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ILLINOIS INFRASTRUCTURE DOESN'T MAKE THE GRADE

Illinois Engineers Say Roads, Transit, Wastewater, Drinking Water, Navigable Waterways and Rail are Top Regional Concerns

Springfield, Ill. – Whether it's sitting in traffic every morning or having a water main break disrupt the water supply to your home, no matter where you live in Illinois, failing infrastructure has an impact on your checkbook and quality of life. Today, the Illinois chapters of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) released the first ever *Report Card for Illinois's Infrastructure*, which assigned the state's infrastructure a cumulative grade of D+.

"In Illinois, the condition of our infrastructure is deteriorating. We cannot stand by and allow that to happen," said Illinois Section President Chris King, P.E., S.E. "For the safety and security of our families, we can no longer afford to ignore the congested roads, aging dams and deficient bridges we face every day."

This assessment comes in light of the 2009 *Report Card for America's Infrastructure* released by ASCE National in January 2009, which assigned the nation's infrastructure a cumulative grade of D. Grades in the Illinois *Report Card* ranged from a high of C+ for both aviation and bridges to a low of D- for navigable waterways.

The *Report Card* also presents five key solutions for raising the state's infrastructure grades. These include:

- Increase federal and state leadership in infrastructure to address the crisis. The state's infrastructure is more than a funding issue; it is a key basis to our economy and our way of life.
- Promote sustainability and resilience in infrastructure to protect the natural environment and withstand natural and man-made hazards.

- Develop national, state and regional infrastructure plans that complement a national vision and focus on system-wide results. Doing so will more effectively marshal funds while creating solutions with efficient expenditures.
- Address life-cycle costs and ongoing maintenance to meet the needs of current and future users and to do so sustainably.
- Improve and increase infrastructure investment from all stakeholders – for as our infrastructure fails, including the roads we use to drive to work or school every day, our neighborhoods fail.

Even though bridges and aviation received the highest grades on the *Report Card*, 17 percent of the state's bridges are classified as structurally deficient or functionally obsolete. In addition, a lack of attention to the state's aviation infrastructure will result in continued deterioration and will compromise the system's ability to meet future travel demands.

Dams, which received a grade of C, are also an area of concern. There are currently 445 dams in the state that are more than 50 years old. Seventy-four percent of these dams have not been reviewed or issued a dam safety permit by the state.

Drinking water and wastewater both received a grade of D+, and both categories are substantially underfunded. The drinking water system requires an investment of \$21.5 billion over the next 20 years to comply with safe drinking regulations and wastewater requires an investment of \$13.4 billion over the next 20 years.

Transit, which also received a grade of D+, currently faces the challenge of addressing the dramatic growth in intra-suburban commuting, given the automobile orientation of many suburban communities. The current five-year capital needs in Northeastern Illinois alone are \$10 billion, yet the recent Illinois Capital Bill provides only \$2.7 billion for the entire state.

Roads and rail, which both received a grade of D, are experiencing substantial congestion problems. Rail congestion costs millions of dollars in shipping delays and causes substantial noise and air pollution as trains idle for hours waiting for track clearances. Meanwhile, it is estimated that road congestion costs Illinois's economy tens of billions of dollars in lost productivity each year. The average cost of congestion per commuter in the Chicago area is \$921 per year.

The state's navigable waterways were assigned a grade of D- due to inadequate funding and the unreliable lock and dam systems, which threaten the future viability of the state's navigable waterway infrastructure

The 2010 *Report Card for Illinois's Infrastructure* was developed by an advisory panel comprised of 33 civil engineers representing the broad spectrum of civil engineering. These civil engineers represent the Illinois, Quad Cities and Central Illinois Sections, and the East, Illinois Valley and West Branches of ASCE. Each category was evaluated on the basis of funding, maintenance needs, current capacity and future capacity needs.

For more information on the 2010 *Report Card for Illinois's Infrastructure*, visit www.isasce.org.

The Illinois, Quad Cities and Central Illinois Sections and East, Illinois Valley and West Branches of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) are local units of ASCE and represent more than 4,000 civil engineers in the state of Illinois. Founded in 1852, ASCE represents more than 144,000 civil engineers worldwide and is America's oldest national engineering society.

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