American Bridges

A Failing Infrastructure

The United States infrastructure is in a critical state. Some of the most vital pieces of infrastructure, bridges, are in dire need of improvement. Failure to address this issue may result in catastrophe such as the I-35 bridge collapse in Minneapolis in 2007. In the recent release of the American Society of Civil Engineers Report Card grading America's infrastructure, United States bridges were given a grade of "D."

Bridges across the United States are failing because of two reasons: being functionally obsolete and being structurally deficient.

Structurally Deficient: Bridges that require significant maintenance, rehabilitation or replacement to conform to current weight standards. These bridges typically require limits on speed, size and weight of vehicles passing to be considered completely safe.

Functionally Obsolete: Bridges that do not conform to current standards for transportation needs. This may include lane width or height clearances for typical vehicles.

The greater midwestern states are experiencing high amounts of structurally deficient, yet functional, bridges. This pattern is likely due to newer construction of bridges to accommodate large amounts of interstate transportation begining in the 1950's. Although conforming to current standards, the structures of these bridges are deteriorating and require rehabilitation or reconstruction to ensure safety.

Despite being in the least problematic category, Arizona's funding per capita increased between 2007-2010 bringing into question whether the money should have been spent on other, more critical states.

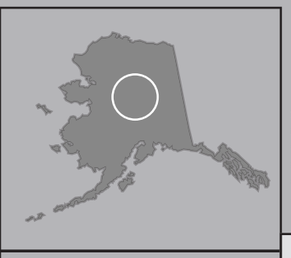
Delaware has the largest amount of funding per capita of all the states in the United States. Due to Delaware receiving the most total funding and being one of the least populated states, the funding per capita is much higher than most other states.

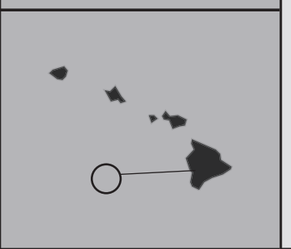
Mississippi is in the most structurally deficient category while receiving -$188 per capita. For instance, 37.2% of the bridges in Amite County are considered structurally deficient.

11 of the 16 most structurally deficient states are receiving negative funding per capita

9 of the 15 most functionally obsolete states are receiving negative funding per capita

38 total states are receiving negative funding per capita

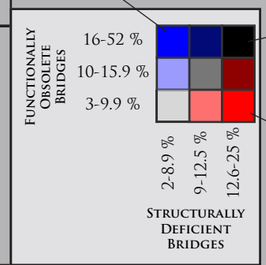




Structurally sound, but lacking function for current transportation standards. Typically these bridges are well designed structurally, but due to age are not appropriate for large vehicles.

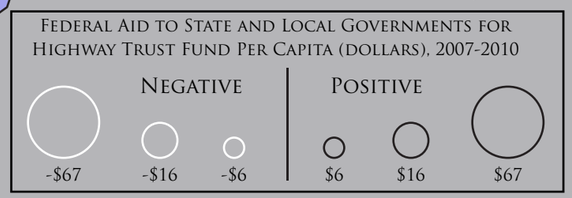
These bridges are in the worst conditions. Most bridges are not structurally sound and also do not function for typical transit. Often these bridges are old and experience large amounts of traffic on a daily basis. Major rehabilitation or reconstruction is necessary to ensure safety and proper service.

Functional, but lacking structural integrity. These bridges are often newer designs that conform to current functional standards, but were not designed to carry the appropriate loads.



0 150 300 Miles

Federal Aid to State and Local Governments for Highway Trust Fund Per Capita (dollars), 2007-2010



Projection: Albert Equal Areas Conic | Central Meridian: -96° | Standard Parallels: 20° N, 60°N | Quantile Classification Scheme
Author: Chris Facklam | Data Source: U.S. Federal Highway Administration, Office of Bridge Technology, U.S. Census Bureau