

(September 5, 2007) Aging Infrastructure Must Be Addressed (posting by Rep. Dan Lipinski)

Aging Infrastructure Must Be Addressed

(Rep. Dan Lipinski) September 5, 2007

<http://blog.thehill.com/2007/09/05/aging-us-infrastructure-must-be-addressed-rep-dan-lipinski/>

I think the tragedy in Minnesota with the bridge collapsing really shows the need to do more for our infrastructure in general in this country, beginning with bridges. Right now Chairman Oberstar (D-Minn.) has a bill that will help take care of the structurally deficient bridges in this country. We have far too many bridges that are rated as structurally deficient, and we don't want another tragedy to occur like the one that happened in Minnesota.

There are a lot of different ways to look at paying for this. Right now there's a lot of talk about a gas tax. I think there are other ways to look at paying for this - for example, a dollar a barrel on imported oil or a windfall profits tax on oil companies.

Obviously some decision will need to be made on how it will be paid for, but there's no question that more needs to be done. I think there are other things we need to look at in terms of highway safety, such as signs that may fall - as some have done - killing motorists, and other safety concerns.

But beyond that, our infrastructure in this country is aging and we need to do more, as we saw in New York City with the steam pipe that failed and exploded in the middle of the street. There's a lot of infrastructure in this country that needs to be taken care of, and we need to look at it. It's difficult in these times of tight budgets, but we cannot continue to put off any needed fixes to our infrastructure, because we do not want to have any more tragedies occur.