



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT:

Paula Gilbeck

pgilbeck@prwcomm.com

608.577.7829

La Crosse Co. Rough Road Tour Keeps Spotlight on Crumbling Infrastructure

Area officials get on bus to experience region's road woes

(West Salem, WI) – The condition of Wisconsin roads has caught the public's attention. Unfortunately, no long-term solution for the state's transportation challenges was reached in the last state budget. Meanwhile, poor roads continue to frustrate drivers with increased car repairs and lost time.

The Rough Road Tour kicked off this morning, Tuesday, May 15, with La Crosse-area officials taking the media on a bus to experience firsthand the region's aging roads and outdated bridges.

"We're seeing a lot of excessive repairs on buses from bent rims to shattered glass to mirrors flying off," reported Troy Gunderson, superintendent of the West Salem School District. "Our drivers have to slow down, well below the speed limit, just to keep the parts from flying off and, of course, to keep the kids safe."

The goal of the Rough Road Tour is to bring attention to the condition of Wisconsin transportation infrastructure, which includes state and local roads and bridges, as well as the impact on local communities.

"Today's tour is a continuation of the **Just Fix It** campaign which has sought to educate and engage the public regarding the rough road we face," commented TDA Executive Director Craig Thompson.

"It doesn't have to be this way," Thompson continued. "Other states have figured it out, and so can we."

The La Crosse County Rough Road Tour bounced through the cities of West Salem and Onalaska as well as the towns of Hamilton and Farmington, showing just a sample of the area's road conditions.

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As an example, the La Crosse County Highway Department is responsible for maintaining more than 280 miles of county highways. Almost 50 percent of this aging county highway network needs major work.

“It’s going to take all levels of government stepping up to fix our aging infrastructure,” stated Ron Chamberlain, La Crosse County highway commissioner. “It will likely require local governments to have more tools in the tool box to meet their responsibilities and help the state address this serious issue.”

The Rough Road Tour kick-off coincides with the 6th annual National Infrastructure Week, which runs May 14-21. It features a week of events, media coverage and education and issue advocacy to elevate infrastructure as a critical issue impacting America's economy, society, security and future. (<http://infrastructureweek.org/>)

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Logo and graphics are available at <http://www.tdawisconsin.org/lacrossecotour/>.

About TDA

From the buses in Racine to the Port of Green Bay to the rail lines in Superior to the Waukesha County Airport to the roads we use every day, Wisconsin’s transportation network is the key to connecting goods to market and people to jobs.

Founded in 1971, the Transportation Development Association of Wisconsin promotes the vitality and safety of the state’s transportation system, including public transit systems, public-use and general aviation airports, railroads, commercial ports, and roads. TDA’s members comprise business, labor, units of government, regional planning organizations, as well as individuals.

Contact us at: www.tdawisconsin.org and Twitter handle @TDAWisconsin