

Contact: Charles Carrier, (518) 457-6400
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Transportation Funding and The Gas Tax

NYSDOT Forum to Discuss Paying for State's Infrastructure Needs

New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) Commissioner Astrid C. Glynn today announced a major transportation funding conference, "Beyond the Gas Tax - Funding Future Transportation Needs," will be sponsored next month by NYSDOT and the University Transportation Research Center (UTRC), a consortium of universities institutes of technology.

The forum, to be held from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. on October 7 in the Art and Home Center on the State Fair Grounds in Syracuse, Onondaga County, will focus on ways to pay for the future transportation needs, particularly the state's highway and bridge system.

The symposium will bring together federal and state governmental officials, academics, members of the construction industry and transportation experts from across the country to consider alternatives and supplements to the current gasoline tax as a revenue source in paying for future transportation projects.

"This conference responds to the reality that the gas tax, the traditional source of revenue for transportation investments at both the state and federal level, may no longer be the way to meet our growing transportation needs," Commissioner Glynn said. "We want to examine very thoroughly the status of federal and state transportation funding and the issues and options for funding critical future infrastructure projects."

Opening remarks will be provided by Commissioner Glynn and UTRC Director Robert Paaswell. The keynote address will be delivered by Emil Frankel, director of transportation policy for the Bipartisan Policy Center, an association that develops and promotes policy solutions that can be supported by both political parties and the public. Frankel formerly served as U.S. Department of Transportation assistant secretary for policy and as Connecticut Department of Transportation commissioner.

Panel discussion topics will include:

- the current and future role of the gas tax to fund transportation investments;
- federal, state and private funding and financing options for transportation projects;
- the status and outlook for the state Dedicated Highway Trust Fund;
- linking transportation and energy policy; and
- transportation financing approaches of other states.

UTRC is a consortium of 12 major universities in New York, New Jersey and Puerto Rico and was established to support research, education and the transfer of technology in the field of transportation. Its members are the City University of New York, Columbia University, Cornell University, New Jersey Institute of Technology, New York University, Polytechnic Institute of New York University, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Rowan University, Rutgers University, State University of New York, Stevens Institute of Technology and the University of Puerto Rico.