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COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

MAIN CAPITOL
ROOM 140
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA

BUDGET HEARING
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2020
10:07 A.M.

BEFORE:

- HONORABLE STANLEY SAYLOR, MAJORITY CHAIRMAN
- HONORABLE MATT BRADFORD, MINORITY CHAIRMAN
- HONORABLE ROSEMARY BROWN
- HONORABLE SHERYL DELOZIER
- HONORABLE GEORGE DUNBAR
- HONORABLE JONATHAN FRITZ
- HONORABLE MATT GABLER
- HONORABLE KEITH GREINER
- HONORABLE SETH GROVE
- HONORABLE MARCIA HAHN
- HONORABLE DOYLE HEFFLEY
- HONORABLE LEE JAMES
- HONORABLE JOHN LAWRENCE
- HONORABLE JASON ORTITAY
- HONORABLE CLINT OWLETT
- HONORABLE GREG ROTHMAN
- HONORABLE JAMES STRUZZI
- HONORABLE JESSE TOPPER
- HONORABLE JEFF WHEELAND
- HONORABLE RYAN WARNER
- HONORABLE MARTINA WHITE
- HONORABLE DONNA BULLOCK
- HONORABLE MORGAN CEPHAS

1 BEFORE (continued):

2 HONORABLE AUSTIN DAVIS
3 HONORABLE ELIZABETH FIEDLER
4 HONORABLE MARTY FLYNN
5 HONORABLE EDWARD GAINEY
6 HONORABLE PATTY KIM
7 HONORABLE STEPHEN KINSEY
8 HONORABLE LEANNE KRUEGER
9 HONORABLE STEPHEN MCCARTER
10 HONORABLE BENJAMIN SANCHEZ
11 HONORABLE PETER SCHWEYER

7

NON-COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

8 HONORABLE MATT DOWLING
9 HONORABLE TIM HENNESSEY
10 HONORABLE BARRY JOZWIAK
11 HONORABLE TOM MEHAFFIE
12 HONORABLE FRANK RYAN
13 HONORABLE CRAIG STAATS
14 HONORABLE KEVIN BOYLE
15 HONORABLE MIKE CARROLL
16 HONORABLE DAN DEASY
17 HONORABLE JOE HOHENSTEIN
18 HONORABLE MARY ISAACSON
19 HONORABLE ED NEILSON

14

15

COMMITTEE STAFF PRESENT:

16 DAVID DONLEY, MAJORITY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
17 RITCHIE LaFAVER, MAJORITY DEPUTY EXECUTIVE
18 DIRECTOR
19 ANN BALOGA, MINORITY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
20 TARA TREES, MINORITY CHIEF COUNSEL

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BRENDA J. PARDUN, RPR
bjpardun@comcast.net
717-940-6528

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1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: I call the
3 Appropriations hearings to order.

4 And, Madam Secretary, would you rise
5 and raise your right hand?

6 YASSMIN GRAMIAN,
7 was duly sworn.

8 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: Thank you,
9 Madam Secretary.

10 And we'll get started with questions
11 right away. We'll start off with
12 Representative Topper.

13 REPRESENTATIVE TOPPER: Madam
14 Secretary, over here on your far right, which
15 is probably appropriate, right, Chairman
16 Bradford? So, we'll start the morning off
17 with a little humor.

18 We so appreciate you coming before
19 us. I'd like to start by talking about
20 something that I know is of great import and
21 interest to my constituents and I know many
22 constituents, and that's the implementation of
23 Real ID, as we're kind of coming down to the
24 wire.

25 The governor proposed a little over

1 25 million appropriation for Real ID in 2021,
2 to comply with the federal Homeland Security
3 requirements. I remember being on the House
4 State Government Committee when we -- when we
5 developed the legislation to implement Real ID
6 here in Pennsylvania.

7 Just a few questions. The first, do
8 we anticipate, as the time gets closer, that
9 we're going to have more requests, are we
10 going to need more staff? Do we have the
11 staff complement that will be in place? Do we
12 feel comfortable at the Department to be able
13 to handle kind of the influx of what we feel
14 will be kind of a mad dash to make sure
15 everybody's in compliance by October?

16 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Good
17 morning. Thank you for that question.

18 And, yes, as we get closer, there's
19 going to be more demand for Real ID. As a
20 matter of fact, last weekend, on Friday, we
21 had 24,000 folks actually going to our
22 driver's vehicle centers. And of those
23 24,000, 6,000 people applied for Real ID.
24 So -- and on Saturday, we had 20,000 folks
25 going to our DVS centers, and we're still

1 waiting to get the numbers on that. But we're
2 definitely seeing an increase of the
3 population applying for Real ID. We are ready
4 to respond to the needs.

5 We're actually looking into adding
6 more hours to the centers, adding more staff.
7 We hired an additional two hundred sixty-five
8 people to address the need of the Real ID.
9 Again, as I mentioned, we're looking into
10 adding hours, maybe looking into opening on
11 Mondays. Some of the centers, we're
12 actually -- that used to be open, like, three
13 days a week, we've actually added more people
14 over there to keep it open five days a week.

15 So, we're definitely putting a plan
16 together to address the need of Real ID.

17 REPRESENTATIVE TOPPER: And that is
18 very comforting to myself, I'm sure all of our
19 district staff as well, that deal with all of
20 those requests. We do think that there will
21 be that influx. I'm happy to hear that the
22 Department is preparing for that.

23 The other thing, you know, this is
24 our Appropriations hearings, and we talk about
25 budgeting. And I remember at the time that we

1 developed the legislation, the intent of
2 the -- of the House -- and I believe the
3 legislature as a whole -- was that this would
4 be somewhat of a user fee. If you -- if you
5 wanted it, you would be able to -- you would
6 pay for it and you would have it. But I don't
7 think that program has really paid for itself,
8 has it? I mean, don't we see money from the
9 Department having to go to this -- taxpayer
10 dollars, you know, go to the program? And how
11 did that happen? And is that the way you see
12 it?

13 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: So, you
14 mentioned user's fee. It's for the folks who
15 want to opt into getting Real ID. If you
16 don't want Real ID, you don't have to pay
17 anything extra. If you want Real ID, there's
18 a one-time fee of 30 dollars. Right?

19 REPRESENTATIVE TOPPER: Right. But
20 is that the -- is that 30 dollars really
21 covering the cost?

22 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: It
23 doesn't. It's actually 50 percent of the
24 cost, if not less.

25 REPRESENTATIVE TOPPER: Right.

1 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: So, it's
2 really not covering the cost for Real ID. And
3 that's a decision that was made when we
4 actually were looking into how we wanted to
5 plan out the financial side of the Real ID a
6 couple years ago.

7 Some states have a higher number.
8 They collect higher numbers from the people
9 who apply for Real ID. Some states go lower.
10 It's purely up to the states. We didn't get
11 any federal money on how much we should be
12 charging for Real ID.

13 REPRESENTATIVE TOPPER: And I
14 understand that. And, again, that's kind of,
15 I felt like, the intent as we put that
16 legislation together, was that those who did
17 not want Real ID or did not need Real ID would
18 not have to pay for it. However, to a certain
19 degree, they will, because the folks are only
20 paying for 50 percent of what it costs to
21 obtain it.

22 So, I thought that was correct, just
23 wanted to make sure. And that ends my
24 questioning.

25 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

1 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR:

2 Representative Davis.

3 REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Mr. Chairman,
4 I'm sorry I bring out that reaction in you,
5 when you bring up my name.

6 Thank you.

7 Madam Secretary, thank you. Right
8 here, right here, Madam Secretary, to your
9 left. Right here. Thank you.

10 Madam Secretary, thank you for being
11 with us today.

12 The governor's executive budget
13 proposed includes a 39 million-dollar increase
14 for funding for public transportation. And
15 just a little back story, I represent the Mon
16 Valley area and Allegheny County. And it's a
17 series of older, struggling industrial towns
18 that are -- that mass transit is more than
19 just a way of transportation. It's a life
20 line for many of the folks that live there.

21 Can you explain a little bit the
22 added benefit of such funding, this extra 39
23 million dollars in the governor's budget?

24 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: So, I can
25 provide you with the details of the extra 39

1 million, but what we're trying to do is, as
2 we're getting more funding, we wanted to make
3 sure that all areas are receiving public
4 transit. We -- every year we do a survey of
5 the public transit agencies. We look into how
6 they're performing. We look into a number of
7 other information that we receive within those
8 areas. And the deputy secretary for
9 multimodal actually chooses to look into -- to
10 make some improvements on the performance,
11 share rides, and so forth.

12 So, some of the money that's been
13 collected could be going towards actually
14 adding more services for shared rides or fixed
15 routes.

16 REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: One of the
17 items that we're going to be charged within
18 the next year or so is creating -- is raising
19 more revenue for mass transit in Pennsylvania.
20 And one of the ideas that we've batted around
21 is enacting a fee on -- a flat fee on TNCs or
22 potentially giving the counties the ability to
23 levy an earned income tax.

24 Can you expound on any ideas that you
25 might have to raise additional revenue for

1 mass transit here in the Commonwealth?

2 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: You know,
3 Representative, it's -- it's no surprise that
4 we need more money for mass transit. And the
5 need for improvements in mass transit in the
6 rural areas is different from the urban areas.
7 The way we can raise money in the rural area
8 or come up with more funding in the rural area
9 could be different from the way we come up
10 with more funding in the urban areas.

11 I looked at -- I actually reviewed
12 the report that came from the task force
13 infrastructure and transportation. They have
14 some great suggestions in there. We're
15 looking forward to working with the members of
16 that team task force to actually develop some
17 of those ideas.

18 There's really not one solution to
19 address the public transit. And I think we're
20 at the point that we need to engage all
21 stakeholders, including the private industry.
22 If they're actually bringing in businesses,
23 there's some merits into economic development,
24 and they're looking to bring in more employees
25 into their areas, there should be some

1 actually contribution from them in what we're
2 trying to do and provide some mass transit.

3 There's solutions. There are
4 multiple solutions to address this. And, you
5 know, transit-oriented development is one of
6 them. Looking into share rides is another
7 one. Providing shuttle services with the help
8 of the private industry is another one. TNC
9 that you mention, taxing the Uber and Lyft is
10 another one. There's all kinds of solutions
11 out there. We have to make sure that we pick
12 the right one for the right location.

13 REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: Thank you,
14 Madam Secretary. And I'll just say I look
15 forward to being a partner with you and the
16 governor's administration as we move forward
17 to flush out some of those ideas and find
18 solutions that work for all Pennsylvanians.

19 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Thank you
20 very much.

21 REPRESENTATIVE DAVIS: So, thank you
22 for the work that you're doing in your
23 Department.

24 And with that, that concludes my
25 questioning, Mr. Chairman.

1 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Thank you.

2 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR:

3 Representative Warner.

4 REPRESENTATIVE WARNER: Thank you,

5 Mr. Chairman.

6 Thank you, Madam Secretary, for

7 joining us here today.

8 During last year's budget hearing,

9 when asked about declining transportation

10 revenues, then-Secretary Richards explained

11 that the Department had limited resources, was

12 3 billion dollars short in funding, and that

13 the agency needed more revenue.

14 The House Republican caucus created a

15 task force, which I'm happy to be a member of,

16 which identified several options to fund

17 transportation infrastructure in the short

18 term. The governor is proposing 4.5

19 billion-dollar bonds for his Restore PA

20 proposal. There have been very few and

21 limited initiatives for transportation funding

22 in this budget.

23 Would you agree or comment on -- do

24 you think it makes sense that we take care of

25 our own infrastructure first, essentially a

1 core function in government, which I think
2 people on both sides of the aisle would agree
3 that the government's responsible for?

4 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: So, I do
5 agree that we need to come up with solutions
6 for -- to address the transportation
7 infrastructure needs. It's not an easy way to
8 address it. And as I mentioned earlier, it's
9 not one solution for the entire state.

10 I've been in this business for over
11 thirty-some years, and I got to tell you,
12 every four, five years, we actually need to
13 look into how we're funding our
14 transportation. Transportation is going
15 through transformation. It's not the same old
16 transportation that we used to have twenty
17 years ago when Act 44 passed or even when Act
18 89 passed. Right? So, every so often, every
19 four, five -- four to five years we need to
20 look into how we're funding our
21 transportation, especially now that -- with
22 technology coming into transportation. Right?

23 We're losing revenue from gas tax
24 because the cars are more efficient, because
25 there are more electrical vehicles on the --

1 on the roads, because the -- there is a change
2 in the behavior of the demographic. You know,
3 young people don't like to drive as much.
4 Young people like to live in the cities and
5 metropolitan areas and commute, do a reverse
6 commute their jobs. We got to take all these
7 things into consideration.

8 And I agree with a lot of the
9 recommendations that came out of the task
10 force. But what I wanted to say is not one
11 solution for the state. I think we really
12 need to have a very comprehensive public
13 outreach. And what I mean by public outreach
14 is through the channels of the stakeholders,
15 the counties, the -- the MPOs, the RPOs, the
16 private industry chambers should be at the
17 table and we figure out what works -- what is
18 going to work best for the state of
19 Pennsylvania. Right? What may work in the
20 rural area may not work in the urban area.
21 The challenges we're seeing in Bethlehem and
22 Philadelphia is different from Westmoreland
23 and some other places.

24 So, yes, it's a very complex issue,
25 funding transportation. And we really need to

1 put a lot of thought into it. And that's
2 probably why there's not a whole lot of
3 details currently. But there's a lot of
4 support. Everybody I talk to, there's a lot
5 of support to come up with a new way of
6 funding transportation.

7 REPRESENTATIVE WARNER: Thank you.
8 I'm glad that you agree with some of the
9 recommendations from the task force report.

10 Is there anything specific going in
11 this budget that you or the governor would
12 support from transportation? Any of the ideas
13 for transportation funding?

14 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: I think
15 there are a lot of great ideas that we support
16 that we definitely need to look into.
17 Possibility of tolling. We need to look into
18 the possibility of congestion pricing. And
19 when I say tolling, I don't mean necessarily
20 to take I-95 and toll the entire I-95. We
21 really have to come up with solutions, again,
22 as I mentioned, through a very comprehensive
23 public engagement, what works for which area.

24 I mean, we also are partnering with
25 our FHWA partners to come up with some ideas.

1 We wanted to make sure what we are actually
2 putting forward is doable, it's not going to
3 take a long time, it can be implemented in a
4 very timely fashion, so we can see the benefit
5 of it.

6 REPRESENTATIVE WARNER. Thank you.

7 I just want to shift gears here real
8 quickly. There's a trend at the Department on
9 the use of warm mix asphalt. In 2017, PennDOT
10 used 7.6 million tons of warm mix; 2018, 7.2
11 million tons; 2019, this was down to 6.7
12 million tons. 2020, PennDOT projects to use
13 of 6 million tons.

14 I'm just curious and just asking why
15 the reduction in this. I'm just -- I'm
16 thinking that there's roads that need to be
17 repaired. I'm just wondering what -- if
18 there's a reasoning behind the reduction.

19 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: There's
20 definitely a good reason behind the numbers
21 being so high, 2017-2018. And it was due to
22 the tremendous storms that we had, a lot of
23 issues that we had with the potholes and our
24 roadway system. And, you know, there were
25 things popping up everywhere, and that's why

1 the -- the amount of asphalt was increased
2 that year because we had to address the
3 emergency repairs.

4 If you'll recall, that was the year
5 that we spent over 125 million dollars to
6 address the emergency repairs throughout the
7 state.

8 REPRESENTATIVE WARNER. Yeah. I see
9 my time is up, Madam Secretary. Thank you
10 very much.

11 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

12 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: Thank you.
13 Representative Gainey.

14 REPRESENTATIVE GAINNEY: Good morning,
15 Madam Chairman. How you doing?

16 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Good
17 morning. Thank you.

18 REPRESENTATIVE GAINNEY: A couple
19 things. One, my colleagues took all my
20 questions from the west.

21 Just two quick questions. One, I
22 wanted to know about, in regards to when we do
23 find the right way to raise money for mass
24 transit, how are we going to protect it in the
25 motor fund so that everybody's not dipping

1 into it and making it decrease quicker than it
2 normally -- than it needs to decrease? That's
3 number one.

4 And number two, we talked about -- I
5 agree with you when you talk about
6 transportation has changed. And one of the
7 things that I wanted to hear from -- all we
8 talking about how we expand transportation,
9 and only just right now for mass transit,
10 which is critical, particularly in the west,
11 but also how we create that line from west,
12 meaning Allegheny County, southwest PA, all
13 the way up to Harrisburg, to better have a
14 transportation infrastructure.

15 So, just curious about how we want to
16 protect this motor fund, because I know a lot
17 of times we went into it and it wasn't always
18 about transportation.

19 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: So, that's
20 a good question. But I have to tell you,
21 it's -- how we distribute the funds has been
22 decided before. So, it's not discretionary.
23 I mean, we have a small pot for multimodal
24 that even that is not discretionary. It's
25 being distributed based on formula, and then

1 there are some projects that were being --
2 that are being done under that. But
3 everything, how we spend the money, from
4 public -- Public Transportation Trust Fund, is
5 all being done through a formula.

6 So, I -- I'm not sure what you mean
7 when you're saying somebody else is taking our
8 money. I'll be curious --

9 REPRESENTATIVE GAINEY: No. Someone
10 told me it was just another pot. So, I
11 apologize for that.

12 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: No.
13 That's fine. That's fine.

14 I'm sorry. What was the next
15 question? You mentioned something about --

16 REPRESENTATIVE GAINEY: Expanded
17 transportation from southwest up to
18 Harrisburg.

19 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: As part of
20 the Pennsylvania line --

21 REPRESENTATIVE GAINEY: Train. I'm
22 sorry, the train.

23 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Okay.
24 Inner-city transit, you're talking about --

25 REPRESENTATIVE GAINEY: Yes.

1 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: -- and
2 rail. So, we are actually looking into that
3 right now. I mean, as -- like anything else,
4 it requires more money, more funding. Some
5 capital costs -- requires money for capital
6 costs and requires money for operating costs.
7 Right? And we're looking into the ridership
8 and see if there's merit into adding more
9 services, which I believe there is, because
10 the more you provide the service, the more
11 passengers will get on the train and use the
12 service.

13 I quite often get, you know, comments
14 from colleagues and friends and relatives, why
15 can't we expand the services. Honestly, we're
16 supporting Amtrak with their operating costs.
17 We're supporting Amtrak with their capital
18 improvement costs. If we wanted to add more
19 services, we're trying to figure out how much
20 additional it's going to cost and how we're
21 going to pay for it.

22 So, we're looking into it. We don't
23 have an answer right now at this moment. But
24 once the study is done, hopefully we'll be
25 able to give you more information on that.

1 REPRESENTATIVE GAINNEY: Thank you.

2 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Thank you.

3 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR:

4 Representative Delozier.

5 REPRESENTATIVE DELOZIER: Thank you,
6 Mr. Chairman.

7 Thank you, Madam Secretary, for being
8 here and on the hot seat a little bit with all
9 the different numbers that are flying around
10 when we deal with transportation issues.

11 And transportation infrastructure
12 and -- I was part of the task force this past
13 summer when we were looking at a lot of
14 opportunities or -- in all honesty, it boiled
15 down to what we need. Two of the biggest
16 needs that we have looming, coming down the
17 pike, and we know it's coming, is the transfer
18 of Act 44, with the turnpike issue, as well as
19 the transfer and trying to get PSP out of the
20 motor licensing fund. Those are two issues
21 that we have that we know we have coming down
22 the pike.

23 One of the big issues that -- when we
24 were talking about it, we came up with some
25 solutions, looking for different ideas. And

1 you mentioned a minute ago that you're open to
2 the ideas, but my concern is the fact that we
3 are, in some -- for one of them, three years
4 out, with 2022 looming, and the governor
5 spending 2 billion more dollars, none of which
6 are going to fixing this problem. So, we have
7 2 billion dollars more in spending on
8 different items within the budget, and we know
9 we have this bill coming due.

10 So, my question you to as the
11 secretary is, what do you see us having to do
12 in order to make up this gap? You said you
13 supported a couple of the recommendations, and
14 that's fine. Are there specifics, because I
15 don't feel that the governor is looking to
16 fixing this infrastructure issue, 'cause three
17 years from now, it will be somebody else's
18 problem. And all of a sudden we'll run into a
19 cliff.

20 How can we make sure that we're not
21 running into that cliff and, three years from
22 now, all of a sudden saying how are we coming
23 up with 450 million dollars?

24 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: So, I
25 agree with you, it's an urgent matter. We

1 need to address it. And one of the things we
2 are trying to do at the Department of
3 Transportation is really be very savvy about
4 how we're spending the money. There's been
5 some changes in financial guidance, as I may
6 have heard. We actually put an asset
7 management program together for our highways
8 and bridges. We're following the asset
9 management to address the asset and actually
10 spend the money such that, you know, it's more
11 focused on the preservation, get more out of
12 the money that we're spending, more life out
13 of our assets. But because of that, some of
14 the funding has been shifted to the assets
15 that we have been spending as much money.
16 Right? So, we're mindful of that.

17 At the same time, you know, we're
18 being very savvy with the way we're spending
19 our maintenance dollars. We try to address
20 some of the low volumes with low-costs
21 maintenance solutions. We are looking into
22 the cycles of the low-volume roads. We're
23 looking into how we actually can use some of
24 the maintenance dollars on non-interstate
25 highways to extend the life of them.

1 At the end of the day, you're
2 absolutely right, we need more money to put it
3 into highway infrastructure, to put it into
4 transit infrastructure. And that's why we
5 need to look into some of the options that
6 actually has been proposed.

7 I have to tell you, I mean, I did
8 talk to the governor about a lot of these
9 ideas. The governor is in full support of
10 rolling out the new program for funding
11 transportation. So -- but I think he's --
12 he's kind of -- he wants to work with us to
13 propose some solutions to him, and we can
14 jointly review some of those options and make
15 a decision. But he's completely in support of
16 new funding for transportation.

17 REPRESENTATIVE DELOZIER: And I
18 appreciate that. And I apologize for the
19 time, I don't want to cut you off, but it's
20 just more a matter of respecting the idea that
21 he's supportive but he didn't put anything in
22 his budget. And that's the plan and the road
23 map that we use in order to recognize how
24 we're fiscally going down the next three years
25 and knowing that we have to this looming gap.

1 So, him being supportive is one
2 thing. But I was disappointed that there
3 wasn't a plan in the budget to understand that
4 we need to facilitate this, you know -- we had
5 proposed possibly diverting dollars to make
6 sure that we don't see this cliff. That's not
7 in the budget.

8 And so, the ability for us to feel
9 confident that we're not going to run into
10 that cliff, because we can talk about it, and
11 we all know government, we're good at talking
12 about things and everything else, but the
13 action plan that the governor put forward did
14 not include taking care of that cliff and
15 recognizing that it's coming.

16 So, that's my concern, because we
17 will have it, and we have to pay this bill as
18 well as the idea of shifting our PSP out of
19 the motor licensing fund, which is another
20 huge gap.

21 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: So, if I
22 may answer that question. The governor is
23 very passionate about Restore PA. And whether
24 you agree or disagree on how we raise the
25 money, where the money is going to be spent,

1 we all agree it's the right place to spend it.
2 So, that -- I have to put this out there that
3 he was very -- he's very passionate about
4 Restore PA.

5 The other thing I wanted to mention
6 is, he actually proposed something on PSP,
7 state police, and how to be funded from a
8 different source rather than transportation.
9 So, he's looking into some of the options,
10 but, again, he's counting on us collaborating
11 to work and come up with some solutions.

12 REPRESENTATIVE DELOZIER: And I would
13 just say that Restore PA, going out there for
14 a bond that size, while not taking a look at
15 internally where we can get dollars to make
16 that shift, I think is the wrong way to go.
17 We can't make our future being paying for the
18 mistakes that we've made in the past with
19 transferring of funds.

20 So, thank you very much for the
21 consideration and for willingness to work.
22 Thanks.

23 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Thank you.

24 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR:
25 Representative Cephas.

1 REPRESENTATIVE CEPHAS: Thank you,
2 Chairman.

3 And thank you, Secretary.

4 A couple of -- two quick questions,
5 the first being in reference to the safety of
6 our roadways. In my district, I roughly have
7 around five highways that runs through it.
8 And just over the course of three years, I've
9 had a nine-year-old pass away due to a
10 hit-and-run. I've had a grandmother that was
11 getting off of a trolley, again, due to a
12 hit-and-run, and I still have a student from
13 Saint Joe's University in critical condition,
14 all of which have happened crossing these
15 roadways.

16 So, can you talk to me about how your
17 Department is creating more safer passways
18 over these highways, and what is it that we
19 can do as a legislature to increase those
20 safety measures?

21 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: May I ask
22 you which specific roadway you were referring
23 to?

24 REPRESENTATIVE CEPHAS: So, City
25 Avenue, I believe is --

1 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Roosevelt
2 Boulevard and City Avenue, which one?

3 REPRESENTATIVE CEPHAS: Um-hum.
4 Um-hum. Oh, City Avenue, not Roosevelt
5 Boulevard.

6 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: It's City
7 Avenue.

8 REPRESENTATIVE CEPHAS: Um-hum.

9 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: First of
10 all, I'm very sorry about all these accidents
11 that happen, the hit-and-run. And you're
12 absolutely right. We're faced with a lot of
13 safety issues, and we're constantly looking
14 into how to address that.

15 I mean, there's -- obviously what can
16 help is the technology part. You know, we're
17 becoming smarter about our traffic signals and
18 making sure the timing is right. We're
19 looking at the numbers of cars that are
20 actually using those roadway facilities and
21 the timing of the traffic signals and whether
22 or not there is pedestrian crossings available
23 or not or enough time for the pedestrians to
24 cross from one side to another. I mean, there
25 are multiple things on the engineering side

1 that we're looking into.

2 And then there's, unfortunately, the
3 behavior part, which I don't know how much we
4 can control over that and change that, except
5 that's when we actually can benefit from
6 having the police forces to help us out with
7 that, and, you know, enforce some of the laws.

8 But we're actually, in terms of
9 safety and what the Department of
10 Transportation is doing, we're looking into --
11 constantly looking into our traffic signals,
12 the timing of it, the crosswalks and so forth.

13 REPRESENTATIVE CEPHAS: And how often
14 would you say your Department reviews the
15 safety of these highways? Like, is that a
16 regular occurrence that you do an assessment
17 on how safe these passageways are and what --
18 and coming up with recommendations to increase
19 the safety?

20 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Well,
21 actually, depends on the locations. And I
22 know, down in Philadelphia, Roosevelt
23 Boulevard is a corridor that's been seeing a
24 lot of accidents. And the way PennDOT works
25 is, you know, we work with our districts and

1 we look into the specific projects to see
2 what's causing the accidents. We actually
3 come up with areas, as we call it, the hot
4 spots, to see how we can address those hot
5 spots.

6 I mean, it's -- it's as often as is
7 needed. Obviously, it's like any other
8 project, it has to be funded. It comes from
9 the districts. They put it -- they work with
10 the counties. They work with the MPOs and
11 RPOs to make sure there is funding in place
12 that we look into these projects.

13 REPRESENTATIVE CEPHAS: Okay. Thank
14 you.

15 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Thank you.

16 REPRESENTATIVE CEPHAS: My second
17 question is in reference to the disparity
18 study that your Department conducted. We've
19 gotten the results. I want to thank you for
20 shining a light on this issue in the
21 Commonwealth. We often say that we want to
22 the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to be
23 reflective of its consistency, and I think the
24 one way that we can do that is through its
25 contracting opportunities.

1 So, can you briefly talk about the
2 study and provide an update on what the
3 Department is doing to expand opportunities
4 for small businesses across Pennsylvania?

5 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN:

6 Absolutely. So, I'm actually proud to share
7 some of the numbers with the team here. We
8 looked into where we are in terms of
9 employment of females and minorities. We're
10 at 18 percent female employees and 11 percent
11 minority employees, 23 percent female in
12 management, and 9 percent minority management,
13 which is -- which we're hoping -- I mean,
14 these are good numbers compared to where we
15 were ten years ago, eight years ago, but, as
16 you know, making improvements, it's
17 incremental. We're putting a lot of programs
18 to make sure these numbers go up.

19 We've put a lot of effort into
20 recruitment and retaining -- retention of the
21 employees, minority and female. There are
22 some leadership programs that we put in place
23 for female in management positions. There
24 is -- there are some changes that we made in
25 the process of our interviewing, making sure

1 that there is always a very diverse group
2 making the interviews so they're all being
3 heard.

4 We looked at the disparity study, and
5 we compared ourselves to where the other
6 states are and how we are being measured in
7 terms of the amount of work that we're giving
8 out to the small businesses and to the
9 minorities.

10 I'm proud to actually share some good
11 numbers with you. In -- since -- in fiscal
12 year '18 and '19, we paid over 67 million
13 dollars to small businesses. And this is 49
14 percent higher than the previous years. And
15 in terms of the DBEs, minority and
16 disadvantaged business enterprises, we
17 actually increased the percentage by 17
18 percent, and we are at 25 million right now.

19 The other thing that we've done is we
20 have created the set-aside contracts for the
21 small businesses. And we started with doing
22 some bridge designs throughout six, seven of
23 our districts, and they were packages of
24 bridges that were specifically outlined for
25 the small businesses and minority firms. And

1 those projects were actually -- they're under
2 contract. And they're being worked on. And
3 we're rolling out the next phase, which is the
4 construction inspection projects for small
5 businesses and minorities.

6 REPRESENTATIVE CEPHAS: I thank you
7 for that.

8 I see that my time is up, so I'm
9 going to just say thank you.

10 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Thank you.

11 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR:

12 Representative White.

13 REPRESENTATIVE WHITE: Thank you very
14 much, Secretary, for being here with us today.

15 And as the chair of the task force
16 that the House Republican caucus put together
17 this past year, I really appreciate our
18 members who had asked their questions earlier.
19 I think they're doing a tremendous job in
20 trying to find solutions for this ever-growing
21 problem of transportation infrastructure
22 investment funding.

23 I'd just like to follow up in regards
24 to, you know, what do you think that the
25 overarching impact would be if the 450 million

1 dollars that you heard from Representative
2 Delozier does not come to fruition in a few
3 years? What will the impact be on our mass
4 transit system in the Commonwealth and also
5 the local economies, not just in urban
6 communities but also rural communities?

7 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Yeah. The
8 overarching impact is going to be huge. We
9 have to cut the contribution on multimodal
10 funds by 450 million. As you know, 450
11 million goes towards operations, towards
12 capital improvements, towards asset expansion,
13 and projects of statewide significant impact
14 throughout the state on the transit side.

15 Last year, Secretary Richards and
16 Deputy Secretary Granger actually gave
17 multiple presentations on how this cut of 450
18 is going to impact our transit system. We
19 have to cut across the board because, I mean,
20 obviously the southeast and the southwest port
21 authority of Allegheny and SEPTA is going to
22 be impacted the most. But all transit
23 agencies will be impacted by this lack of 450.

24 So, everyone, everyone. The
25 elderlies, the aging population, the

1 population that are in the needs, everyone is
2 going to get impacted.

3 REPRESENTATIVE WHITE: And in regards
4 to the Pennsylvania state troopers' funding,
5 can you describe what the impact has been with
6 the shift of dollars being taken from our
7 transportation system and instead allocated
8 over to our state troopers, what kind of an
9 impact that's been having on the Department
10 and your resources?

11 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: So, you
12 mean shift the money to state police; right?

13 REPRESENTATIVE WHITE: Right, yes.

14 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: So,
15 obviously, we have less money to spend on
16 infrastructure, highways, bridges, and our
17 maintenance actually. So, since 2017-2018,
18 when we started seeing some of the money back
19 into Transportation, we get about 32 million
20 dollars a year. Of that 32 million, 16
21 million is being spent on the maintenance
22 portion of our business, and another 16
23 million goes into construction projects. So,
24 obviously, we have another 32 million to be
25 spending on maintenance and construction that

1 we didn't have prior to 2017-2018 budget.

2 REPRESENTATIVE WHITE: And then, I
3 just wanted to follow up on -- on another
4 quick question, which is regarding the rural
5 communities. There's a large amount of money
6 that is spent by our mass transit systems,
7 both in, you know, in Philadelphia and in
8 Allegheny County.

9 Can you just talk about, you know,
10 the revenues that they generate for other
11 rural communities when they spend their
12 dollars on other businesses for their -- for
13 their capital needs or their -- their
14 overarching, you know, just daily operational
15 expenses?

16 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: I'm sorry.
17 I don't quite understand your question.

18 REPRESENTATIVE WHITE: So, it's my
19 understanding that, you know, the mass transit
20 systems, they have a lot of, you know, needs
21 that they, in order for them to operate.
22 Right?

23 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Right.

24 REPRESENTATIVE WHITE: So, they may
25 buy their rail cars, they may buy their paper,

1 they may buy their, you know, various
2 materials that they need to to function. And
3 a lot of those types of resources that they
4 utilize, they come from other local businesses
5 here in Pennsylvania, including in rural
6 communities.

7 So, do you feel that there would be a
8 significant impact again on the rural
9 communities if that was to -- if that 450
10 million dollars doesn't come through in 2022?

11 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Obviously,
12 if the 450 million doesn't come through, there
13 is going to be, as I mentioned, impact on
14 southeast, southwest, rural communities,
15 everywhere. This 450 million, as I mentioned,
16 is not just funding the -- the major transit
17 systems in the state, but it's also funding --
18 it goes into Transportation Trust Fund, and it
19 goes towards shared rides. It goes towards
20 fixed route. And it's going to impact all
21 transit systems.

22 REPRESENTATIVE WHITE: And then,
23 finally, can you talk a little bit about the
24 MATP situation and how you feel that the
25 Commonwealth can move forward to help ensure

1 that our seniors and our disabled population
2 are able to afford their transportation
3 services that the Commonwealth provides? And
4 any concerns you have in that regard.

5 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: So, the
6 report was published. And there were some,
7 you know, evaluations of whether this new
8 system that was proposed is going to work.
9 There are -- there were some evaluations of
10 pros and cons of the -- having a broker to
11 manage the system.

12 Obviously, we're at the table,
13 talking to DHS and Department of Aging and,
14 you know, other members of the committee, and,
15 you know, the decision was to delay making any
16 changes, any decisions for eighteen months.

17 The RFA has been pulled out, so, at
18 this moment, we're actually at the table,
19 talking, looking into it. There hasn't been
20 any changes. There's not going to be changes
21 for another eighteen months. And we don't
22 know what's going to come out of it beyond
23 that.

24 REPRESENTATIVE WHITE: Okay. Thank
25 you very much.

1 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Sure.

2 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR:

3 Representative Schweyer.

4 REPRESENTATIVE SCHWEYER: Thank you,
5 Mr. Chairman.

6 Madam Secretary, over here. Thank
7 you for joining us.

8 We know that what you do is -- is not
9 only remarkably important but extraordinarily
10 difficult, trying to balance the needs of mass
11 transit, public transit, interstates, dealing
12 with USDOT.

13 Up until just recently, I served on
14 my local transit authority board for thirteen
15 years. Watching what our transit authorities
16 just have to do on their end, it was
17 incredibly -- incredibly difficult to watch,
18 because it's so challenging. It's so complex.
19 So, I think all of us appreciate your ability
20 to juggle so many things at once and trying
21 your very best for the entire Commonwealth.

22 I hail from the city of Allentown. I
23 represent the Lehigh Valley, which is one of
24 the few growing regions of the Commonwealth of
25 Pennsylvania. In the last couple of years, we

1 added over 40 million new square footage in
2 industrial space. We average 4,000 people a
3 year in terms of population growth. We are
4 growing. We are vibrant. We are the third
5 largest metropolitan region in Pennsylvania.
6 But we only have one interstate in our entire
7 region. I-78 is the only one that goes
8 through the Lehigh Valley.

9 And so, when there was a decision
10 made to divert funding for local and state
11 roads to interstates, it overly impacted the
12 Lehigh Valley. We don't have seven or eight
13 interstates going through our region. And so,
14 as a result, the decision reduced our TIP
15 funding for the next four years by a billion
16 dollars.

17 We saw a 59 percent cut in funding
18 from the National Highway Performance Program,
19 almost 20 percent from state highway capital,
20 23 percent reduction in funding for state
21 bridges, yet our growth is not along our
22 interstate. Our growth is on the offshoots,
23 Route 100, which -- which, does all of our
24 stuff along -- and much of our industrial
25 growth in that area; Route 22, which bisects

1 Lehigh, Northampton counties. That's where
2 our growth is. It's not along I-78.

3 And so, my question to you is, how
4 was this decision made, first and foremost?
5 Did PennDOT take into consideration that your
6 fastest growing region of the Commonwealth is
7 the one that's going to be hit hardest by
8 this?

9 And then, ultimately, what could we
10 do better, working collaboratively, between
11 the administration and the legislature, to try
12 to provide a better balance between local and
13 regional roadways and that of the interstates?

14 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Great
15 question. Thank you for asking that question.

16 Actually, I do understand the
17 challenges you're facing in the Lehigh Valley.
18 And so you ask about how we came about making
19 this decision. So, we put out -- every year,
20 when we are developing our TIP program, we --
21 we put out financial guidance on how we're
22 going to distribute the funding throughout the
23 state. Right? And we don't do it in vacuum.
24 We actually work with all the RPOs, MPOs, and
25 stakeholders -- you know, the counties, the

1 locals -- and we work together. It's a very
2 collaborative process, and actually it's been
3 recognized on a national level, our planning
4 process.

5 So, this year, when we started
6 actually -- beginning our planning process, we
7 send out -- put out the financial guidance.
8 And the financial guidance for distributing
9 the fund was purely based on our asset
10 management plan. The asset management plan
11 was -- it's in compliance of FAST Act MAP-21,
12 which is a federal mandate. And we actually
13 completed it back in June of 2019. It
14 basically prioritizes how your asset, national
15 highway system -- you mention US 22, 422, some
16 of those roads in the Lehigh Valley,
17 Allentown, Berks County area -- as well as the
18 interstate system.

19 What came out of our asset management
20 plan, as well as looking into our financial
21 guidance, working with the MPOs or RPOs, we've
22 been underspending on our interstate system.
23 Right? And we're supposed to spend, based on
24 the plan that we put together and the
25 condition of our assets, interstate system, we

1 have the fourth largest interstate throughout
2 the country. We realize that over 60 percent
3 of our roadway system on the interstate is --
4 it's over fifty years old. We haven't spent
5 any money. Bridges, the same way, over
6 seventy years, sixty to seventy years old.
7 So, we realized that we need to make a shift
8 in our strategy on our investment. And a
9 shift is going to be, we have to increase the
10 spending on our interstate.

11 Prior to this year, we were spending
12 about 450 million to 500 million on our
13 interstate system. We realize, in order to
14 catch up and put our interstate system in a --
15 just a state of good repair, just a state of
16 good repair, we have to be spending over 1
17 billion a year. Okay?

18 The total funding for national
19 highway system, currently it's about 1.2
20 billion. Right? So, 1 billion has to be
21 allocated to the interstate. So, we're
22 ramping up our spending on our interstate,
23 increasing it 150 million this year, another
24 150 million next year, until we get to that
25 billion.

1 If the funding level stays stagnant,
2 that means that less money is being spent on
3 projects such as your US 22.

4 You mention I-78. Actually, I-78 is
5 getting a big chunk of the funding that's
6 coming to your area.

7 REPRESENTATIVE SCHWEYER: I
8 understand that. That's not where our growth
9 is. That's not where our congestion is.
10 That's not where the Lehigh Valley's
11 development is. It's not along there.
12 There's very little developable land around
13 78.

14 And so, whereas, from a strategy
15 perspective and what the feds need -- and I
16 understand my time's up, so I'll default --
17 that's not the needs of my region. That's not
18 the needs of my community, which is still one
19 of the fastest growing and one of the few
20 areas of Pennsylvania that is, in fact,
21 growing. So, we need additional flexibility
22 from PennDOT for us to be able to do that.

23 So, I do appreciate -- I understand
24 your constraints. I understand your pressures
25 from the federal government. But we need more

1 flexibility in communities like the Lehigh
2 Valley.

3 So, Madam Secretary, I very much
4 appreciate the conversation. Thank you.

5 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Thank you.

6 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR:
7 Representative Brown.

8 REPRESENTATIVE BROWN: Thank you,
9 Mr. Chairman.

10 Thank you, Madam Secretary.

11 And Representative Struzzi, who
12 always moves to the side, thank you.

13 Quick procedural question for you,
14 but I do have two questions. The first one
15 is, the utilization of the staff to implement
16 the driver improvement school option that is
17 in the motor vehicle code, the sections that
18 provide for the option for drivers to attend
19 an approved driving improvement school in case
20 of accumulation of points, instead of an
21 examination or a hearing. It doesn't appear
22 that that is an option, based on the vehicle
23 code, but it doesn't appear necessarily that
24 PennDOT is utilizing that option for drivers
25 during the accumulation.

1 Do you know anything about that, or
2 the intentions of that being moved forward?

3 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: I don't
4 know. And I'll look into it and I'll provide
5 you with an answer. But, unfortunately, I
6 don't have an answer to that.

7 REPRESENTATIVE BROWN: Okay.

8 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: I will get
9 that.

10 REPRESENTATIVE BROWN: Thank you so
11 much. That would be interesting to see, you
12 know, the utilization of that as we move
13 forward.

14 Thank you.

15 The second question that I have deals
16 very much with what you've been speaking about
17 as far as budgetary and all the different
18 needs that we have across the Commonwealth.
19 And no doubt each area has -- geographically
20 has their needs and what's important to them.
21 And one area in the Pocono mountains that I
22 represent that has been a thirty-year
23 conversation, is the train and rail system
24 into New Jersey and New York, a high-speed for
25 our commuter population that is ever-growing,

1 our tourism that continues to build. And
2 there is a section that is from Andover, New
3 Jersey, that would bring possibly the train
4 into the Delaware Water Gap or the Mount
5 Pocono region.

6 And I know that we talk about the
7 multimodal. We talk about our budgetary
8 priorities and what we need. I'm hearing
9 rail, you know, down in the southeastern area,
10 in Pittsburgh, out into Ohio, but as far as a
11 region on the northeast, this rail system and
12 this conversation of having this rail system
13 for the people that live in the northeast
14 region is extremely important. It has been
15 really a high priority.

16 But, on the rail plan for
17 Pennsylvania, and where that -- that
18 conversation is and where the expectation of
19 what that would cost, are you aware of -- of
20 that situation in and where we are and what
21 we're doing to move that up in the priority
22 list as well?

23 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: So, are
24 you referring to the Lackawanna cut-off
25 project?

1 REPRESENTATIVE WHITE: Yes.

2 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: I'm very
3 aware of it. Actually, in my past life, I
4 worked with the firm, a private firm, that was
5 engaged in the study and the environmental
6 documents that were prepared back -- I don't
7 remember how many years ago, over decades ago.
8 Back then, when they prepared the
9 environmental document and they put a cost to
10 the project, nobody could come up with a
11 funding plan. Okay?

12 And I know it's a subject that's --
13 it's of utmost importance to your region and
14 perhaps some of the folks on the other side,
15 but the big thing is the funding for it, how
16 are we going to pay for it and whether there's
17 going to be enough ridership or not.

18 I mean, there -- obviously, I would
19 love to expand the rail services throughout
20 the state. I would love to be able to --
21 actually Lehigh Valley has got another project
22 that they're interested to expand into New
23 Jersey. If we had all the money the world, it
24 would make sense. But at this point, the best
25 we can do is help out and be at the table,

1 work with New Jersey transit, work with FTA,
2 to see if there is a way -- first of all, what
3 are the numbers? What is the ridership?
4 What's going to be revenue generated from this
5 additional, you know, rail line between
6 Pennsylvania and New Jersey?

7 There's a lot of variables that we
8 need to look into and then come up with the --
9 ultimately to come up with a cost. Right? I
10 think New Jersey transit or New Jersey --
11 someone in New Jersey, one of the departments,
12 one of the agencies are taking the lead.

13 Deputy Secretary Granger is very
14 involved. She has had several conversations
15 with the folks on the transit side in New
16 Jersey, FTA. She has asked for some
17 additional information to come to us so we can
18 actually be a participant in funding this
19 study.

20 Again, as I said, the study that was
21 done was over decades ago. The environmental
22 document is no longer valid. We have to look
23 into all the things that, you know, was put
24 into this study.

25 The other thing that I have to

1 mention is, many of these new rail systems,
2 transit systems, high-speed rail systems
3 throughout the country, when you look at it,
4 is being actually funded by the private side.
5 I mean, if this project has a merit -- and I'm
6 not promoting it -- but, you know, if you go
7 to Florida and you see the high-speed rail
8 that they actually built and it's in operation
9 right now, was built and constructed and
10 operated by the private entity. I mean, all
11 these options are out there. Not everything
12 has to be funded by the government you know.
13 We have to be clever about bringing in the
14 private into our side of the business.

15 I see my time --

16 REPRESENTATIVE BROWN: Thank you.
17 We're out of time. But I do appreciate that.
18 And I look forward to working with you and,
19 like you said, some other entities to move it
20 forward.

21 Thank you.

22 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Thank you.

23 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR:

24 Representative Sanchez.

25 REPRESENTATIVE SANCHEZ: Thank you,

1 Mr. Chairman.

2 Madam Secretary, up here, in the
3 back. Nice to see you.

4 As you're aware, Act 89 of 2013
5 helped create Pennsylvania's municipal signal
6 partnership program, also known as Green
7 Light-Go Program, which the state funds for
8 operation of maintenance and traffic signals
9 along critical, designated corridors on state
10 highways. We've used this grant program with
11 much success in my neck of the woods, Abington
12 Township in eastern Montgomery County,
13 Pennsylvania, on Route 611 and some of the
14 corridors there.

15 Could you discuss or provide some
16 details related to the 20 million for this
17 program? It's a 10 million increase over last
18 budget proposal. However, it's still about
19 half the 2018-2019 level.

20 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Right.
21 So, our goal is really to be able to spend 40
22 million annually on this program. But it's
23 going to turn out, the way the act has been
24 written or interpreted or however the money's
25 being distributed, whatever is left out of the

1 MLF, you know, goes into that. Previous
2 years, it was forty years. Unfortunately,
3 there is two years' life into the GLG program.
4 In other words, you know, there is the
5 program, once you start -- apply for it and
6 you, the grant has been given, you need to
7 expedite the program, get the design done, get
8 it into construction so you can benefit from
9 the grant.

10 If you don't, and a lot of these
11 projects or some of the projects that were
12 awarded with the grant were not able to
13 deliver the program. That's a concern of us.
14 Right?

15 So, rather than -- we wanted to make
16 sure that, you know, the folks who actually
17 come into the system and apply for the grant
18 and get the grant are able to deliver it. We
19 are being more diligent about reviewing some
20 of these applications and wanted to make sure
21 that it's fully being taken care of.

22 REPRESENTATIVE SANCHEZ: So, is
23 that -- is that to say that some of the back
24 grants have not been met and will -- and will
25 be attempted --

1 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Correct.

2 REPRESENTATIVE SANCHEZ: First in the
3 priority.

4 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Correct.

5 REPRESENTATIVE SANCHEZ: Thank you
6 very much.

7 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Thank you.

8 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR:
9 Representative Fritz.

10 REPRESENTATIVE FRITZ: Thank you,
11 Mr. Chairman.

12 And, Madam Secretary, pleased to see
13 you.

14 Madam Secretary, following a series
15 of desperate pleas made over consecutive
16 months, we hosted -- and I'll be nice -- a
17 somewhat reluctant PennDOT secretary, your
18 predecessor, for a four-hour drive-about tour
19 of my district's roads, roads that have
20 deteriorated to a dangerous level. And the
21 secretary admitted, they were the worst roads,
22 on a wholesale basis, that she had ever seen.

23 Following that drive-about tour, we
24 had a meeting, a meeting which I requested
25 some additional dollars, to the tune of 5

1 million dollars a year over a course of three
2 years to help get caught up on our roads. I
3 was laughed at.

4 And to add insult to injury, we would
5 soon be revealed -- we would find out that we
6 were going to see a shift away from our rural
7 roads to the interstate highway system.

8 Can you kindly speak to what drives
9 that -- that critical shift, that necessary
10 shift, so you claim, of dollars away from my
11 roads, my rural, secondary roads, to the
12 interstate system?

13 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN:

14 Absolutely. So -- so, that I -- I apologize
15 for not being knowledgeable enough. You're --
16 you're referring to the projects in District
17 4, and you're from which county?

18 REPRESENTATIVE SANCHEZ: I represent
19 the 111th Legislative District, which includes
20 Wayne and Susquehanna County.

21 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Wayne and
22 Susquehanna, I apologize. I should know that.
23 Thank you.

24 REPRESENTATIVE SANCHEZ: That's fine.
25 That's fine. I understand.

1 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Yes. So,
2 I have to tell you, part of the reason that
3 your roads in the rural areas, in that area,
4 in that district, is not in a good condition
5 is because of the leadership that we had
6 within the district. And I think you're
7 familiar with that situation. And there were
8 some challenges within District 4 that covers
9 your area, and we made some changes. We
10 actually put in -- strengthened the leadership
11 of District 4. They're paying more attention.

12 I mean, no excuse for what has
13 happened in the past. We take full
14 responsibility. And I believe that Secretary
15 Richards allocated a million dollars to
16 address some of the potholes and maintenance
17 issues that were neglected last year to
18 address it. You know, through that million
19 dollars, I think she tried to help out as much
20 as she could at the time. And we will
21 definitely look into it and make sure that,
22 you know, moving forward, that we could
23 actually apply some of those ideas that we
24 have for the rural roads, for the low-volume
25 roads, on the maintenance side. And we want

1 to make sure we address that.

2 You have, by the way, one of the best
3 leaders, who's very familiar with all of the
4 maintenance issues and the low-volume roads,
5 as your district executive, Rich Roman. He
6 came from central office. He knows all the
7 situations. And he's there to help you and
8 support you.

9 With regards to the shift of funding
10 to the interstate, I -- I don't want to
11 explain again and take time away from you,
12 but, you know, it's a federal mandate. We
13 have to follow asset management plan, and we
14 actually put the financial guidance with
15 inputs from the MPOs, RPOs from your area and
16 other areas.

17 District 4 has got one of the most
18 numbers of interstate within the district, you
19 know. You know, I-81, I-84 is a critical
20 artery within District 4, and we need to
21 address it. And there's going to be some big
22 projects coming out of District 4. That's the
23 reason there's been some money shifted
24 actually into the interstate system there.

25 REPRESENTATIVE SANCHEZ: Okay. Thank

1 you for that response. And thank you for your
2 understanding of what precipitated the
3 protracted neglect for our roads and
4 introducing management that is going to bring
5 about a new culture, because that is
6 absolutely critical.

7 But if we're seeing a 3.15
8 billion-dollar shift away from secondary,
9 rural roads into interstate highways, can we
10 at some point expect the converse to occur,
11 where we're going to see a surplus of dollars
12 shifted into secondary and rural roads? Would
13 that be a fair consideration?

14 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN:

15 Absolutely. Absolutely.

16 I mean, we're looking into all these
17 alternative funding to be able to actually pay
18 for the interstate through the alternative
19 funding, and hopefully shift some of the
20 dollars that's been shifted to interstate back
21 into the rural areas and state highways.

22 REPRESENTATIVE SANCHEZ: Okay. Thank
23 you, Madam Secretary, for being here. Thank
24 you for your interaction and your dialogue.

25 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

1 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: Thank you.
2 Representative Flynn.
3 Representative Bullock.

4 REPRESENTATIVE BULLOCK: Thank you,
5 Mr. Chairman.

6 Good afternoon -- good morning, Madam
7 Secretary. How are you?

8 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Good
9 morning. Thank you.

10 REPRESENTATIVE BULLOCK: Great. So,
11 I just have a few questions. I'll ask them up
12 front and allow you to answer them as you
13 feel.

14 First, following up on Real ID, I
15 know there was a few questions asked earlier.
16 I was wondering whether or not PennDOT tracks
17 enrollment by county and if that's information
18 you can provide to the chairman, so we can see
19 where we're lacking in enrollment,
20 particularly in Philadelphia County.

21 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Yeah. We
22 can certainly provide you with that
23 information. Sure.

24 REPRESENTATIVE BULLOCK: And do you
25 also have information about whether people are

1 enrolling over the counter versus doing the
2 pre-verification online? Is that something
3 you're tracking as well?

4 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: I'll look
5 into it. I'm not sure. I'll look into it,
6 how many people actually do pre-verification
7 before coming into the centers to get their
8 Real ID. I can look into it and see if
9 there's that information available.

10 REPRESENTATIVE BULLOCK: Right. The
11 reason why I'm asking is, you know, for many
12 of our districts, whether you're in the city
13 or you're in one of our more rural areas of
14 the Commonwealth, sometimes there are barriers
15 and challenges and obstacles to getting to a
16 center. And so, I was wondering how folks are
17 accessing the Real ID process.

18 And in relation to that, are you
19 aware of any challenges folks are having or
20 are we finding that people are having
21 difficulty in getting any of the verification
22 documents? Where do you see people struggling
23 to get to the Real ID?

24 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: We do see
25 a lot of challenges, you know, especially

1 locating the -- the -- the Social Security
2 cards, marriage license, birth certificate,
3 you know. We're basically following the
4 Homeland Security federal process to issue
5 Real ID. Right? If there's -- and that's the
6 importance, hence the importance of actually
7 pre-verification before coming to this center,
8 to understand exactly what they need to bring
9 with them and what -- and how the information
10 should be presented.

11 So, if there is discrepancy from one
12 piece of document to another, they should be
13 able to go back to the original document,
14 whether it's birth certificate or whatever, to
15 get that kind of information for us to be able
16 to verify.

17 Anybody who got their license prior
18 to 2003, I believe before we kind of
19 centralized and automated the system, those
20 information on a Social Security card is not
21 in our system. Right? So, there are some
22 challenges, you know, working with an old
23 system, bringing in some new ways of doing
24 business with the Real ID, all the
25 requirements from the feds, to make sure that

1 certain documents are there. So, we're trying
2 to accommodate as much as we can by providing
3 the information to the customers that this is,
4 these are the documents you need. These are
5 the places you got to go to achieve -- to --
6 to obtain them and, you know -- and, you know,
7 there are centers that will provide you with
8 the Real ID on-site and there are centers that
9 you go in, you turn in your papers, and, you
10 know, you receive it within a couple weeks in
11 the mail.

12 REPRESENTATIVE BULLOCK: And, thank
13 you, Madam Secretary.

14 My second set of questions is around
15 accessibility throughout the transportation
16 system, in coordination with local transit
17 authorities and Amtrak. Can you share with us
18 progress on making sure that all of our mass
19 transit entryways are accessible to the
20 public, particularly trains and buses and
21 such, and what progress have we made in that
22 regards?

23 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: So, we've
24 made tremendous progress on ADA accessibility.
25 It's very important to us. And, you know, I'm

1 not saying we're 100 percent there, but every
2 station, every platform, you know, every bus
3 stop that is being out there, we're looking
4 into and we're kind of creating an asset
5 management on where we need to make the
6 improvements.

7 You mention Amtrak and SEPTA. You
8 know, they have -- Amtrak actually has got
9 their own program of ADA compliance. All
10 transit authorities and rail authorities
11 throughout the country actually, it's mandated
12 to look into their ADA compliance, and -- at
13 the stations. And if you go to New York City,
14 there is a huge program by all the MTA transit
15 authorities looking into it. Same thing with
16 Amtrak. They -- every station that we touch
17 along SEPTA or Amtrak, the first thing that we
18 wanted to address is ADA accessibility. Same
19 thing with the bus stops and all the transit
20 agencies.

21 REPRESENTATIVE BULLOCK: Thank you.
22 I have no further questions.

23 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR:
24 Representative Hahn.

25 REPRESENTATIVE HAHN: Thank you,

1 Mr. Chairman.

2 Madam Secretary, back here. Thank
3 you.

4 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Thank you.

5 REPRESENTATIVE HAHN: I just want to
6 go to how far in the weeds the administration
7 gets when we're looking at the maintenance
8 budgets.

9 So, do you compare -- do you look
10 at -- at the cost of salt brine as far as the
11 cost of getting that together to the
12 effectiveness that it is on the roads? And
13 does the administration or does someone at --
14 out here in Harrisburg call the districts and
15 say, You have to use salt brine now. Or you
16 leave that up to the county managers?

17 I mean, sometimes we see -- and
18 sometimes, like, I think it's more of --
19 sometimes PennDOT maintenance gets a bad wrap
20 and, you know, people are like, We never see
21 PennDOT out on the roads. So, now we see them
22 out putting salt brine down, but -- it melts
23 the snow, but then it refreezes. So, it's not
24 as effective.

25 So I'm just wondering if you look at

1 the effectiveness of it before it's used and
2 is it more effective in other parts of the
3 state than some of the others?

4 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Thank you
5 for that question, Representative Hahn.

6 I got to tell you, I'm an engineer,
7 and I'm still trying to figure out the
8 maintenance business at PennDOT. Right? It's
9 very complicated. It's not just the
10 engineering part. It's the science part.
11 It's the timing part. It's the scheduling
12 part. It's the resource part. It's very,
13 very complicated. I never thought that this
14 part of PennDOT is so complex. And, actually,
15 when I talked to our executive deputy
16 secretary, George McAuley, he calls it the
17 science of winter. Right? I mean, and
18 there's been a lot of thoughts and studies put
19 into it and constantly looking into improving
20 the business of maintenance.

21 You -- you mention -- and there are
22 spreadsheets after spreadsheets on how much
23 salt they wanted to get, based on the numbers
24 from previous years, you know. I mean, there
25 is a scientific way on actually the resources

1 they put together, in preparation for the
2 winter season especially. You know, based on
3 the previous data, they use that.

4 You mentioned using brine before
5 salting the roadways, again it -- it's related
6 to the temperature at that time. It's related
7 to what's coming next, how cold it's going to
8 get. So, yes.

9 REPRESENTATIVE HAHN: It just seems
10 like, years ago, you know -- and the people
11 who are in the maintenance office or
12 maintenance departments have been there for
13 years, and they kind of know what works and
14 what doesn't. Sometimes I think we bring the
15 scientific data in and it throws everything
16 askew, and it's best left to the people who
17 know what they're doing at the level.

18 So, they might know, in Northampton
19 County, it works at this temperature, and
20 maybe when you go up over the mountain -- and
21 we see them in the districts, in Monroe, it
22 might be a different temperature.

23 So, I was just curious on that. But,
24 I have a lot of other questions so I'm just
25 going to keep moving on.

1 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Sure.

2 REPRESENTATIVE HAHN: Coming from the
3 Lehigh Valley, I have a lot of cement industry
4 in the district. So, I'm just wondering, I
5 know Representative Delozier has House Bill
6 2062, which will form an advisory committee to
7 study concrete versus asphalt for highway
8 construction.

9 So, is that something, you know,
10 you'd be interested in? Do you look at that?
11 Do you see when is a good time to use one
12 versus the other? Does it make it more
13 competitive if they're competing? I have
14 asphalt plants as well. So, I'm not trying to
15 put anyone out of business, but I'd certainly
16 like to help the industries that are there
17 stay there.

18 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN:

19 Absolutely.

20 As a Department, we're looking into
21 it. We're working with both partners, the
22 asphalt industry and the concrete industry.
23 We're actually looking to them to come in with
24 some tools, with some ideas. We want them --
25 we want the industry to be competitive in

1 their bidding.

2 You know, at the end of the day, we
3 wanted to bring in the best quality and the
4 lowest cost kind of a product into PennDOT.
5 We wanted to do more with the dollars that we
6 have. Right?

7 We've been talking to both sides.
8 And we -- actually competitive bidding
9 definitely is an idea using -- we're
10 experimenting with bringing more concrete into
11 our business with asphalt overlay. That's a
12 project we're actually doing as a pilot
13 project in District 3, CSVT. So, we're
14 constantly looking into new ideas of low
15 life-cycle cost for asphalt and concrete, and,
16 you know, making it very competitive. But,
17 again, we are looking at them to come in with
18 some tools and ideas.

19 REPRESENTATIVE HAHN: Okay. Thank
20 you. I appreciate that.

21 Another issue that I hear a lot, I
22 live in a small municipality and small
23 borough. We have five state roads -- the
24 mayor tells me this every time I see her,
25 which is at least once or twice a week. We

1 have five states roads that come into the
2 borough.

3 What is PennDOT doing to help these
4 small municipalities? I think we heard from
5 my counterpart in the Lehigh Valley that we
6 have all this -- the warehouses mostly coming
7 in, so a lot of truck traffic. The GPS is
8 taking them through these small boroughs,
9 maybe on their state roads, but not always as
10 well maintained as we like.

11 So, how can PennDOT help these
12 smaller municipalities deal with this truck
13 traffic when they have nowhere to go, they
14 really have no way to widen the roads, nothing
15 else to do?

16 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Yeah,
17 that's very unfortunate. And we're faced with
18 that challenge everywhere.

19 Actually, part of the problem
20 we're -- we're -- we're hoping to address this
21 issue as we're developing our long-range
22 transportation plan. We're in the process of
23 developing our twelve-year program --
24 actually, twenty-five years, which I think
25 it's way too long, but it is what it is. But

1 basically looking at all these freight routes
2 and, you know, state routes, and the freight
3 movements as well as we work with the locals
4 and the regional MPOs, RPOs on the development
5 within those areas. We're hoping that the
6 municipalities actually know what's coming
7 next. We need to work together.

8 So, a lot of times, unfortunately,
9 this is a situation we face everywhere. I
10 mean, Pennsylvania is blessed with a lot of
11 these warehouses, but, at the same time,
12 they're dumping a lot of traffic on our
13 roadway system. And, you know, some of these
14 expansions was really not a well-thought-out
15 plan. And, you know, I don't know how much --

16 REPRESENTATIVE HAHN: And some of
17 these municipalities don't have a say.
18 They're building in the surrounding areas, but
19 the traffic's coming through. But I see I'm
20 out of time. So, thank you. I appreciate it.

21 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

22 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR:
23 Representative Kim.

24 REPRESENTATIVE KIM: Secretary, thank
25 you so much for your information. I think

1 you've made a really smooth transition when
2 Secretary Richards left. So, I commend you on
3 that.

4 So, you had mentioned in your
5 response to Representative Warner's question
6 that we have to take a look at our funding
7 mechanism because patterns and behaviors
8 change. And you gave an example of younger
9 people driving less or living in cities where
10 commutes are shorter.

11 Now, I know you don't have a crystal
12 ball in front of you, but can you speak on
13 trends that you see coming our way? What can
14 we, as legislators, do to provide support or
15 at least be ready?

16 For example, Representative Rothman
17 and I held a hearing on House Bill 1078 that
18 would provide the technology and
19 infrastructure on public roads for autonomous
20 vehicles. Do you see driverless vehicles
21 happening soon? Or things like, should we
22 build out the grid for electric charging
23 stations? Should we pass House Bill 1392 to
24 ensure that all vehicles, including EVs, pay
25 for road use?

1 I threw a lot out to you. My
2 question is, future trends, what should we
3 look you out for, and how can we be
4 supportive?

5 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Great
6 question, Representative Kim.

7 Yes. And the answer is yes to both
8 actually. We should be future-ready. As I
9 mentioned earlier in my -- the other question,
10 the earlier question, transportation is going
11 through transformation. And a big part of it
12 is technology. You mention automated
13 vehicles, and I think we certainly -- you
14 know, there's a task force that's looking into
15 providing guidelines on testing these
16 automated vehicles, on communications, on
17 workforce development. We're working on that.
18 We're focused on that. When it's going to
19 happen, roll out, honestly, I -- I don't -- as
20 you mentioned, I need a crystal ball for that.
21 But we wanted to be ready for that. And I
22 feel like, you know, the industry is ahead of
23 us.

24 As -- as a state agency, we're
25 probably trying to catch up. That's why these

1 task forces, we -- the folks from the private
2 side at the table is very important to our
3 future-ready and planning for the future.

4 Automated vehicles can definitely be
5 a source of transit for shuttle services, you
6 know, for microtransit. I mean, there's a lot
7 of things that we can do through automated
8 vehicle.

9 The other question you had,
10 electrical vehicle chargers? Yes, I think
11 it's important to make sure that we -- we're
12 actually in the process of identifying
13 corridors and how we're going to go about
14 installing the EV chargers and how to collect
15 funding. And I think everybody who uses the
16 transportation system, they should somehow pay
17 for it. Right? Whether it's EV, whether
18 it's -- even bikers, to an extent. I mean,
19 we're providing these bike lanes. If somebody
20 wants to get on our bike lanes with their
21 expensive bikes, over 400, 500 -- I'm not
22 saying we should, but we should look into it.

23 I mean, we wanted to expand all modes
24 of transportation for everyone. Right? I'm
25 not saying we should, but we should definitely

1 look into it.

2 So, yes, electrical vehicles, we
3 should be ready for them. We should have a
4 plan on how they're going to pay their fair
5 share of using our infrastructure and highway
6 system.

7 REPRESENTATIVE KIM: Thank you very
8 much, Madam Secretary.

9 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

10 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR:
11 Representative Gabler.

12 REPRESENTATIVE GABLER: Good morning,
13 Madam Secretary.

14 I was wondering if I might start by
15 asking the question that I think everybody
16 else might have been afraid to ask, and that
17 is, I've had the pleasure of seeing your name
18 written, but I've never heard it pronounced
19 correctly. I was wondering if you might help
20 me out.

21 ACTING SECRETARY GABLER: Yeah.
22 Sure. No problem. So, my first name is
23 Yassmin. And last name is Gramian.

24 REPRESENTATIVE FLYNN: I will get it
25 right. Thank you. I appreciate it.

1 I wanted to move on. And by the way,
2 you and I share, we both have names that, when
3 displayed in writing, nobody gets it right.
4 So, we share that. But I appreciate it.

5 So, we're here to talk about the
6 upcoming year's budget and to analyze the
7 proposals submitted by Governor Wolf. As
8 Representative Delozier said, it's
9 disappointing that this budget proposes huge
10 increases in spending, 2 billion dollars in
11 the budget, plus a billion dollars in bonding
12 in one program, plus 4 and a half-billion's in
13 another bonding program -- excuse me -- 4 and
14 a half-billion dollars in bonds in another
15 program. But none of this addresses the
16 structural issues that we face in the Motor
17 License Fund and the trend that we see in the
18 transportation infrastructure.

19 My colleagues and I on the House
20 Republican Transportation Infrastructure Task
21 Force have laid out a plan for prioritizing
22 our available resources to address our funding
23 and infrastructure problems. I want to focus
24 for a moment on the money that continues to be
25 diverted from the Motor License Fund. That is

1 money from driver's license fees, gas taxes,
2 vehicle registration fees to pay for the state
3 police. A 2017 report from the legislative
4 Budget and Finance Committee concluded that
5 the appropriate and justifiable level of Motor
6 License Fund support for the state police
7 should be no more than about 530 million
8 dollars a year.

9 PennDOT and our auditor general last
10 year held a press conference outlining this
11 very problem, despite the fact that the
12 auditor general, when he was in this chamber,
13 actually voted to increase the Motor License
14 Fund's support for our state police. But my
15 colleague, Lynda Culver, and I are working to
16 turn this problem around, which is why we've
17 introduced House Bill 2061, which will
18 prioritize our limited resources by
19 accelerating the rate by which the general
20 fund picks up responsibility for funding our
21 state police, until we reach the neighborhood
22 of the funding levels that are suggested by
23 the legislative Budget and Finance Committee.

24 So, to that end, I'd like to ask a
25 few questions about -- about this funding

1 stream and how we can improve it.

2 So, first, how much Motor License
3 Fund money does the governor's budget propose
4 to divert to the state police in the coming
5 year?

6 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: 706
7 million dollars.

8 REPRESENTATIVE GABLER: 700 and --

9 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: 6.

10 REPRESENTATIVE GABLER: 706, okay.
11 Thank you very much.

12 And do you know -- how long have we
13 been subsidizing the state police out of the
14 Motor License Fund budget?

15 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: You mean
16 since --

17 REPRESENTATIVE GABLER: How many
18 years? Do you know how long that's been going
19 on?

20 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Since --
21 since Act 89. The bill was before that?

22 REPRESENTATIVE GABLER: I know
23 there's a long history. And I think it's
24 something that --

25 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: It was

1 increased since Act 89.

2 REPRESENTATIVE GABLER: Right. So
3 Act 89 --

4 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: I
5 apologize.

6 REPRESENTATIVE GABLER: Right. Act
7 89 made some tweaks. And I --

8 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Yes.

9 REPRESENTATIVE GABLER: It's -- I
10 know that it's a long-standing problem. So, I
11 know it's something that we can't obviously
12 fix in one year.

13 What was the high-water mark for the
14 percentage of Motor License Fund money in the
15 state police budget that came from the Motor
16 License Fund? When did we hit that high-water
17 mark? And --

18 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: When we --
19 what was the maximum amount that we --

20 REPRESENTATIVE GABLER: Right. As
21 far as the -- as far as the amount of the
22 state police budget that was derived from the
23 Motor License Fund.

24 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Actually,
25 it's been reduced. This year it's going to be

1 reduced by 48 million. And I mentioned 706 is
2 the number that we allocated this year in the
3 budget. So, you add 48 to 706, that should
4 make it 754 million. So, 754 million.

5 REPRESENTATIVE GABLER: Okay. Thank
6 you.

7 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: If I do my
8 math correctly.

9 REPRESENTATIVE GABLER: Now, are you
10 familiar with the auditor general's report?
11 Are there any solutions --

12 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Yes.

13 REPRESENTATIVE GABLER: -- that are
14 contained in there or recommended solutions
15 for this issue contained in that report?

16 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: You mean
17 to expedite -- what specifically are you
18 referring to?

19 REPRESENTATIVE GABLER: Right. As
20 far as addressing the -- addressing the fact
21 that the Motor License Fund is -- is -- is
22 providing funding for the state police to a
23 level beyond what is -- is justified, I guess,
24 based on usage and such.

25 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Okay.

1 Yes. What was your question? I'm sorry.

2 REPRESENTATIVE GABLER: So, yeah,
3 what sort of solutions from that report
4 would -- would you, as the secretary of the
5 Department of Transportation, support for us
6 to address moving forward?

7 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: So, the
8 funding for state police is being reduced.
9 Right? By 4 percent over the next ten years,
10 to be capped at 500 million. Okay?

11 And in -- what's really important to
12 us -- I mean, every dollar that's being added
13 to the -- to Transportation funding is going
14 to go towards doing more projects for everyone
15 here. Right? Constructing more projects,
16 designing more projects, building more
17 projects. But bottom line is, what's really
18 important to us, the number one to the --
19 factor and priority of the Department of
20 Transportation is safety. And state police
21 plays a major role in keeping our highways
22 safe, and that's very important to us. So,
23 any transfer of funds from state police into
24 Department of Transportation, we'll be glad to
25 take it, but we got to make sure that they're

1 being made whole.

2 REPRESENTATIVE GABLER: Right. it's
3 about shifting the fund rather than --

4 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Right.

5 REPRESENTATIVE GABLER: --
6 eliminating it, for sure.

7 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Right.

8 REPRESENTATIVE GABLER: Just to wrap
9 up, to that end, would you be willing to work
10 with Representative Culver and I on pushing
11 2061 to accelerate that rate of transfer to
12 further prioritize funds for Transportation?

13 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: To come up
14 with a solution on replacing the funds,
15 absolutely.

16 REPRESENTATIVE GABLER: That's right.
17 Thank you so much, Madam Secretary.

18 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Thank you
19 very much.

20 REPRESENTATIVE GABLER: Great working
21 with you and appreciate the opportunity to ask
22 you questions.

23 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

24 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Thank you.

25 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: Just to

1 add to that conversation, the state police
2 reached the high point in the '16-'17 budget
3 of 801 million dollars. We started to reduce
4 that amount in the 2018-'19 budget. And it is
5 projected to hit 500 million dollars -- a
6 reduction to 500 million dollars in the
7 year -- fiscal year '27-'28. So, that's where
8 we're at, for the information of the committee
9 and others. So, that is where the projections
10 are.

11 I do know that --

12 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Thank you.

13 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: -- when I
14 first came here, there was legislation back --
15 because I was a cosponsor of it -- that would
16 have removed the state police from highway
17 funding completely over a four-year period.
18 That would have been a lot easier in those
19 days.

20 But, anyway, we will move on to the
21 next questioner. Representative Krueger.

22 REPRESENTATIVE KRUEGER: Thank you,
23 Mr. Chairman.

24 Hi, Madam Secretary. Thank you so
25 much for joining us here today.

1 I have a question that's specific to
2 Delaware County. My district, the 161st
3 District, is in Delaware County. And last
4 week, our county council passed a new
5 five-dollar fee on county vehicle
6 registration. In the comments to the public
7 about why they were approving this fee, they
8 told folks that PennDOT will be matching that
9 five-dollar fee to lead to ten dollars for
10 more improvements for roads and bridges in
11 Delaware County.

12 Now, I understand that this was
13 enabled by Act 89 of 2013, and that
14 twenty-three other counties in the
15 Commonwealth, including most of the counties
16 around Delaware County, have already enacted a
17 similar fee.

18 I've gotten a couple of questions in
19 my district office from people who want to
20 know, do those matching funds actually exist?
21 And how will they know for sure that PennDOT's
22 going to make the investment in Delaware
23 County?

24 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: We want to
25 encourage more counties to sign up for this

1 program. And, as you know, the matching fund
2 caps at 2 million; right? We match up to 2
3 million towards the program.

4 Yes, the funds are going to become
5 available. They will be available for any
6 counties that wanted to sign up for the
7 program.

8 And what was the other question? I'm
9 sorry.

10 REPRESENTATIVE KRUEGER: And what is
11 the source of those matching funds? Where's
12 PennDOT pulling the money from?

13 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: PennDOT is
14 pulling the money from the Road MaP program.
15 Actually, the -- we allocated 16 million
16 towards the construction of the projects out
17 of the Road MaP program.

18 REPRESENTATIVE KRUEGER: And the
19 matched funds on the county level, are they
20 restricted for certain kinds of infrastructure
21 investments? What are the restrictions on the
22 matching fees?

23 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: It's
24 for -- mostly for bridge programs.

25 REPRESENTATIVE KRUEGER: For bridge

1 programs.

2 And I want to note that, in Delaware
3 County, nine out of our forty-two county
4 bridges are structurally deficient, so we
5 really do need some increased investment.

6 Again, got a question in the district
7 office, concerns about the Motor License Fund
8 and restrictions and the diversion of state
9 police. I do have questions on that topic,
10 but I'm going to reserve them for the budget
11 secretary, who comes before us next week. I
12 want to understand more about the governor's
13 proposal and why they're proposing the fee on
14 municipalities who have their own police
15 departments.

16 But the matching funds for this
17 five-dollar fee, would that be coming from the
18 Motor License Fund? Would it be diverted from
19 other statewide infrastructure projects?

20 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: No. No.
21 It comes out of the Motor License Fund.

22 REPRESENTATIVE KRUEGER: It does come
23 out of the Motor License Fund.

24 And then, can you talk about the
25 constitutional restrictions on the Motor

1 License Fund? What is that money reserved
2 for?

3 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: So, the
4 way the Motor License Fund is being spent, if
5 I -- I would -- we have about 6.3 million
6 dollars in Motor License Fund towards highway,
7 2 billion is going towards maintenance, and
8 2.9 billion goes towards construction. Of
9 this 2 billion, some of it is state funds and
10 some of it is federal funds. Of the 2.9
11 billion for construction, some of it is state
12 funds -- 1.1 billion is state money and 1.8
13 billion is federal money. Obviously, this is
14 coming from the gas tax we're paying the
15 federal government and the gas tax and
16 registration and licensing for the state.

17 There are some 940 million dollars
18 allocated to the municipalities and about 290
19 million for drivers and vehicles services.
20 And there is another 150 million for other,
21 such as general government operations and so
22 forth.

23 So, that's the motor -- the 6.3
24 billion Motor License Fund for highway.

25 REPRESENTATIVE KRUEGER: Okay. And

1 you said earlier in your testimony that you're
2 a professional engineer who's served a long
3 time in that role. Do you think we're
4 currently investing enough in our road and
5 bridge infrastructure in Pennsylvania?

6 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: We are
7 investing as much as we have. Right? We
8 would like to invest more. So, to answer your
9 question, no, we're not investing enough.

10 And if we don't continue investing
11 into our -- we have actually made tremendous
12 progress since 2015. With all the money that
13 came from Act 89, we managed to spend about
14 12.2 billion dollars on highway bridge
15 projects. Right? We used to have over 6,000
16 bridges in structurally poor condition,
17 actually referred to as structurally deficient
18 bridges. We're now down to 2600. That's
19 major progress since back in 2006.

20 We actually managed to push out 558
21 bridges into -- from poor condition now built
22 new under the P3 project. Now -- in four
23 years. This is unprecedented. So, there's a
24 lot of progress that we've made with having
25 money. If money doesn't come through, we're

1 going to lose a lot of ground, you know, from
2 what we've recovered over the years in
3 Transportation.

4 REPRESENTATIVE KRUEGER: Okay. Thank
5 you so much for your answers and your
6 leadership.

7 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Thank you.

8 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR:
9 Representative Lawrence.

10 REPRESENTATIVE LAWRENCE: Thank you,
11 Mr. Chairman.

12 And thank you, Madam Secretary, for
13 being here today.

14 Certainly every state agency has its
15 challenges, and PennDOT's certainly no
16 exception. But I would like to take this
17 opportunity to call out a few folks who work
18 for you who have really helped me out and my
19 office. Amanda Black, Cass Green, Joan
20 Williams, David Lapadat. I also appreciate
21 Bob Kennedy, Gene Blaum and others at District
22 6. I think sometimes they're sick of hearing
23 from me, since I call them so often, and I
24 admit I am a pest, but they have been helpful
25 in resolving many issues, and I appreciate

1 that. Of course we do still have some to
2 resolve.

3 I realize that you've only been on
4 the job for a couple months. I have a few
5 questions that I'm going to ask now, and I'm
6 going to ask if you can get me the answers
7 over the next few weeks.

8 I want to know what the Department's
9 policy is on Clearview versus Highway Gothic
10 font use on highway signs, since the federal
11 government has given us some flexibility on
12 this matter. Personally, I would prefer us to
13 stay with -- stay with Highway Gothic, since
14 we have to pay to use Clearview.

15 I would specifically like to know
16 what PennDOT and PennDOT's contractors have
17 paid in licensing royalties to use Clearview.

18 I'd also like to know what PennDOT is
19 doing to hold third-party contractors
20 responsible who install signs that are not
21 MUTCD compliant.

22 The Pennsylvania taxpayer is paying
23 contractors to install road signs, but many of
24 these signs that they're installing, at least
25 in my area, are not compliant with federal

1 rules and regulations. We shouldn't be paying
2 for those signs.

3 My area and Pennsylvania as a whole
4 has inherited a generation of concrete roads
5 built in the 1950s, then overlaid several
6 times with asphalt. And in my area, US Route
7 1, PA 41, US 30, and many secondary roads fall
8 into this category. During the freeze-thaw
9 cycle, the old concrete roads, several layers
10 down, moves at a different rate than the
11 asphalt, which cause cracks in newly laid
12 asphalt.

13 I recently brought Gene Blaum, from
14 District 6, out to see this happening on Route
15 41, near the intersection with PA 796. Less
16 than seven months after the road was repaved,
17 cracks from the old concrete underneath are
18 forming and causing large potholes in the
19 brand new road surface.

20 I want to know what the Department is
21 going to do to make sure these cracks are
22 sealed, to preserve the recently laid asphalt.

23 I also want to know what PennDOT has
24 done to look into milling up the layers of
25 asphalt, using rubblization on the

1 seventy-year-old concrete to make a new,
2 excellent road base, and then lay asphalt or
3 new concrete. This certainly costs more, but
4 the result would be ten times better.

5 I really want to know what PennDOT
6 has done to look at rubblization.

7 Next, I'd like to know what options
8 PennDOT and SEPTA are looking at to extend
9 commuter rail on the Broad Street line down to
10 the Navy yard in Philadelphia. I've seen
11 estimates that it will cost one and a
12 half-billion dollars to extend that rail line
13 a little more than a mile. That's too much,
14 and, in my view, at that price, it will never
15 get done. That estimate is for a subway. I
16 want to know what it would cost to do it above
17 ground and if that brings the project into the
18 realm of reality.

19 I'd like to know what it would cost
20 to bring trolley service to West Chester from
21 the new station being built at Wawa.

22 Now, with all of that, I do have one
23 question I'd like to ask now. In 2014, the
24 Gaming Control Board awarded stadium casino a
25 license to build a new casino in south

1 Philadelphia. As a condition of winning this
2 license, stadium casino agreed to build a
3 badly needed on-ramp to the Schuylkill
4 expressway westbound near the stadiums and the
5 proposed casino. At that time, the casino
6 said they had set aside 19 million dollars to
7 construct this on-ramp.

8 Flash forward to August of last year,
9 the Gaming Control Board regrettably, in my
10 opinion, reduced the obligation unilaterally
11 from 19 million to 3 million and put the onus
12 on the government, not the casino, to build
13 the on-ramp. This is a huge and avoidable
14 loss. But, importantly, the Gaming Control
15 Board inserted a provision that if the on-ramp
16 is not approved and permitted by August of
17 2024, the 3 million-dollar obligation from the
18 casino will expire.

19 So, we have four and a half years to
20 get this permitted and approved or we lose
21 this money. This is badly needed
22 infrastructure to service the stadium area in
23 south Philadelphia.

24 Can you give me some sort of
25 commitment today that PennDOT or one of your

1 partners that you work with will dedicate the
2 resources necessary to move on this
3 opportunity so this ramp gets built?

4 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Thank you
5 for all the comments. I really appreciate it.

6 You know, a lot about what we're
7 doing, especially in southeast Pennsylvania,
8 with -- I have to say something about the
9 signs, you mentioned the signs. And that's
10 part of our maintenance program, is to go over
11 asset management of the signs, take out the
12 old signs, the signs that are outdated, the
13 signs that don't meet the current requirements
14 and so forth. So, we're not there yet, but
15 it's part of our program.

16 Back to the ramp you mention -- and
17 I'm quite familiar with that ramp -- the
18 challenge is that section of I-76 is actually
19 -- it's under the jurisdiction of DRPA.
20 Right? Delaware River Port Authority. And
21 we've had several meetings with the DRPA, and,
22 you know, the folks from the commissioners --
23 or actually board of the DRPA was -- we had
24 some meetings with them. I had some
25 discussions with them. Secretary Richards

1 actually talked to some of the board members.

2 We're trying to resolve the issue.

3 We're not sure where they stand with
4 their ramp. Right? And that's the challenge
5 here. We're willing to build it, we're
6 willing to maintain it and take it over, but
7 there is some jurisdiction issues here that we
8 need to figure it out.

9 I know the district is extremely
10 engaged in this project, in the ramp. It's a
11 much-needed ramp, and we're looking into it.
12 And I'll be glad to work with you and provide
13 you with an update on where we are.

14 REPRESENTATIVE LAWRENCE: So, my
15 time's expired. I am aware that the DRPA owns
16 that section of I-76.

17 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Yes.

18 REPRESENTATIVE LAWRENCE: But we
19 can't -- we need to get them to the table. We
20 cannot let them hold this up.

21 Thank you for your answers.

22 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR:
23 Representative Struzzi.

24 REPRESENTATIVE STRUZZI: Thank you.

25 Good afternoon, Madam Secretary.

1 I, myself, represent Indiana County,
2 but previously I spent fourteen years working
3 for the Department of Transportation in
4 District 10 and District 11, as a community
5 relations coordinator, press secretary. So,
6 George and I spent many a day out on
7 construction projects in hard hats and things
8 like that. So, I truly appreciate, you know,
9 the task before you and the importance of what
10 PennDOT does.

11 I have a number of questions, and I'm
12 hoping that we can get to all of them. But my
13 immediate concerns, you know, coming from the
14 western Pennsylvania region, we have a lot of
15 landslides. A good part of that is due to our
16 geology and the number of streams and rivers
17 that flow south. And so, I'm a little
18 concerned, and if I'm reading this right,
19 within the budget request, at least for the
20 federal reimbursement, it looks like you're
21 asking for half of what you did the previous
22 year.

23 So, my question is, we're going to
24 have landslides. We're going to have
25 disasters related to flooding and things like

1 that. How are you accounting for that in this
2 upcoming budget?

3 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Yeah,
4 you're absolutely right. It's a major
5 challenge for us.

6 We -- I was talking to the district
7 executive, District 11, as to get a feel for
8 how many landslides we had since 2018. And we
9 had over a hundred twenty, between a hundred
10 twenty to a hundred thirty landslides. Some
11 of these local roads are still closed, and
12 they're actually looking into whether there's
13 any merit to open it or make a cul-de-sac out
14 of those roads. Where are you going to spend
15 the money? Do you fix the landslides? Do you
16 fix the bridge that's closed? You know, there
17 are -- there is a lot of challenges out there
18 with the severe storms and the weather
19 conditions and rains that we're seeing.

20 The budget for emergency repairs, 20
21 million, I mean, but, I have to tell you,
22 previous years, in the year that we spent 125,
23 we actually took money from construction and
24 we put it into emergency repair. And some of
25 the money's coming back to us, you know,

1 through the FEMA process, but not -- not a
2 whole lot. And, you know, they don't make it
3 easy for us to collect the -- the money from
4 FEMA. Right? There's a lot of strings
5 attached to it. There's a lot of requirements
6 when you apply for the funding to come back to
7 the state.

8 They may not see it as an emergency
9 situation. It's an emergency to us, because
10 we're causing inconvenience, roadblocks.
11 That's emergency. But I don't know how they
12 categorize emergency at FEMA.

13 It's a major problem.

14 But I tell you, moving forward, we're
15 actually trying to be smarter and better about
16 the new projects that we're designing, to make
17 sure that we're -- if we're spending the
18 money, we're creating a more resilient
19 infrastructure. Right?

20 We get complaints from the
21 contractors that, you know, you're creating
22 this massive structures for a minor creek
23 crossing. Why do we have to put so much
24 boulders, or we call it rock slope protection,
25 in front of the abutment? Part of it is

1 because we wanted to protect the structures,
2 the bridges, you know, when -- in a case where
3 we're seeing some of these flooding
4 situations.

5 Roads are being raised, you know, the
6 profiles are being raised. We are mindful of
7 the, you know, the buildings around the roads
8 and the drivers and so forth. It's becoming
9 very complicated, but we're trying to get
10 better.

11 We're updating our guidelines. We're
12 actually -- we have some tools to be more
13 proactive. BridgeWatch is -- it's a tool that
14 you actually install and you measure when the
15 flooding is going to be happening so -- and
16 what the level of water is going to be so
17 we're better prepared, you know, in the storm
18 conditions. We close it down. We -- you
19 know, provide safety for the public. There's
20 all kind of stuff that we're looking into to
21 be more proactive.

22 REPRESENTATIVE STRUZZI: Right.
23 Right. I think it's important that we account
24 for that in the budget so that, you know, next
25 year's budgets, particularly within the

1 PennDOT districts, aren't skewed, because it's
2 obviously important. We need to continue to
3 repair roads and bridges.

4 I want to applaud my colleagues who
5 served on the Transportation task force this
6 past summer I think. That's a lot of common
7 sense legislation that will help us fund
8 projects in the future.

9 But my question, as we're shifting
10 money from rural roads to interstates, we
11 don't have an interstate in Indiana County,
12 but we have a lot of rural roads. Have you
13 given any thought to adjusting or changing the
14 liquid fuels formula to at least help some of
15 our municipalities with their road
16 infrastructure?

17 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: I think
18 this is a decision that this body will make.
19 Right? To change the formulas. So, we're
20 carrying on with the same --

21 REPRESENTATIVE STRUZZI: Would you
22 support that?

23 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: We'll be
24 glad to look into it. Absolutely.

25 REPRESENTATIVE STRUZZI: Lastly, and

1 very quickly, one of my pet peeves when I was
2 at PennDOT -- and I think this is for a lot of
3 people who wait for transportation projects --
4 is the amount of time that it takes the
5 environmental clearance policy, the National
6 Environmental Policy Act. The President has
7 proposed streamlining that. And I really
8 believe that could save millions and millions
9 of dollars in the clearance process that could
10 be used to pave more roads, fix more bridges.

11 What are your thoughts on those
12 proposed changes to the NEPA clearance
13 process?

14 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: So, I'm
15 all with you.

16 I don't want the projects -- every
17 year we actually extend the life of the
18 project, it takes longer to build a project,
19 the cost of the project is going to go up.
20 Right? We wanted to make sure that we get it
21 designed and cleared as expeditiously as
22 possible. Right?

23 But I also have to mention something
24 to you that, you know, we have to comply with
25 the regulatory agencies. So, when they put a

1 whole bunch of regulations in front of us
2 coming from DEP, Army Corps, you name it, all
3 agencies that we have to work with to get the
4 environmental clearance, we have to comply,
5 otherwise we won't have the permits to take
6 our project into construction. Right?

7 So, if they ease up the permits or
8 they work with us and we put some kind of an
9 agreement to expedite the review process; I'm
10 not saying they should cut corners. We can
11 still provide -- do the due diligence to
12 protect the environment. But the challenge,
13 as you mention, is it takes a long time for
14 the review. And part of it is because they
15 don't have enough resources.

16 As you know, the governor's budget is
17 offering the DEP with some additional human
18 resources, you know. They're going to hire
19 more staff to be able to respond to some of
20 the permits. Additionally, at FHWA and
21 PennDOT is funding some positions with
22 multiple agencies to be able to actually have
23 them review our applications much faster.

24 So, there's a lot of collaboration
25 going on between us and DEP to make sure,

1 within the state, we can do everything
2 possible to expedite the process.

3 REPRESENTATIVE STRUZZI: Thank you.

4 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR:

5 Representative Owlett.

6 REPRESENTATIVE OWLETT: Over on this
7 side.

8 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

9 And thank you for joining us today.

10 Bad roads, it's a hot topic in
11 everybody's district I think, so we're all
12 here advocating for our constituents.

13 I serve Tioga and Bradford and parts
14 of Potter County. We had a lot of flooding,
15 similar to Struzzi in his concerns there.
16 Specifically, Canoe Creek Road is still
17 closed, a major artery in our district. So,
18 we all have roads that are still closed, and
19 it is a little bit discouraging to see money
20 shifting from our rural roads to our
21 interstates.

22 How do you -- how do you pick which
23 projects to invest in in a specific year?

24 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: So, we
25 don't pick the projects. Actually, your MPOs,

1 RPOs, in collaboration with your counties, in
2 collaboration with the districts, they make a
3 decision, and they send their recommendation
4 to PennDOT central office, and that's how we
5 actually put it in our budget. Right? So, as
6 I mentioned, there is a very collaborative and
7 engaging process within your region on what
8 projects to be picked.

9 What we initiate and actually lead is
10 a financial guidance and how we're going to
11 actually distribute our money, our strategy on
12 how we're going to spend our money. And,
13 again, this is not being done in vacuum. It's
14 in, again, with collaboration with MPO, RPOs,
15 the counties, the folks who are actually
16 representing the people in your constituents.
17 So, this is how the process goes.

18 REPRESENTATIVE OWLETT: So, when we
19 reach out to them, the question is brought
20 back to us, Well, are you going to fund it?
21 How are you -- are we, as the legislature,
22 going to give you more money? So, how do
23 we -- how do we advocate for -- for these
24 projects that really are crippling our rural
25 communities?

1 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: So, I
2 mean, that's a good reason that we need to
3 look into. Obviously we don't have enough
4 money. Right? We don't have enough money,
5 otherwise we wouldn't take from Peter to give
6 it to Paul. We -- we have a certain amount of
7 money and the financial guidance has been
8 shifted. And as a result, Peter is getting
9 less of money, as last -- previous years.
10 Right?

11 So, we need to actually come up with
12 ways to generate more funding within each
13 region throughout the state. And I'm not
14 saying, you know, one size fits all, there's
15 going to be one solution to all the
16 transportation funding. That's why we need to
17 work to together to actually put all the
18 thoughts and ideas, the ideas that came out of
19 the task force, and look into it, you know,
20 and see how we can actually generate more
21 funding statewide.

22 What I really am an advocate of is,
23 like, any money that's being generated through
24 new sources of funding from your district
25 should be spent in your district, whether it's

1 on your highway system or transit system or
2 whatever the solution is, it should stay
3 within your district, so that your
4 constituents should be the beneficiary of
5 additional funding that we're generating here.

6 REPRESENTATIVE OWLETT: I appreciate
7 that. I just -- through the process, the
8 rural communities sometimes feel like they're
9 forgotten. You have north of Route 80 and
10 then you have, like, north of Route 6. So we
11 want to make sure that those communities are
12 not forgotten in the process as well.

13 I did have a question on the highway
14 beautification process and illegal signs.
15 We've been all getting letters in our
16 districts. There seems like a renewed effort
17 to collect or try and bring everybody into
18 compliance for the federal mandate.

19 Could you update us on that process?
20 How much money is spent every year on -- on
21 that program?

22 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: I can get
23 back to you on that.

24 REPRESENTATIVE OWLETT: Okay. That
25 would be great. I would appreciate that.

1 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Thank you.

2 REPRESENTATIVE OWLETT: And I would
3 love to know your feedback on House Bill 1985,
4 which would exempt churches from that highway
5 beautification. I think it's Representative
6 Lawrence's bill. I'd love to know your
7 feedback on that bill as well.

8 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Okay.
9 Thank you.

10 REPRESENTATIVE OWLETT: Thank you.

11 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR:
12 Representative Ortitay.

13 REPRESENTATIVE ORTITAY: Thank you,
14 Mr. Chair.

15 Madam Secretary, are you familiar
16 with the secretary's spike decision project
17 list?

18 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Yes.

19 REPRESENTATIVE ORTITAY: Okay. Can
20 you explain what it is for everyone here?

21 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: So, the
22 spike money is the money that we're using to
23 fund the projects. And when you say "list,"
24 you're -- what is it that you want to know
25 specifically about?

1 REPRESENTATIVE ORTITAY: I'm just
2 trying to -- I've been talking about this
3 spike list for a while now, and I'm just
4 trying to get some information on it, because
5 it has about -- a little less than 4 and a
6 half-billion dollars worth of projects all the
7 way through 2031. And what I'm trying to
8 figure out is if that list of projects is
9 prioritized in any -- in any kind of fashion,
10 or if they're just projects that were promised
11 to legislators who are no longer here, if
12 there's other priorities that are above them.

13 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: No. These
14 are the projects that are prioritized and
15 we've allocated funding over the next four
16 years, twelve years. And it -- and sometimes
17 some of the -- the years on these projects
18 could change. And, again, this financial
19 guidance, if you look at the spike list and
20 compare it to the previous years, you may see
21 some changes that, you know, the projects are
22 not eliminated from the list, but it's being
23 programmed for future years, as, in the past,
24 it could have been programmed for, like, the
25 next four years. Again, because there is a

1 shift in the guidance, you know, a shift in
2 the spending, there could be some changes in
3 the dates of those projects.

4 REPRESENTATIVE ORTITAY: So, you
5 could move these projects around, if --

6 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: To an
7 extent. To an extent.

8 REPRESENTATIVE ORTITAY: Okay. I
9 guess that was my next question is how much
10 discretion do you have in prioritizing these
11 projects and moving them around?

12 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Well, we
13 wanted to make sure that, you know, if the
14 project is currently under design and it's
15 into final design, and we have acquired the
16 right-of-way for the project, and there's
17 money set aside for the utilities -- it
18 depends on the phasing of the project. Right?

19 I mean, we don't want it to --
20 definitely don't want to interrupt the life of
21 a project. As I mention, every year, you
22 actually, you know, push a project out, the
23 cost of that project is going to go up by 2 to
24 2 and a half percent. Right? So, it has to
25 be something that makes sense.

1 If the project hasn't started yet
2 and, you know, it's in the program for four
3 years from now, pushing it out another year
4 wouldn't make a big difference.

5 Again, you have to, if you have some
6 specific projects that you wanted to ask
7 about, I'll be glad to --

8 REPRESENTATIVE ORTITAY: I don't have
9 anything in particular. I was just wondering,
10 in general, about the list. Because when I
11 had initially started asking about it, it was
12 hard to even track down the list and to get
13 information about it. But I was able to find
14 it online, and that's what I wanted to ask
15 today. But I appreciate the answers.

16 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Sure.

17 REPRESENTATIVE ORTITAY: Thank you
18 very much.

19 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR:
20 Representative Heffley.

21 REPRESENTATIVE HEFFLEY: Thank you,
22 Mr. Chairman.

23 And thank you, Madam Secretary, for
24 being here today.

25 Act 44 put really unrealistic demands

1 on the Pennsylvania turnpike. And we're
2 seeing that come to fruition now with the
3 increasing of tolls year after year. A few
4 years ago, it was reported that there was a
5 decline in heavy truck traffic in some regards
6 to the Pennsylvania turnpike.

7 Can you tell me if -- is there still
8 a decline in some areas in the turnpike in
9 truck traffic?

10 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: I don't
11 have the exact number of average daily truck
12 traffic for Pennsylvania turnpike. I don't
13 think the revenue for Pennsylvania turnpike
14 has gone down. I don't -- again, I'll be glad
15 to get you that information from you -- for
16 you in terms of truck traffic on Pennsylvania
17 turnpike. I don't have the information right
18 now.

19 REPRESENTATIVE HEFFLEY: Okay. And
20 we all talked about the need to -- to shift
21 that state police funding out of the Motor
22 License Fund and hopefully back into the
23 general fund, where it belongs. But with the
24 limited funding that we have right now, how
25 can we better utilize some of those dollars?

1 It's been reported to me by some of
2 the counties and different maintenance
3 departments, not just in PennDOT, but also
4 some of the counties and local municipalities
5 that are doing projects, that the endless cost
6 and review of engineering designs and NPDES
7 studies and everything else, that the cost of
8 the engineering is actually more than the cost
9 of the construction on some of these projects.

10 What can be done to cut that down? I
11 mean, we already know that the Fish and Boat
12 Commission, the Game Commission have endless
13 maps of the state of Pennsylvania identifying
14 where the endangered species or potential
15 endangered species are, why do we have to
16 continue to spend resources to do NPDES
17 studies when we already have that information?
18 How can the agencies at DEP, Fish and Boat,
19 Game Commission, Army Corps, better coordinate
20 to cut down on some of these endless
21 engineering designs? Because it's just
22 driving up the cost of projects and taking
23 that money off of the roads and just putting
24 -- just, really, it's not benefiting
25 Pennsylvanians. Is there -- is your

1 Department working to cut down some of those
2 costs?

3 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Yeah.
4 We're actually -- I think, one of the
5 representatives asked the same question, had
6 the same concern about -- Representative
7 Struzzi talked about, you know, taking too
8 long to actually push this project out and
9 longer, it's more expensive. Now you're
10 mentioning the engineering part. I don't
11 think there's endless cost to the engineering
12 and the design work that's being done. It's
13 basically complying with all the requirements.

14 Anytime we start looking into the
15 project, we -- I tell you, I've been in the
16 business for thirty-some years, and I've seen
17 a huge efficiency being created in how we go
18 about projects. We do scoping. We actually
19 bring everybody together. We go and walk the
20 project. We do the scoping of the project.
21 We look at all the environmental sensitive
22 areas, environmental issues around the
23 project. We identify those issues that could
24 actually be a challenge for us while we're
25 pushing the project out. You know, we put

1 action items together on how we're going to
2 address those challenges.

3 I mean, we're trying to be very
4 systematic and very strategic about how we do
5 projects. Right?

6 And when you say "endless," because
7 there are certain things -- NPDES is a big
8 part of our practice right now.

9 REPRESENTATIVE HEFFLEY: Do you
10 coordinate with those agencies that already
11 have these maps? Right? They already have
12 maps across the whole state.

13 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Yes. Yes.
14 Yes, we do.

15 REPRESENTATIVE HEFFLEY: Are they
16 releasing -- do they give you that
17 information?

18 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Yes.

19 REPRESENTATIVE HEFFLEY: Because
20 every time we have a project coming up -- we
21 had a project where it's in a potential bog
22 turtle area and it was delayed. It was a
23 major safety concern. And it was delayed
24 probably for a year until they could finally
25 get the water off the road. And it was an

1 icing situation, several accidents. And yet I
2 was told that they had to do another study.

3 So, I'm just wondering how those
4 efficiencies can be better streamlined.

5 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: So,
6 actually, I'm glad you mentioned that. You
7 just pointed out an issue. You know, you said
8 when there is water, there is icy conditions
9 on the road. It shouldn't happen. If it's
10 properly designed, we shouldn't have water on
11 the bridge. We shouldn't have icy conditions.
12 We should have proper basin and stormwater
13 management that would collect the water. And
14 that's the reason there is some push on the
15 NPDES permits.

16 You know, the county conservation
17 districts are looking into these things,
18 because, especially going back to the problems
19 we are having on the resiliency on the storms,
20 on the roadways being flooded, on the bridges
21 being washed, we have to be more cognizant on
22 making sure that we find a way for the water
23 to seep through or catch it in a basin.

24 I mean, there is a -- again,
25 Transportation is in transformation, and even

1 the engineering part is being looked at
2 differently.

3 REPRESENTATIVE HEFFLEY: One other
4 cost driver that I hear about all the time is
5 ADA requirements and the ADA ramps. I could
6 take you to a place just down the road from
7 where I live where there's -- it's all
8 cornfields, but yet there's ADA ramps at every
9 intersection. There's no sidewalks; there
10 never will be. This is farmland.

11 Is there anything that PennDOT can do
12 to push back on some of the ridiculous
13 requirements?

14 I have ADA ramps right down -- half a
15 block from my district office that every time
16 it rains they're constantly underwater.
17 Nobody can utilize them. But yet we have this
18 federal mandate to put them in. And it's
19 driving up the cost of these crucial dollars
20 that we don't have enough of for real
21 projects.

22 Is there anything that you can do to
23 try to make it a little bit more common -- a
24 little more common sense as to how we develop
25 some of these projects?

1 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: So, we'll
2 be glad to work with you and look at this
3 specific case. But you said there are ADA --
4 ADA ramps, and there's no sidewalk. So, the
5 ADA ramps, is it like curb cut or -- I mean,
6 I'm sorry.

7 REPRESENTATIVE HEFFLEY: It's a curb
8 cut, yeah.

9 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Okay.
10 We'll be glad to look into it.

11 REPRESENTATIVE HEFFLEY: I mean, they
12 were told they had to put them in. But I just
13 don't know what, if anything, PennDOT can do
14 to push back on some of those ridiculous
15 requirements.

16 Thank you.

17 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: Very good.
18 We'll go to Chairman Hennessey of the
19 Transportation Committee.

20 REPRESENTATIVE HENNESSEY: Thank you,
21 Mr. Chairman.

22 Welcome, Madam Secretary.

23 Last summer, PennDOT applied to be
24 part of the fifteen-state pilot program
25 operated by the federal government in terms of

1 investigating what's called congestion pricing
2 or value-based pricing.

3 Has any decision been made by the
4 feds yet as to whether Pennsylvania will be
5 part of that pilot program? I've not heard an
6 answer one way or another about that.

7 And if Pennsylvania is selected, can
8 you give the committee some idea as to what --
9 what's in store, what kind of plans does
10 PennDOT have to try -- you referenced, earlier
11 in your testimony, some -- some possibilities
12 of tolling or looking at tolling, but can you
13 just explain to the committee what's in store?

14 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN:

15 Absolutely. And thank you for asking that
16 question.

17 So, yes, PennDOT prepared the
18 application to be part of the value-pricing
19 pilot program of FHWA. And a year later --
20 not a year, but nine months later we heard
21 from FHWA, and we actually thought we were
22 taking the last spot because there were
23 fifteen spots, and we were the last
24 application. We're very anxious to get the
25 application within their hands just to do this

1 study. Not to implement it, just to do the
2 study.

3 But we just learned that we actually
4 can produce with the study. And this
5 application is really needed when we're
6 rolling out the implementation of
7 value-pricing. Right? So, we're in good
8 shape. We can do the study. We can actually
9 expand the study. And we can make a decision
10 whether we wanted to proceed with the
11 congestion pricing. Right? So, that's where
12 we stand with the application. Okay.

13 So, the second question was what are
14 we doing?

15 REPRESENTATIVE HENNESSEY: Yeah,
16 what's the future hold?

17 I'm not so sure I understand. Did
18 you say that they authorized us to go ahead
19 with the study?

20 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Yes. Yes.

21 REPRESENTATIVE HENNESSEY: So, we are
22 part of the fifteen or not?

23 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: We --
24 actually, it's -- now there are more spots
25 available, because a lot of states, they

1 pulled out.

2 REPRESENTATIVE HENNESSEY: Okay.

3 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: So it's a
4 little bit confusing, Chairman. And we are
5 trying to figure out -- you know, initially we
6 thought the application is needed to even
7 initiate a study. Now we understand, for
8 study, we don't even need the application.
9 It's good to have the application in place,
10 just in case we wanted to take the study into
11 implementation. Right?

12 REPRESENTATIVE HENNESSEY: Okay.

13 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: So, don't
14 worry about the application. We're in good
15 shape. We can actually proceed with the
16 study.

17 And the plan, what's the plan? The
18 plan is to definitely look into congestion
19 pricing. And we've identified some
20 corridors -- Lehigh Valley, Harrisburg area,
21 Philadelphia, southwest -- as congestion
22 corridors. And we're looking into congestion
23 pricing within those corridors.

24 We are in the process of procurement,
25 bringing consultants on board to look into all

1 Granger's been involved in a number of our
2 House Transportation Committee meeting, trying
3 to see if we can loosen that log jam and see
4 if we can come up with some ways to get
5 increased train service.

6 Could you give -- give the committee
7 an idea of what the PennDOT priority is in
8 trying to see some increase in service for the
9 people in the western part of the state to
10 Harrisburg?

11 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Yeah. It
12 is -- it is an important part of what
13 Secretary Granger is looking into.

14 It's -- as you mention, she's been at
15 several meetings. She's talking to the
16 partners. She's talking to Amtrak. She's
17 engaged with conversations with Norfolk
18 Southern, looking at the numbers, looking at
19 the costs of increasing the services, and
20 we're trying to figure it out.

21 We're very much in support of it.
22 But, like anything else, we need money to
23 implement and add more services to Pittsburgh
24 area.

25 REPRESENTATIVE HENNESSEY: Okay. One

1 final question. Is anybody at PennDOT
2 monitoring and how seriously are we monitoring
3 Amtrak's compliance with upgrading the
4 existing stations to meet ADA requirements?

5 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: If anyone
6 at PennDOT is monitoring it?

7 REPRESENTATIVE HENNESSEY: Yes.

8 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: So, I -- I
9 don't want to give you an answer that's
10 incorrect. But I think Amtrak should be -- if
11 it's their station, they should be monitored
12 by FTA, FRA.

13 I know PennDOT is very engaged in
14 rebuilding the stations for Amtrak. And
15 anytime we get -- and one of the number one
16 priorities, when we get into station rebuilds
17 or expansion, is ADA compliance. So, that's
18 an important part of what we're doing, yes.

19 REPRESENTATIVE HENNESSEY: Okay.

20 Thank you very much.

21 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

22 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Sure.

23 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR:

24 Representative Carroll.

25 REPRESENTATIVE CARROLL: Madam

1 Secretary, as you know -- and I believe the
2 numbers that I'm about to use I think are
3 accurate -- Pennsylvania has the fourth
4 highest number of interstate miles among the
5 fifty states in our nation. Pennsylvania has
6 also the fourth highest network in terms of
7 road miles, when you consider US 22 that was
8 mentioned before and our SR network. PennDOT
9 has huge responsibilities when it comes to a
10 highway and bridge network in this state.

11 Specifically thinking about District
12 4, is it fair to say that the funding
13 challenges that PennDOT has were even more
14 problematic than the leadership of District 4?

15 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Yes.

16 REPRESENTATIVE CARROLL: I appreciate
17 that. Because I'm not sure who we could have
18 put at District 4 that would have been able to
19 create money out of thin air.

20 We have tremendous challenges with
21 respect to trying to fund a -- an interstate
22 network in District 4 is that is, I think, the
23 highest in the state, and a series of SRs that
24 in every other state would be responsible --
25 would be the responsibility of local or county

1 government. PennDOT has inherited that
2 responsibility dating back to the time when
3 PennDOT was created. It is the responsibility
4 of the Department.

5 But we also have to consider, when
6 you compare the funding opportunities that
7 Pennsylvania has with other states, it is not
8 an apples-to-apples comparison. When there's
9 an -- when there's a comparison of gasoline
10 tax on a state level with Pennsylvania and
11 another state, very often we are higher. The
12 reason is because we have more roads than the
13 other states; PennDOT has more responsibility.

14 And so, for those of us that sit on
15 this side of the room and ask for additional
16 money for an SR or inform five SRs that come
17 into a borough in Northampton County, we also
18 have to recognize the need that there comes --
19 that comes with that, and that's in terms of
20 funding.

21 And so, when we have that recognized
22 tremendous need, we then fall on top of
23 that -- "we," on our side of the table -- a
24 decision to fund the state police out of the
25 Motor License Fund. That was a collective

1 decision. For anyone who's voted for a budget
2 in this state over the last number of years,
3 many years, you've endorsed, by virtue of that
4 vote, the transfer of Motor License Fund
5 dollars to the state police.

6 For those of us that supported
7 funding transit when we had the turnpike
8 borrow 400 million dollars a year to give that
9 money to the transit authorities, that was a
10 policy decision made by the members of the
11 general assembly who cast those votes. And I
12 was one. And I did it because there was a
13 lack of any other option.

14 But when it comes to actually funding
15 our transportation network out of the Motor
16 License Fund or funding transit out of the
17 general fund, there is no easy solution. And
18 I doubt that there is any kind of transfer of
19 funds that we could employ that would solve a
20 400 million-dollar hole in transit and a 700
21 million-dollar hole in the Motor License Fund.
22 Somewhere along the way, there's going to have
23 to be a conversation about what is an adequate
24 level of funding for transit and Motor License
25 Fund.

1 And then, if all of that weren't
2 enough, our federal partners have been totally
3 derelict in their responsibility with respect
4 to providing Transportation dollars not just
5 to Pennsylvania but to all fifty states. And
6 when you consider our position fourth among
7 the states with interstate responsibilities
8 and an absent federal partner, it just piles
9 onto the responsibilities that PennDOT has.
10 Your responsibilities and those of your
11 Department, it's almost an unsolvable
12 mathematic problem. But it's our job, as
13 legislators in the general assembly, to try
14 and give you some more tools to solve it.

15 And for those that are eager to
16 transfer the step-down from either the state
17 police or the turnpike, I welcome that
18 discussion. I'm not sure that the general
19 fund -- I will leave it to the chairs of this
20 committee to figure out where we're going to
21 get 700 million dollars or 400 million dollars
22 if we reduce the state police obligation and
23 then, similarly, with respect to the turnpike,
24 if we're going to fairly fund transit and not
25 rely on the turnpike borrowing the money.

1 Hundreds of millions of dollars in
2 this building are hard to find. We ran a bill
3 to try and do an electric vehicle fee that
4 raised a very, very modest amount of money,
5 somewhere in the neighborhood of 5 million
6 dollars. Look at the challenges we've had
7 relative to try and get that to the finish
8 line, 5 million dollars, compared to hundreds
9 of millions of dollars.

10 So, Madam Secretary, you can
11 imagine -- there's no question here except for
12 the one that I asked you about District 4. I
13 guess I simply want to highlight for those in
14 the room and those watching that when it comes
15 to transportation funding and the -- on the
16 transit side or on the highway and bridge
17 side, hundreds of millions of dollars are
18 necessary, hundreds of millions of dollars are
19 hard to find.

20 The governor did offer a proposal
21 with respect -- and it continues with Restore
22 PA. And I know that there's some members in
23 this room that are not supportive of that. At
24 least from the perspective of the governor,
25 that was hundreds of millions of dollars. And

1 that would have provided a solution set. But,
2 at the end of the day, we have to be more
3 sincere on our side with respect to where do
4 we get hundreds of millions of dollars.

5 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Thank you.

6 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: For a
7 second round, I have Representative White.

8 REPRESENTATIVE WHITE: Thank you,
9 Secretary. I just wanted to follow up, and I
10 really genuinely appreciate the two chairmen
11 of Transportation Committee being here today.

12 You know, first and foremost, we just
13 want to run down a few of the bills that had
14 come out of the Transportation Infrastructure
15 Task Force to see what you would be supportive
16 of.

17 In regards to the acceleration of the
18 turnpike debt relief proposal, where we
19 expedite that process by 150 million dollars
20 each fiscal year, up until the 450
21 million-dollar shortfall, do you -- would you
22 be supportive of that expediting of that debt
23 relief?

24 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: We'll be
25 glad to work with you to come up with the

1 right solution.

2 REPRESENTATIVE WHITE: Okay.

3 What about ending the diversions from
4 the Motor License Fund for the Pennsylvania
5 State Police?

6 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Same
7 thing.

8 REPRESENTATIVE WHITE: But you feel
9 that the state police obligations do need to
10 be compensated, but they shouldn't come out of
11 the Motor License Fund anymore?

12 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Well, I --
13 again, I have to repeat. I want to make sure
14 that if -- if it's not coming out of Motor
15 License Fund, that it's coming from a reliable
16 source of funding, because state police is an
17 integral part of what we're trying to do at
18 Department of Transportation, which is safety,
19 which is enforcing some of the technology that
20 we put in place on the roadway systems.

21 So, I mean, as long as -- I would
22 like to support you, I want to also make sure
23 that we do have a replacement for what we're
24 taking away from this state police.

25 REPRESENTATIVE WHITE: Understood.

1 What about the reduction of costs in
2 terms of the asphalt versus concrete? You
3 know, we need to reduce costs in that regard,
4 and by having more competition between those
5 two industries, do you think that's something
6 that you would be able to support?

7 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: I -- I
8 support that. Yes.

9 REPRESENTATIVE WHITE: What about
10 the -- you know, adding to the design/build
11 proposals for different project delivery
12 systems so that we can also reduce costs in
13 that regard?

14 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: I support
15 that.

16 REPRESENTATIVE WHITE: And how about
17 in terms of expanding the public-private
18 partnership opportunities, you know, we've
19 utilized the design -- or the P3 proposal for
20 bridges in the Commonwealth. Do you think
21 that that's something we can expand upon and
22 utilize --

23 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN:
24 Absolutely.

25 REPRESENTATIVE WHITE: -- that more?

1 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: We're
2 actually in the process of doing it right now.

3 REPRESENTATIVE WHITE: Okay. Great.

4 How about for the county referendums
5 for Transportation funding where we allow for
6 local ordinances to be effectuated and then
7 funding generated to help support local
8 projects for Transportation, which includes
9 them having available local sales tax
10 increases and potentially income tax
11 increases, but specifically dedicated toward
12 infrastructure projects?

13 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN:

14 Definitely.

15 REPRESENTATIVE WHITE: What about the
16 consolidated permitting for highway and large
17 projects? A lot of times you find that
18 there's been delays in propose -- in, you
19 know, that process. And we'd like to see that
20 expedited so we can cut down costs. Is that
21 something that you would be in favor of?

22 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Again, as
23 I said before, it's -- there's so much we can
24 do. We would definitely sit down and talk to
25 our business partners to see how we can work

1 better to reduce the cost and to reduce the
2 time that it takes to get -- to secure those
3 permits.

4 REPRESENTATIVE WHITE: Okay.

5 And then, one of the bills that I
6 actually have that's a proposal is to have the
7 local gaming revenues that come from a brand
8 new casino in Philadelphia and have that
9 applied toward mass transit in the
10 Commonwealth. Is that something that you'd be
11 inclined to support?

12 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: I'll be
13 glad to talk about it. Honestly, I'm not that
14 familiar. But any new source of funding to
15 Transportation I would welcome. We have to
16 see how it's going to impact other areas of
17 our business and other agencies, but I'm very
18 encouraged by your bills and I'm looking
19 forward to working with you.

20 REPRESENTATIVE WHITE: And rightly
21 so. I certainly appreciate you taking the
22 time today. And I know that, as a
23 Commonwealth, we know how important investing
24 in transportation infrastructure is for our
25 economy and for commerce.

1 We have to continue to look at
2 infrastructure investment as actually an
3 investment, as not as an expense. Investing
4 means that we're about to grow our economy.
5 It's about being able to operate and function
6 effectively. And I think, with your support
7 for this initiative and for the variety of
8 bills that we have proposed, we certainly
9 appreciate you taking the time and look
10 forward to working with you as well.

11 Thank you very much.

12 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Appreciate
13 it. Thank you.

14 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR:
15 Representative Delozier.

16 REPRESENTATIVE DELOZIER: Thank you,
17 Mr. Chairman.

18 Thank you, Madam Secretary.

19 I agree with what has been -- was
20 stated earlier by Representative Carroll that
21 there is not going to be the ability to just
22 massively transfer dollars and solve the
23 problems that we've talked about and the gaps
24 that we know are coming. But I guess that
25 makes it even more disappointing that the

1 governor hasn't taken those steps to try and
2 fund that gap that we know is coming.

3 But my question a lot comes down to
4 an area that we know we've had a flip in cost,
5 and that is the issue of registration stickers
6 from Act 89. And I've asked the last
7 secretary, I've asked this the last couple
8 times, doing the budget -- the budget
9 hearings. With the sunset of Act 89 and the
10 and the turnpike money coming over, in 2013 --
11 just for background -- you know, we enacted it
12 to estimated savings of 1.5 million dollars,
13 removing the stickers off of the cars, within
14 Act 89.

15 In 2013, we also said that we were
16 going to form a program for our law
17 enforcement, municipal law enforcement, to
18 have scanners or automated plate readers,
19 which didn't come to fruition. And also we
20 talked about that PennDOT had said that all of
21 PSP would have these readers in order to make
22 sure that our roads are safe and the cars are
23 registered that are on our -- on our roads.
24 And that, at that point, there's only six
25 statewide. So, would -- they certainly

1 haven't gotten the automated readers to the
2 state police.

3 So, my question lies in the fact
4 that, in 2017, the website, the PennDOT
5 website, had mentioned that there were
6 234,000-plus fewer vehicles registered than
7 the year before, and '17 was the first year we
8 did not have the stickers, which was a loss of
9 22 million dollars. And then in '18, the loss
10 is estimated to be about 10 million dollars.
11 So, we're talking about over 30 million
12 dollars lost in registration funds -- or fees
13 and then not -- also on the -- on the other
14 side, the police are not able to check and
15 make sure our cars are safe, because that's
16 what we need on our roads. And we've talked
17 about safety a number of times and how we want
18 our roads to be safe.

19 So, my question comes to you as to
20 the fact that there's bills that have been
21 introduced to have the stickers back on and
22 have multi-year stickers rather than having
23 the annual sticker that we had in the past for
24 our cost savings. But when we're looking at a
25 -- a reduction of 33 million dollars, and

1 we've talked about how much we're looking for
2 dollars to come back into this state, the
3 stickers seem to be an option that is
4 possible -- I recognize start-up costs, but --
5 because it has been eliminated, but wouldn't
6 that gap of 33 million dollars be better
7 served in the coffers of the PennDOT and also
8 have our police, who support replacing the
9 stickers, have that ability to make sure that
10 our cars are safe on the road?

11 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: So, thank
12 you for that question. And we've had numerous
13 discussions about the stickers. And we
14 certainly don't want to lose any money, if we
15 can get it.

16 And, actually, we looked into the
17 numbers, and you said you took it off of the
18 website of PennDOT that we had a loss of
19 230,000 -- equivalent of 230,000 --

20 REPRESENTATIVE DELOZIER:
21 Registrations.

22 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: --
23 registration in 2017.

24 So, I did talk to the deputy
25 secretary for our vehicle services. According

1 to him and the numbers that he has, numbers
2 dollarwise, compared to previous years,
3 there's -- this program has been in place
4 since 2016, there has been no losses of
5 revenue from the stickers.

6 You also mentioned the state police.
7 We've actually had several discussions with
8 the state police and other agencies -- PEMA --
9 to see if not -- lack of stickers is going to
10 impact what they're trying to do. They're
11 good with it. There's no problem for that.
12 It's a savings for us because we don't have to
13 actually send out of the stickers. We don't
14 have to mail it. There's postage savings.
15 There's letter savings. There's this cost --
16 the cost of operation adds up.

17 And in addition to that, this will
18 enable the folks to be able to register
19 online. It's actually making -- it's a more
20 customer-friendly kind of a way for folks to
21 get registered.

22 So, we -- we looked into it.

23 REPRESENTATIVE DELOZIER: Um-hum.

24 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: But we
25 didn't see any merit.

1 REPRESENTATIVE DELOZIER: Okay. So,
2 you're saying that everybody was happy with
3 it, but yet we've lost 30 million dollars.

4 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: I don't
5 know where you get that number from. I will
6 be glad to look into it.

7 REPRESENTATIVE DELOZIER: Okay.

8 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Because
9 everything that I ask, I was told that we are
10 not losing any revenue from lacking the
11 stickers on the cars. And the revenue is
12 steady. The revenue is as where it's supposed
13 to be. In fact, if anything, we're saving
14 dollars because we don't have to go through
15 the process of mailing and sending out --

16 REPRESENTATIVE DELOZIER: And I
17 recognize that was the goal. And that 1.5
18 million-dollar savings that they estimated
19 when we started it, reflective of the fact
20 that we've had hearings on this issue, because
21 of the bill. And so a lot of the numbers that
22 we have are generated from those hearings and
23 this testimony that we've been able to, you
24 know, kind of cull the numbers from.

25 And being safety and, like I said,

1 that flip, we're supposed to be saving 1.5
2 million dollars. The numbers that have been
3 testified to are much, much higher of a loss.
4 And the ability for PSP and other municipal
5 police and our law enforcement preferring that
6 we have the stickers on the cars for not only
7 safety but the ability to make sure that our
8 cars are safe.

9 So, I look forward to working with
10 you on that. I know there's a number of bills
11 that we can do. But I would appreciate
12 looking at a possible revenue stream there.

13 Thank you.

14 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR:
15 Representative Bradford.

16 MINORITY CHAIRMAN BRADFORD: Thank
17 you, Chairman Saylor.

18 And thank you, Secretary.

19 My follow-up will be means of
20 commentary and actually very similar to what I
21 think Chairman Carroll very succinctly stated,
22 which is a concern that many on our side of
23 aisle here have with kind of the discussion
24 that's going on. And by "discussion," I mean
25 it's more of a Kabuki dance.

1 We'll get a large agreement that we
2 all support the turnpike, and we need to do
3 better. Tolls are too high. The debt has
4 gotten insurmountable and, frankly, is no
5 longer sustainable.

6 On the issue of roads and bridges, we
7 all have different feelings, whether you're
8 from rural or suburban areas, but whether it's
9 new capacity or repairs or potholes or
10 landslides, there's a recognition that we need
11 do more on roads and bridges.

12 There is similarly a recognition that
13 the way we fund the Pennsylvania State Police
14 at the -- to the detriment of the Motor
15 License Fund is, again, no longer sustainable.

16 We all want more classes in the PSP,
17 but we recognize that continuing to raid the
18 Motor License Fund is no longer -- not only
19 bad -- it's no -- it's not only not good
20 public policy, it is, frankly, not
21 sustainable.

22 And then, on the issue of mass
23 transit, and these four issues are obviously
24 interconnected, not only do we realize that
25 our funding -- our transit agencies have dire

1 funding situations, but there's a recognition
2 that there are many new capacities that we
3 need as well there.

4 I would mention -- and I think it's
5 not just as a matter of throwing it out there,
6 but I think it adds to the discussion, again,
7 it's not hypocrisy, it's just the nature of
8 legislators wanting to fight for their
9 district in their part of the Commonwealth --
10 but I've heard requests, and I'm not remiss
11 because I support the King of Prussia rail
12 project, but I've heard trollies for West
13 Chester, subways to the Navy yard, trains to
14 Monroe County, trains to Lehigh Valley. I've
15 heard all of these projects that people want
16 beyond the concerns and the challenges we
17 already have.

18 And what I've not heard, and I think
19 is similar to what Chairman Carroll states, is
20 that any idea from this body about how to fund
21 it. And while I've heard some -- some more
22 political posturing and the usual waste,
23 fraud, and abuse, I give the governor credit,
24 because while it is not popular, for I believe
25 five or maybe six years in a row, the

1 governor's proposed a local state police fee.
2 I've heard much about rural roads, but I've
3 not heard much about rural policing and how
4 it's paid for.

5 And if we're going to dig down into
6 these issues, and we're going to have a
7 discussion about how we fund in the hundreds
8 of millions, as the chairman states, then we
9 need to talk about how we fund the state
10 police. You can not like this year's
11 governor's proposal, and then I would say,
12 Okay. Then look at the year before, or the
13 year before, or the year before, because every
14 year the governor has gone out there, chasing
15 votes in this legislature for how we deal with
16 this.

17 But, instead, we've allowed the Motor
18 License Fund to get -- to get -- to get
19 raided. We've made the continuing funding of
20 the Pennsylvania State Police an issue that is
21 not sustainable. And this fee is just one
22 thing that the governor's thrown out there.

23 Chairman Carroll again rightly points
24 out, Restore PA. You can be against Restore
25 PA, and I guess you can deny climate change

1 and the challenges that come with it, but if
2 you don't want a severance tax and you don't
3 want the hundreds of millions of dollars that
4 come with Restore PA, then what are you
5 proposing?

6 Because one of the things I fear when
7 you hear about "I want my train station
8 repaired" or "I want my road fixed," is how do
9 you plan on funding it? The governor, like it
10 or not, doesn't have the proposal we want for
11 the -- for two years forward. But, frankly,
12 the governor may not be here when that cliff
13 comes, but this legislative body will be. And
14 I think we need to get serious about these
15 challenges. And they are funding challenges.

16 So, rather than engaging in this
17 Kabuki dance where we pit the turnpike against
18 roads and bridges versus the state police
19 versus mass transit, let's have an honest
20 discussion about the hundreds of millions of
21 dollars it will take to honestly and
22 appropriately address transportation in
23 Pennsylvania.

24 And there's one thing I want to do,
25 if I can follow up from the good lady of

1 Philadelphia. I live in suburban
2 Philadelphia. I actually, as a crow flies,
3 live about 19 miles, I think, from the Comcast
4 tower. I can see it from my house, to quote a
5 former governor. I can see it, but I can't
6 get there, 'cause, at rush hour, it would
7 probably take the better part of -- between
8 422 and the bridge, and the Schuylkill
9 Expressway, it would probably take close to
10 two hours to get there in rush hour.

11 If we're going to be pro-business,
12 and we're going to talk about our job
13 creators, and we're going to talk about really
14 growing our economy, the idea that the lack of
15 production that comes from having hundreds of
16 high earners sitting in traffic for hours on
17 end with no ability to access the arts and the
18 businesses and the services and the
19 restaurants and all that is great in
20 southeastern Pennsylvania because we are not
21 engaging in new projects, new capacity, light
22 rail, rebuilding our roads and bridges. And
23 Act 89 put us far down the road, and thank
24 God, under amazing pressure, it was able to
25 get accomplished.

1 But we've got to realize that these
2 four issues -- turnpike, roads and bridges,
3 PSP, mass transit -- if we're going to do
4 right not just by the people in terms of their
5 quality of life so they're not sitting in
6 traffic but also do right by our environment
7 and our economy, then we need to get real
8 about the hundreds of millions of dollars that
9 this is going to take not just in southeastern
10 Pennsylvania but also to address those rural
11 roads and bridges where they've not been all
12 that supportive of tolling I-80 and such. But
13 if we're going to have that discussion, then
14 it all needs to be out on the table, and we
15 need to be talking about all these projects
16 that these folks, and they're right to want
17 those projects. They're fighting for their
18 district and their region.

19 But we need to talk about all of
20 Pennsylvania pulling together, not using
21 targeted money from impact fees that are
22 shielded from the total Commonwealth, but
23 having an honest discussion for all four
24 corners of Pennsylvania about how we deal with
25 the challenges for our Commonwealth.

1 Thank you, Secretary.

2 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Thank you.

3 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: Before I
4 get to his comments, which I will, I want to
5 follow up and make sure that -- Representative
6 Lawrence mentioned a couple of things that he
7 needs follow-up, if you could copy me on the
8 follow-ups that you do to Representative
9 Lawrence.

10 Put a couple plugs in here. Many
11 people, central Pennsylvania, use light rail
12 for Philadelphia to New York and so on and so
13 forth. But I have taken notice to -- and I
14 don't get to every one of the train
15 stations -- I've been to Elizabethtown. But
16 the one in Lancaster in particular, we've been
17 working on and hearing for years from the
18 Department of Transportation they're working
19 on additional parking, and it's a major
20 problem at the Lancaster train station that
21 people in central Pennsylvania use to get to
22 Philadelphia and the King of Prussia area for
23 work on a regular basis, day in and day out.

24 And particularly for those who are
25 handicapped, they have to park downtown, in

1 some cases, and have to be taxied or Ubered
2 out to the train station, which is even more
3 of a problem for those who are handicapped.
4 There are handicapped parking spaces. But the
5 amount of use of that train station, and
6 I'm -- which I'm tickled about, because glad
7 to see our train system being worked very
8 well.

9 The other is, you know, as chairman
10 of the Appropriations Committee, it is my goal
11 to speed up this whole state police issue of
12 coming out of the highway funds. I think our
13 infrastructure is so critical to our economic
14 development here in Pennsylvania, and so I
15 think it's something we'll take a look at.

16 Another concern I've always had, and
17 I continue to mention to Secretary McDonnell,
18 has been the permitting issue between PennDOT
19 and you. I think that DEP has been ridiculous
20 in the fact that they are not a very
21 cooperative agency with other state and local
22 agencies in their permitting process.

23 I will tell you, Madam Secretary --
24 first of all, I want to thank you for coming
25 and joining me at a press conference in York

1 County, calling on the federal government to
2 fulfill their responsibility in anteing up
3 money for our infrastructure, for our nation,
4 but in particular for Pennsylvania.

5 But this permitting process at DEP, I
6 think you guys have had an outstanding record
7 at PennDOT in the way you've handled and
8 managed projects throughout the years in all
9 parts of this state. And I think there needs
10 to be a little bit more trust from DEP about
11 how you do your operation, because I think you
12 guys need to be commended about how you've
13 protected the environment in a lot of the
14 projects that you've run, major projects, in
15 this Commonwealth.

16 Kind of last, but not least, Exit 18,
17 I know -- yes, that's your nightmare and my
18 nightmare as well. Again, I want to
19 appreciate your involvement and the former
20 secretary, along with Mike Keiser, in dealing
21 with that issue. I have never seen such an
22 incompetent -- I served on an MPO for -- and
23 chaired it as well in York County for, like,
24 ten years. I've never seen a more incompetent
25 project, other than maybe the one in Lancaster

1 when they did Route 30, many, many, many years
2 ago. This is just absurd.

3 Just to comment, do you have -- is
4 PennDOT able to blacklist that corporation?
5 They've gone through twelve, if not more,
6 superintendents in four years. Are you
7 able -- what are -- like, if they would decide
8 to bid on I-78 or I-80, whatever it is, are
9 you able to keep that from happening right
10 now?

11 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: So, we're
12 looking into it. And I don't know how much
13 comments I can make about this Mount Rose
14 project because we're in litigation, and there
15 are claims there, and there's a lot of
16 discussions.

17 And, Chairman, I have actually
18 attended several meetings with our district
19 and our attorneys, chief counsel, talking
20 about this project. The latest I heard is
21 they were going to come in, the contractor,
22 that is, with a schedule on when they're going
23 to complete the project, which I'm not sure
24 how much I can believe or not believe.

25 And I've actually been asking a lot

1 of people on what we can do to avoid this
2 situation. We're very serious, very serious
3 on the message we're sending out. We
4 absolutely have no tolerance for performance
5 such as this one, especially with the big
6 contractors coming from another state and
7 acquiring this firm, which is local.

8 I mean, we gave the job to another
9 firm, and the contractor came in and acquired
10 the firm, made all kinds of changes. We --
11 and went through generations of changes on
12 project management and the team they provided
13 on the project.

14 And, honestly, the sub consultants
15 are delivering -- the subcontractors are
16 actually working on the project.

17 It's -- I'm very unhappy about this
18 project, I'll put it this way, and we are
19 definitely going to look into, you know, the
20 kind of message we wanted to send out to the
21 industry.

22 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: I have
23 contacted Congressmen Perry and Smucker, who
24 represent York County and this region, to look
25 at federal legislation as well, to -- I've

1 been working with people in the highway
2 industry to protect -- you know, I don't want
3 to get carried away with retribution on any
4 company that, for any number of circumstances,
5 aren't able to complete a job on time, but I
6 think there does need to be penalties for
7 companies like this who -- this company, in
8 particular, Tutor Perini, is in court with, I
9 believe, like twenty states, suing them for
10 over a billion dollars in similar-type
11 projects possibly, which really concerns me
12 when a company as large as Tutor Perini, which
13 is New York and California based, who has a
14 staff of attorneys full time on their payroll,
15 what they can do to our transportation system.

16 So, I'm going to continue keeping
17 focused on hopefully federal reforms on this
18 kind of issue as well and look forward to
19 working with you.

20 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Thank you.

21 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: Earlier, I
22 have had a lot of complaints from members as
23 well as others across the state about our line
24 painting. The paint that we use has been
25 atrocious, doesn't hold up more than one

1 season. It's not able to be seen during rain
2 and snow because -- just the weather.

3 So, I -- I don't know why we haven't
4 looked at doing what Maryland has done.
5 They've changed back to an epoxy paint that
6 can be seen at night. I'm real concerned,
7 I've always been concerned when I chaired the
8 MPO, about the safety of our citizens on the
9 highway. If you can't see the white or the
10 yellow lines, that is a real danger of people
11 crossing lines because of the weather
12 conditions. And I would hope that PennDOT
13 will take that safety concern back.

14 I realize the paint that we have now
15 is cheap. But it's not cheap when it comes to
16 the lives of Pennsylvanians. So, I hope that
17 we would do what Maryland has done and switch
18 to a paint that citizens can see.

19 The other thing is, the chairmen of
20 the Transportation, the chairmen and others
21 are concerned, and I agree with them, on
22 electric vehicles. The way to solve this
23 problem of electric vehicles as well as
24 highway funding is to come up with real
25 solutions, not to play politics with it.

1 You know, we know that no matter what
2 vehicle you drive on the highway -- we're now
3 seeing electric tractor-trailers on the
4 highways, which totally amazes me, as an old
5 guy who never thought we'd see electric
6 vehicles and a tractor-trailer let alone a
7 car -- we have to get to the point where we're
8 responsible. We can't play politics with
9 keeping a fee so low that nobody gets a
10 negative vote. We have to have that fee be a
11 fee that is truly the cost of putting that
12 electric car on there. They do as much damage
13 as a car on natural gas or on fuel.

14 So, this general assembly needs to be
15 responsible and pass a real fee onto these
16 electric vehicles. I'm all for saving and
17 cleaning up our environment, but you don't get
18 a break when you still -- our highway system
19 needs to have that funding and have a fair
20 system to do that.

21 Last but not least, my colleague next
22 to me mentioned about pie-in-the-sky things
23 and situations like that. He's talked about
24 Restore PA. That is a pie in the sky, the
25 governor knows it's a pie in the sky. This

1 general assembly's never going to do that.

2 First of all, he's promised that
3 money to everybody and every cause in this
4 Commonwealth. It's a fiasco. You can't walk
5 into the little town of Columbia, Lancaster
6 County, and promise you're going use that
7 money for blight, then walk up into Potter
8 County and promise them you're going to use
9 that money for broadband, walk into another
10 town and promise you're going to use it on
11 highways, and another place you promise it for
12 something else.

13 Four and a half-billion dollars
14 doesn't solve our highway problems. You know
15 that, I know that, they know that, and the
16 governor knows that. We need to quit playing
17 the politics with these dollars. If we truly
18 want to fix our infrastructure in this state,
19 we got to be realistic and working together.

20 Proposing solutions like the state
21 police's solution that just came out, as well
22 as Restore PA, are all worthless pieces of
23 paper that never had a chance to pass in the
24 first place. So, if we want to get to the
25 solutions of solving our problems with our

1 highway and our infrastructure, this caucus
2 put it out.

3 We have real bills that have been
4 introduced in the House of Representatives
5 that need to get passed to solve, whether it's
6 mass transit funding or it's highway funding
7 or whatever it is.

8 Representative Martina White has done
9 an amazing job in trying to get rural
10 Pennsylvania, urban Pennsylvania, and suburban
11 Pennsylvania to come together for solutions.
12 And that's tough to do, because if you're in a
13 rural area, you really don't care about mass
14 transit. Let's be honest. But that
15 commission or that task force came up with
16 something that they believe that rural
17 legislators, urban legislators, and suburban
18 legislators can come together to solve these
19 real problems.

20 And we can continue to talk and pit
21 one part of our state versus another, but we
22 have to come together as legislators who
23 represent all kinds of diversity here in
24 Pennsylvania, not some political pie in the
25 sky that we know that's going to be good that

1 we're only going to use in our political
2 campaigns, but real solutions.

3 And I think that Representative White
4 and her task force that came up with these
5 solutions need a lot more support, because
6 otherwise we're never going to get to solving
7 these problems. And for our economic
8 development, we need to get there.

9 So, I personally hope that this
10 administration, for once, instead of talking
11 about Restore PA, talks about real solutions
12 to mass transit and to the rural roads of
13 Pennsylvania and our bridges, not sit and talk
14 about Restore PA to something that will never
15 come about because there's not enough money
16 there to solve all the problems that the
17 governor's promised.

18 I have great respect for our
19 governor. He has great compassion for the
20 people of Pennsylvania. But there's a
21 difference between real solutions and
22 pie-in-the-sky solutions. We have to get to
23 real solutions. And we see this Building
24 Pennsylvania, we need to understand it. That
25 needs to get done.

1 And the only last comment I'll make,
2 the auditor general was brought up earlier.
3 Representative -- he served here in the
4 general assembly. Eugene DePasquale proposed
5 and criticized the fact that the turnpike is
6 borrowing 450 million dollars, and it's 11
7 billion dollars in debt, and criticized and
8 how dare we have such high turnpike tolls.

9 Well, he is such a hypocrite, and
10 that is what he is, because of the fact that
11 he voted for that legislation, to create that
12 11 billion-dollar debt. And whether you're
13 for it or you're against it, that's okay.
14 There's nothing wrong with that in this
15 legislation.

16 I commend Representative Carroll who
17 said here today he voted for it. But you
18 don't get to vote for something and then
19 criticize others who voted for it and act like
20 you had nothing to do with it.

21 It's a real problem we have, 11
22 billion dollars at the turnpike, and we need
23 to solve it. But criticizing it and using it
24 for political reasons is just wrong.

25 MINORITY CHAIRMAN BRADFORD: With all

1 due respect, Chairman, we should have him --

2 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: I'm
3 speaking right now.

4 MINORITY CHAIRMAN BRADFORD:
5 Chairman, you should let the man speak. If
6 you're going to attack the man in a political
7 way --

8 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: You need
9 to just -- Matt, I didn't interrupt you. But
10 I disagree with you. You need to understand
11 that.

12 So, all I'm going to say, Madam
13 Secretary, is I'm not going to accept the fact
14 that certain politicians want to use this as
15 politics. If you want to criticize, you want
16 to come up with solutions, great. But don't
17 criticize if you don't have a solution to
18 solving our problems.

19 Again, I think you're doing a great
20 job as secretary. And I commend you for that.
21 But it's the governor, I want him to come to
22 real solutions for the state police as well as
23 come to solutions for fixing our real
24 infrastructure problems here in Pennsylvania.

25 Thank you very much for being here

1 today.

2 ACTING SECRETARY GRAMIAN: Thank you
3 very much.

4 MAJORITY CHAIRMAN SAYLOR: There will
5 be a reconvening of this meeting at 1:30, with
6 the Department of General Services.

7 (Whereupon, the hearing concluded at
8 12:33 p.m.)

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REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the foregoing is a true and accurate transcript, to the best of my ability, produced from audio on the said proceedings.

BRENDA J. PARDUN, RPR
Court Reporter
Notary Public