

1 INTERIM STUDY PROPOSAL 2007-213

2
3 REQUESTING THAT THE ARKANSAS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL STUDY THE IMPACT
4 OF THE STATE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM AND ITS CONDITION IN TERMS OF
5 SAFETY, ECONOMICS, EDUCATION, AND OTHER SOCIAL FACTORS.
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7 WHEREAS, Arkansas's traffic fatality rate is the ninth highest in the
8 nation; and
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10 WHEREAS, of particular concern is Arkansas's traffic fatality rate on
11 rural roads, which is more than two and one-half times higher than the
12 traffic fatality rate on all other roads; and
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14 WHEREAS, several factors have been identified as contributing to the
15 high traffic fatality rate on rural roads in Arkansas, including inadequate
16 roadway safety design, drivers traveling at higher speeds on rural roads, and
17 longer emergency response times in rural areas; and
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19 WHEREAS, rural roads are more likely than urban roads to have only two
20 (2) lanes, narrow lanes, limited shoulders, excessive curves, and steep
21 slopes alongside the roadways; and
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23 WHEREAS, in addition to the suffering and grief that the injured
24 persons and their family members suffer, traffic accidents take a tremendous
25 economic toll in Arkansas; and
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27 WHEREAS, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety
28 Administration (NHTSA), the economic cost of vehicle crashes in Arkansas in
29 2005 was two billion dollars (\$2,000,000,000) or seven hundred twenty-three
30 dollars (\$723) per resident, with costs including medical expenses, lost
31 economic and household productivity, psychological and emotional trauma,
32 property damage, and travel delays; and
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34 WHEREAS, the transportation system and its condition affect the economy
35 in Arkansas in other ways, including automobile efficiency, gas mileage, wear
36 and tear on motor vehicles and their parts, and the life of a motor vehicle;

1 and

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3 WHEREAS, the transportation system and its condition impact economic
4 development in Arkansas, including whether new industries and businesses
5 choose to stay in an area, expand in an area, or relocate to an area, and
6 such decisions impact the economic stability and viability of an area and of
7 Arkansas through the maintenance and development of the tax base; and

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9 WHEREAS, tourism is an important part of the economy in Arkansas and
10 the transportation system and its condition play an important role in the
11 tourism industry in Arkansas; and

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13 WHEREAS, in some areas of Arkansas, tourism is the primary industry,
14 and the transportation system and its condition significantly impact tourism
15 and the economic well-being in those areas; and

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17 WHEREAS, the transportation system and its condition impact education
18 in this state because of the necessary transportation component to education,
19 including children being transported on school buses, educators traveling on
20 roads and highways, and educational specialists that serve multiple schools
21 or school districts who travel on roads, as well as decisions that industries
22 and businesses make when they choose to locate in a community which
23 strengthens the school district's tax base; and

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25 WHEREAS, an underdeveloped transportation system that is not well
26 maintained can have a negative social impact that relates to lost wages,
27 lower wages, lost jobs, and lost or reduced benefits,

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29 NOW THEREFORE,

30 BE IT PROPOSED BY THE ARKANSAS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL OF THE EIGHTY-SIXTH
31 GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

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33 THAT the Arkansas Legislative Council requests the House Committee on
34 Public Transportation and the Senate Committee on Transportation, Technology
35 and Legislative Affairs review, hear expert testimony on, and study all
36 available information on the impact of the state transportation system and

1 its condition in terms of safety, economics, education, and other social
2 factors.

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4 Respectfully submitted,

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8 Representative Allen Maxwell

9 District 10

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