

2021 COMPASS State Legislative Positions

COMPASS supports increasing state and local transportation revenue.

Idaho's current transportation funding level remains inadequate to address the state's needs. State and local transportation entities still face critical funding shortfalls for maintenance and expansion projects.

- **Increase state motor fuels excise tax:** The state fuel excise tax is currently the most effective "user-fee" mechanism available to secure additional adequate funding for state and local transportation needs. COMPASS supports increasing the state fuel excise tax to meet the infrastructure needs of Idahoans, reduce congestion, increase safety, and improve the flow of freight.
- **Index state fuels excise tax to rate of inflation:** Indexing the state fuels tax to rate of inflation would mitigate the challenges of increasing costs of construction over time, and the perceived political risk of active rate changes on the part of the legislature.
- **Consider alternative user-charge concepts:** New automotive technologies and increased fuel efficiency necessitate expanding transportation user-fee concepts beyond fuel excise tax and automobile registration. A mileage-based user fee is reasonable to ensure all users of Idaho's roads and bridges pay a share of those costs.
- **Reinstitute Strategic Initiatives "surplus eliminator" provision for transportation:** The Strategic Initiatives funding mechanism proved to be a useful mechanism for state and local maintenance projects. COMPASS supports reinstating this transportation funding mechanism and maintaining a 60-40 state/local share of those funds.

Support Local Option Sales Tax Authority.

Local Option Sales Tax Authority legislation could provide local units of government a tool to request supplemental infrastructure revenue for specific projects as approved by voters. COMPASS recognizes the value of such a tool to enhance roadway and/or transit projects to the benefit of our region.

Support dedicated funding source for public transportation.

Idaho is one of few states in the country that does not provide a dedicated funding source for public transportation needs. As the population of the state and region continues to grow and diversify, both urban and rural public transportation entities struggle to meet the mobility needs of their communities.

Support statutory authority to implement High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes.

Current statutory language restricts locations in which HOV lanes may be utilized.

Support dedicated funding for safe, community-oriented bicycle and pedestrian options.

Safe community and neighborhood-oriented bicycle and pedestrian options should be a priority for the state.

Support implementation of a weight/distance fee for heavy commercial and farm vehicles.

COMPASS supports implementation of a mileage-based fee structure for heavy vehicles traveling on state and local roadways to include out-of-state vehicles traveling through the state. Heavier axle weights exert proportionately more wear on Idaho roadways. An updated fee structure for heavier vehicles should account for the maintenance costs of such wear.

COMPASS supports realistic, sustainable property tax reform that still allows local taxing districts the ability to deliver infrastructure and services the community needs and expects.