



www.InvestInInfrastructure.org

601 Thirteenth Street NW | Suite 1000 | Washington, D.C. 20005

Co-Chairs

Michael R. Bloomberg, Mayor, New York City

Edward G. Rendell, Governor, Pennsylvania

Arnold Schwarzenegger, Governor, California

CONTACT:

David P. Yarkin

717-395-7726 (cell)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Feb. 24, 2008

GOVERNORS FROM ACROSS COUNTRY JOIN *BUILDING AMERICA'S FUTURE* COALITION

NON-PARTISAN COALITION MAKES INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING A NATIONAL PRIORITY

WASHINGTON, DC – Governors from across the country today declared their support for increasing federal funding to rebuild America's aging infrastructure by joining the *Building America's Future* coalition.

The month-old, non-partisan coalition is co-chaired by Pennsylvania Governor Edward G. Rendell, California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and New York Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg.

The *Building America's Future* coalition will be comprised of state- and locally elected officials from around the nation and will become a repository of best practices on infrastructure funding issues. In the short-term, the coalition will work with the presidential candidates and the platform committees of the national political parties to ensure that the next president understands the enormity of the infrastructure crisis and is committed to increasing federal funding.

As state and local governments continue to pay more of the costs and the condition of our infrastructure further deteriorates, America's infrastructure crisis becomes more critical every day. One of the primary jobs of the coalition is to create an environment where infrastructure funding is treated like the national priority it should be.

"An efficient, well planned and developed infrastructure is essential if America is to compete in the global economic marketplace," Governor Rendell said during a press conference with new coalition members today. "We need to build America's future, brick by brick, and the support of governors from across the country is the first critical brick because it shows that local and state governments cannot continue to do it alone. Infrastructure is a federal challenge. It requires a federal commitment of resources."

Meanwhile, states are making more investments. Governor Rendell proposed that Pennsylvania invest more than \$700 million in state funds over the next three years in infrastructure. His Rebuilding Pennsylvania initiative, unveiled this month during his budget address, will accelerate progress to repair at least 1,000 bridges, all state-owned high-hazard dams, and help local governments repair their dams. In addition, capital funds will provide targeted infrastructure improvements to expand rail freight and aviation facilities and mitigate flooding.

Governor Schwarzenegger agreed.

“We have Republicans, Democrats and Independents from all across the nation,” said Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger. “And we are joining together for one reason – to force Washington to get serious about building our nation’s infrastructure. Everyone here knows this is a big national problem that affects our economy and endangers our communities.”

“Last month, our representatives in Washington missed an important opportunity when they passed an economic stimulus package that did not include the kind of infrastructure investments that create jobs and spur economic growth over the long term,” said Mayor Bloomberg who was unable to attend the event. “We can’t afford to continue taking such a short-sighted approach. We need a new federal commitment to investing in the infrastructure America needs, not the pork-barrel projects politicians want. Mayors and governors understand how important this is — that’s why we’ve formed this non-partisan coalition, and it’s encouraging to see it continue to grow today.”

“States have been at the forefront of innovation when it comes to finding solutions and alternatives for delivering our transportation needs,” said Florida Governor Charlie Crist. “Today, we call on our federal partners to commit to increase their investment and provide states with the flexibility needed to deliver the first class transportation system our citizens deserve.”

The co-chairs urged state and local elected officials who support greater federal investments in infrastructure to join the *Building America’s Future* coalition by registering at www.InvestInInfrastructure.org. For the coalition to be most effective in lobbying the federal government, it is critically important that a broad cross section of elected officials from all political parties, all geographic areas and all levels of government are represented in *Building America’s Future*.

Despite significant state and local infrastructure investments in Pennsylvania, California and New York City, the co-chairs recognize that there are important infrastructure projects that cannot be funded because there are simply not enough capital dollars to go around.

As a share of non-defense federal expenditures, federal infrastructure spending has steadily declined since 1966. For the past 20 years, federal spending on infrastructure has averaged just 3.5 percent to 4 percent of total non-defense expenditures. Between 1956 and 1966, infrastructure spending as a share of total non-defense federal expenditures was approximately 10 percent.

Today, the American Society of Civil Engineers, or ASCE, estimates the national infrastructure needs at more than \$1 trillion dollars over the next five years.

Since the coalition was announced in California on Jan. 19, Democratic and Republican presidential candidates have talked about the need for national infrastructure investment.

Local government officials, including mayors, county commissioners, township and borough supervisors, will soon be invited to join the *Building America’s Future* coalition.

The coalition will work closely with associations that represent these officials, including the National Governors Association, the U.S. Conference of Mayors, the National League of Cities, the National Association of County Officials, the National Conference of State Legislators, and the Council of State Governments.

The Rockefeller Foundation has committed significant funding for coalition staffing and resources.

Additional information about the coalition is available at: www.InvestInInfrastructure.org.

EDITOR'S NOTE: A list of governors joining the *Building America's Future* coalition today follows.

13 Governors joined the *Building America's Future* coalition today

Participants in Today's Press Conference

Co-Chair Edward Rendell, Pennsylvania Governor
Co-Chair Arnold Schwarzenegger, California Governor

Jon Corzine, New Jersey Governor
Charlie Crist, Florida Governor
Janet Napolitano, Arizona Governor
Martin O'Malley, Maryland Governor
Eliot Spitzer, New York Governor
Deval Patrick, Massachusetts Governor

Additional Supporters

John Baldacci, Maine Governor
Donald Carcieri, Rhode Island Governor
Jim Douglas, Vermont Governor
Christine Gregoire, Washington Governor
Jennifer Granholm, Michigan Governor
Tim Kaine, Virginia Governor
Bill Ritter, Colorado Governor