization proposals, I encourage you to maintain and strengthen the Safe Streets and Roads for All program's focus on local control, safety outcomes, and practical implementation. By preserving this targeted, community-centered approach in future authorizing legislation, Congress can ensure that transportation policy remains squarely focused on saving lives and improving safety on our nation's roadways.

## **Conclusion**

The Greater Lehigh Valley's growth underscores the urgent need for strategic investments in transportation infrastructure. Addressing the aging and deficient roads and bridges, expanding passenger rail service, and enhancing safety measures are critical steps toward ensuring economic vitality and quality of life for our residents. I look forward to collaborating with the Committee to advance these priorities for Pennsylvania's 7th District.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today and I yield back.