

**Statement of Delaware Valley Healthcare Council of
The Hospital & Healthsystem Association of Pennsylvania**

Before the House Transportation Committee

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Senator Rafferty, I am Brian C. Eury, Regional Director, Legislative Services for the Delaware Valley Healthcare Council of HAP (DVHC). The council is a membership organization representing more than 50 acute and specialty care hospitals and health systems, over 30 facilities providing inpatient behavioral health services, and 20 facilities providing physical rehabilitation in southeastern Pennsylvania.

On behalf of the Delaware Valley hospital community and the Hospital and Healthsystem Association of PA, DVHC appreciates this opportunity to testify about the importance of Pennsylvania's transportation infrastructure and the funding necessary to maintain it.

Pennsylvania's transportation system impacts everyone who seeks care at, or who works at, the region's hospitals and healthsystems. Each year, millions of patients and nearly 100,000 hospital employees use this system to travel to and from hospitals. Every day in Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia Counties, patients and employees rely on:

- Approximately 3,600 miles of state and interstate roadways
- About 2,800 state-owned bridges
- The Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority's bus routes, trolley lines, subway lines, and commuter rail lines

SEPTA is especially important to the Delaware Valley hospital community.

DVHC hospital members report that as many as a third of their employees – 30,000 workers – use public transit every day to get to work. Patients also rely on SEPTA. According to SEPTA statistics for 2006, approximately 300 million trips were taken for reasons that include work, school, and visits to healthcare facilities and medical offices.

In particular, Philadelphia's older population relies on public transit. SEPTA records indicate that seniors make 88,000 to 95,000 trips daily, many to and from doctors' appointments or hospitals for outpatient tests, treatment, or therapy.

Transportation, however, is not a regional issue. Transportation goes beyond the popular debate of rural versus urban. Transportation is a state issue. Transportation is a critical imperative in the role of access. Currently, Pennsylvania has 32 trauma centers statewide. These centers provide highly skilled teams of medical specialists to provide care during and after an occurrence of trauma. Trauma centers operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. Seven of these critical access hospitals are located in rural areas throughout the commonwealth. Bradford, Susquehanna, Fulton, Somerset, Jefferson, Potter and Clinton counties all have one of these facilities. Jefferson County for example is the only critical access hospital in a five county area.

Hospital and health system patients and employees count on the transportation infrastructure to be safe, convenient, efficient, and affordable.

According to a recent transportation funding study by the Pennsylvania Transportation Advisory Committee, many issues must be addressed if the transportation infrastructure is going to continue to support the needs of the state and region. The committee's findings include:

- Pennsylvania's bridges are the fourth-oldest in the nation. The state ranked first in 2007 in the number of structurally deficient bridges.
- The lack of funding to reconstruct roads on a cyclical basis is leading to more underlying problems with roadway sub-base, drainage, and other aspects of highway maintenance.
- Congestion in Pennsylvania has worsened over the past 20 years. PennDOT traffic engineers expect congestion to worsen by 50 to 60 percent over the next 30 years unless a multifaceted congestion mitigation program is

established. In southeastern Pennsylvania, good public transit is crucial to managing and improving congestion.

Unfortunately, the funding required for these transportation infrastructure improvements has not been approved. The federal government's recent rejection of Pennsylvania's planned funding of public transit through tolling on Interstate 80 has set back state and regional plans for the growth and rebuilding of the commonwealth's transportation infrastructure. The transportation infrastructure of the state and region requires predictable and sustainable funding to provide for investments in technology, equipment, and people to efficiently maintain, enhance, and improve the system for the long term. Citizens of the commonwealth must be able to depend on a secure transportation system to travel to work as well as to access health care services when necessary.

On behalf of the region's hospitals and health systems, DVHC thanks you for providing this opportunity to reinforce the importance of Pennsylvania's transportation system.