



Invest in our Nation's Infrastructure

Background:

NECA contractors play a crucial role in the building and maintaining our nation's infrastructure. Our members power our nation's buildings, hospitals, and schools; light our highways and streets; connect transit and rail switches; install complex electrical systems at airports; operate and maintain the plants that keep our water clean; and much more. Although the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021 authorized approximately \$1.2 trillion to upgrade our infrastructure, additional investments are necessary for our nation to meet the needs of the 21st century. Economic studies show that every \$1 billion in infrastructure investment creates 28,500 direct and indirect jobs, providing our economy and the American taxpayers with a high return on investment.

Key Points:

- Airports. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) reauthorization ensures long-term investment and stability in aviation infrastructure for America's large, small, and rural communities, and it addresses issues to help maintain the safety of our system. NECA contractors play a crucial role in ensuring the safety and efficiency of our aviation network through the construction and maintenance of our airports.
- Broadband. The United States faces an unprecedented expansion of technology that will transform our nation. With the arrival of 5G, 6G and more, Congress must ensure the private sector has the capital ready to invest in these technologies.
- Clean Water and Wastewater. Congress should increase investment in the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds (SRFs). These programs are essential programs that allow communities to leverage federal dollars to fund essential water and wastewater sewer projects. The American Society of Civil Engineer's 2020 economic study, *"The Economic Benefits of Investing in Water Infrastructure: How a Failure to Act Would Affect the U.S. Economic Recovery"* found that the annual drinking water and wastewater investment gap will grow to \$434 billion by 2029.
- Electric Vehicles. The United States market for electric vehicles has significantly increased with the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law spending \$7.5 billion to boost the nation's EV charging network.
- Federal Buildings. The U.S. General Services Administration is responsible for all federal construction outside the Department of Defense. There is a serious backlog of needed repairs, alterations and project starts of non-defense federal construction activity. Beyond federal buildings, funding is sorely needed for federal prisons, courthouses, border stations, and our embassies overseas.
- Grid and Clean Energy. Our grid infrastructure must be modernized to meet the demands of today and tomorrow. Upgraded transmission lines and distribution infrastructure, coupled with the implementation of smart grid technology, will improve the nation's electrical infrastructure with reliability, efficiency, and security. Reports have shown needed investments around \$197 billion by 2029 to meet the transmission infrastructure investment gap.
- Military Construction. The Department of Defense construction agencies design and manage construction for homes, schools, hospitals, data centers, office buildings, airfields, warehouses, and training facilities for military members and their families. In addition to new construction, existing structures need maintenance and renovation.
- Ports and Inland Waterways. The Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) authorizes U.S. Army Corps of Engineers construction projects regularly performed by NECA contractors to improve our Nation's ports and harbors, inland waterway navigation, flood and storm protection, and other water resources infrastructure. Water and waterways infrastructure programs foster economic development, create jobs, facilitate trade and commerce, aid international competitiveness, provide water recreation opportunities, enhance agricultural and industrial productivity, and augment our national defense.

- Rail and Transit. A growing populace, traffic jams, and high gas prices have led many commuters to rely more upon and utilize transit. NECA contractors nationwide provide design support, construction engineering, project management, installation, testing, startup, and maintenance for transit systems in heavy rail, light rail, and automated people mover systems.
- Roads and Bridges. Find a Sustainable Solution to Fix the Highway Trust Fund. Congress must enact a long-term sustainable revenue source for the Highway Trust Fund that makes the fund whole and significantly increases our investment in transportation infrastructure.
- School Construction. School construction has generally been considered a state and local responsibility and the needs are not being met. According to the National Center for Education and Statistics, the unmet need for school construction and renovation is estimated to be \$127 billion or \$2.2 million per school and the average age of a public school building is estimated to be well over 40 years old.

NECA Asks:

Congress should support increased funding for Federal construction projects. Ensure funding increases for the federal construction agencies, including increased funding for the military construction accounts at the Department of Defense, the Federal Buildings Fund account within the General Services Administration, and all other appropriate construction accounts for the other “civilian” agencies.