

110TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 775

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

AUGUST 3, 2007

Referred to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

AN ACT

To establish a National Commission on the Infrastructure
of the United States.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “National Infrastruc-
3 ture Improvement Act of 2007”.

4 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

5 In this Act:

6 (1) **ACQUISITION.**—The term “acquisition” in-
7 cludes any necessary activities for siting a facility,
8 equipment, structures, or rolling stock by purchase,
9 lease-purchase, trade, or donation.

10 (2) **COMMISSION.**—The term “Commission”
11 means the National Commission on the Infrastruc-
12 ture of the United States established by section 3(a).

13 (3) **CONSTRUCTION.**—The term “construction”
14 means—

15 (A) the design, planning, and erection of
16 new infrastructure;

17 (B) the expansion of existing infrastruc-
18 ture;

19 (C) the reconstruction of an infrastructure
20 project at an existing site; and

21 (D) the installation of initial or replace-
22 ment infrastructure equipment.

23 (4) **INFRASTRUCTURE.**—

24 (A) **IN GENERAL.**—The term “infrastruc-
25 ture” means a nonmilitary structure or facility,
26 and any equipment and any nonstructural ele-

ments associated with such a structure or facility.

(B) INCLUSIONS.—The term “infrastructure” includes—

(i) a surface transportation facility (such as a road, bridge, highway, public transportation facility, and freight and passenger rail), as the Commission, in consultation with the National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study Commission established by section 1909(b)(1) of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (Public Law 109–59; 119 Stat. 1471), determines to be appropriate;

(ii) a mass transit facility;

(iii) an airport or airway facility;

(iv) a resource recovery facility;

(v) a water supply and distribution system;

(vi) a wastewater collection, conveyance, or treatment system, and related facilities;

1 (vii) a stormwater treatment system
 2 to manage, reduce, treat, or reuse munic-
 3 ipal stormwater;

4 (viii) waterways, locks, dams, and as-
 5 sociated facilities;

6 (ix) a levee and any related flood
 7 damage reduction facility;

8 (x) a dock or port; and

9 (xi) a solid waste disposal facility.

10 (5) NONSTRUCTURAL ELEMENTS.—The term
 11 “nonstructural elements” includes —

12 (A) any feature that preserves and restores
 13 a natural process, a landform (including a
 14 floodplain), a natural vegetated stream side
 15 buffer, wetland, or any other topographical fea-
 16 ture that can slow, filter, and naturally store
 17 storm water runoff and flood waters;

18 (B) any natural design technique that per-
 19 colates, filters, stores, evaporates, and detains
 20 water close to the source of the water; and

21 (C) any feature that minimizes or dis-
 22 connects impervious surfaces to slow runoff or
 23 allow precipitation to percolate.

24 (6) MAINTENANCE.—The term “maintenance”
 25 means any regularly scheduled activity, such as a

1 routine repair, intended to ensure that infrastruc-
2 ture continues to operate efficiently and as intended.

3 (7) REHABILITATION.—The term “rehabilita-
4 tion” means an action to extend the useful life or
5 improve the effectiveness of existing infrastructure,
6 including—

7 (A) the correction of a deficiency;

8 (B) the modernization or replacement of
9 equipment;

10 (C) the modernization of, or replacement
11 of parts for, rolling stock relating to infrastruc-
12 ture;

13 (D) the use of nonstructural elements; and

14 (E) the removal of infrastructure that is
15 deteriorated or no longer useful.

16 **SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMISSION.**

17 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established a com-
18 mission to be known as the “National Commission on the
19 Infrastructure of the United States” to ensure that the
20 infrastructure of the United States—

21 (1) meets current and future demand;

22 (2) facilitates economic growth;

23 (3) is maintained in a manner that ensures
24 public safety; and

1 (4) is developed or modified in a sustainable
2 manner.

3 (b) MEMBERSHIP.—

4 (1) COMPOSITION.—The Commission shall be
5 composed of 8 members, of whom—

6 (A) 2 members shall be appointed by the
7 President;

8 (B) 2 members shall be appointed by the
9 Speaker of the House of Representatives;

10 (C) 1 member shall be appointed by the
11 minority leader of the House of Representa-
12 tives;

13 (D) 2 members shall be appointed by the
14 majority leader of the Senate; and

15 (E) 1 member shall be appointed by the
16 minority leader of the Senate.

17 (2) QUALIFICATIONS.—Each member of the
18 Commission shall—

19 (A) have experience in 1 or more of the
20 fields of economics, public administration, civil
21 engineering, public works, construction, and re-
22 lated design professions, planning, public in-
23 vestment financing, environmental engineering,
24 or water resources engineering; and

1 (B) represent a cross-section of geo-
2 graphical regions of the United States.

3 (3) DATE OF APPOINTMENTS.—The members
4 of the Commission shall be appointed under para-
5 graph (1) not later than 90 days after the enact-
6 ment of this Act.

7 (c) TERM; VACANCIES.—

8 (1) TERM.—A member shall be appointed for
9 the life of the Commission.

10 (2) VACANCIES.—A vacancy in the Commis-
11 sion—

12 (A) shall not affect the powers of the Com-
13 mission; and

14 (B) shall be filled, not later than 30 days
15 after the date on which the vacancy occurs, in
16 the same manner as the original appointment
17 was made.

18 (d) INITIAL MEETING.—Not later than 30 days after
19 the date on which all members of the Commission have
20 been appointed, the Commission shall hold the initial
21 meeting of the Commission.

22 (e) MEETINGS.—The Commission shall meet at the
23 call of the Chairperson or the request of the majority of
24 the Commission members.

1 (f) QUORUM.—A majority of the members of the
2 Commission shall constitute a quorum, but a lesser num-
3 ber of members may hold hearings.

4 (g) CHAIRPERSON AND VICE CHAIRPERSON.—The
5 Commission shall select a Chairperson and Vice Chair-
6 person from among the members of the Commission.

7 **SEC. 4. DUTIES.**

8 (a) STUDY.—

9 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than February 15,
10 2009, the Commission shall complete a study of all
11 matters relating to the state of the infrastructure of
12 the United States.

13 (2) MATTERS TO BE STUDIED.—In carrying out
14 paragraph (1), the Commission shall study matters
15 such as—

16 (A) the capacity of infrastructure to sus-
17 tain current and anticipated economic develop-
18 ment and competitiveness, including long-term
19 economic growth, including the potential return
20 to the United States economy on investments in
21 new infrastructure as opposed to investments in
22 existing infrastructure;

23 (B) the age and condition of public infra-
24 structure (including congestion and changes in

1 the condition of that infrastructure as com-
2 pared with preceding years);

3 (C) the methods used to finance the con-
4 struction, acquisition, rehabilitation, and main-
5 tenance of infrastructure (including general ob-
6 ligation bonds, tax-credit bonds, revenue bonds,
7 user fees, excise taxes, direct governmental as-
8 sistance, and private investment);

9 (D) any trends or innovations in methods
10 used to finance the construction, acquisition, re-
11 habilitation, and maintenance of infrastructure;

12 (E) investment requirements, by type of
13 infrastructure, that are necessary to maintain
14 the current condition and performance of the
15 infrastructure and the investment needed (ad-
16 justed for inflation and expressed in real dol-
17 lars) to improve infrastructure in the future;

18 (F) based on the current level of expendi-
19 ture (calculated as a percentage of total expend-
20 iture and in constant dollars) by Federal, State,
21 and local governments—

22 (i) the projected amount of need the
23 expenditures will meet 5, 15, 30, and 50
24 years after the date of enactment of this
25 Act; and

1 (ii) the levels of investment require-
2 ments, as identified under subparagraph
3 (E);

4 (G) any trends or innovations in infra-
5 structure procurement methods;

6 (H) any trends or innovations in construc-
7 tion methods or materials for infrastructure;

8 (I) the impact of local development pat-
9 terns on demand for Federal funding of infra-
10 structure;

11 (J) the impact of deferred maintenance;
12 and

13 (K) the collateral impact of deteriorated
14 infrastructure.

15 (b) RECOMMENDATIONS.—The Commission shall de-
16 velop recommendations—

17 (1) on a Federal infrastructure plan that will
18 detail national infrastructure program priorities, in-
19 cluding alternative methods of meeting national in-
20 frastructure investment needs to effectuate balanced
21 economic development;

22 (2) on infrastructure improvements and meth-
23 ods of delivering and providing for infrastructure fa-
24 cilities;

1 (3) for analysis or criteria and procedures that
2 may be used by Federal agencies and State and local
3 governments in—

4 (A) inventorying existing and needed infra-
5 structure improvements;

6 (B) assessing the condition of infrastruc-
7 ture improvements;

8 (C) developing uniform criteria and proce-
9 dures for use in conducting the inventories and
10 assessments; and

11 (D) maintaining publicly accessible data;
12 and

13 (4) for proposed guidelines for the uniform re-
14 porting, by Federal agencies, of construction, acqui-
15 sition, rehabilitation, and maintenance data with re-
16 spect to infrastructure improvements.

17 (c) STATEMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS.—Not
18 later than February 15, 2010, the Commission shall sub-
19 mit to Congress—

20 (1) a detailed statement of the findings and
21 conclusions of the Commission; and

22 (2) the recommendations of the Commission
23 under subsection (b), including recommendations for
24 such legislation and administrative actions for 5-,

1 15-, 30-, and 50-year time periods as the Commis-
2 sion considers to be appropriate.

3 **SEC. 5. POWERS OF THE COMMISSION.**

4 (a) HEARINGS.—The Commission shall hold such
5 hearings, meet and act at such times and places, take such
6 testimony, administer such oaths, and receive such evi-
7 dence as the Commission considers advisable to carry out
8 this Act.

9 (b) INFORMATION FROM FEDERAL AGENCIES.—

10 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Commission may secure
11 directly from a Federal agency such information as
12 the Commission considers necessary to carry out this
13 Act.

14 (2) PROVISION OF INFORMATION.—On request
15 of the Chairperson of the Commission, the head of
16 the Federal agency shall provide the information to
17 the Commission.

18 (c) GIFTS.—The Commission may accept, use, and
19 dispose of gifts or donations of services or property.

20 (d) CONTRACTS.—The Commission may enter into
21 contracts with other entities, including contracts under
22 which 1 or more entities, with the guidance of the Com-
23 mission, conduct the study required under section 4(a).

24 (e) POSTAL SERVICES.—The Commission may use
25 the United States mails in the same manner and under

1 the same conditions as other agencies of the Federal Gov-
 2 ernment.

3 **SEC. 6. COMMISSION PERSONNEL MATTERS.**

4 (a) COMPENSATION OF MEMBERS.—A member of the
 5 Commission shall serve without pay, but shall be allowed
 6 a per diem allowance for travel expenses, at rates author-
 7 ized for an employee of an agency under subchapter I of
 8 chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code, while away from
 9 the home or regular place of business of the member in
 10 the performance of the duties of the Commission.

11 (b) STAFF.—

12 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Chairperson of the
 13 Commission may, without regard to the civil service
 14 laws, including regulations, appoint and terminate
 15 an executive director and such other additional per-
 16 sonnel as are necessary to enable the Commission to
 17 perform the duties of the Commission.

18 (2) CONFIRMATION OF EXECUTIVE DIREC-
 19 TOR.—The employment of an executive director shall
 20 be subject to confirmation by a majority of the mem-
 21 bers of the Commission.

22 (3) COMPENSATION.—

23 (A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in
 24 subparagraph (B), the Chairperson of the Com-
 25 mission may fix the compensation of the execu-

1 tive director and other personnel without regard
2 to the provisions of chapter 51 and subchapter
3 III of chapter 53 of title 5, United States Code,
4 relating to classification of positions and Gen-
5 eral Schedule pay rates.

6 (B) MAXIMUM RATE OF PAY.—In no event
7 shall any employee of the Commission (other
8 than the executive director) receive as com-
9 pensation an amount in excess of the maximum
10 rate of pay for Executive Level IV under sec-
11 tion 5315 of title 5, United States Code.

12 (c) DETAIL OF FEDERAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOY-
13 EES.—

14 (1) IN GENERAL.—An employee of the Federal
15 Government may be detailed to the Commission
16 without reimbursement.

17 (2) CIVIL SERVICE STATUS.—The detail of a
18 Federal employee shall be without interruption or
19 loss of civil service status or privilege.

20 (d) PROCUREMENT OF TEMPORARY AND INTERMIT-
21 TENT SERVICES.—On request of the Commission, the Sec-
22 retary of the Army, acting through the Chief of Engineers,
23 shall provide, on a reimbursable basis, such office space,
24 supplies, equipment, and other support services to the
25 Commission and staff of the Commission as are necessary

1 for the Commission to carry out the duties of the Commis-
2 sion under this Act.

3 **SEC. 7. REPORTS.**

4 (a) INTERIM REPORTS.—Not later than 1 year after
5 the date of the initial meeting of the Commission, the
6 Commission shall submit an interim report containing a
7 detailed summary of the progress of the Commission, in-
8 cluding meetings and hearings conducted during the in-
9 terim period, to—

10 (1) the President;

11 (2) the Committees on Transportation and In-
12 frastructure and Natural Resources of the House of
13 Representatives; and

14 (3) the Committees on Environment and Public
15 Works, Energy and Natural Resources, and Com-
16 merce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate.

17 (b) FINAL REPORT.—On termination of the Commis-
18 sion under section 9, the Commission shall submit a final
19 report containing a detailed statement of the findings and
20 conclusions of the Commission and recommendations for
21 legislation and other policies to implement those findings
22 and conclusions, to—

23 (1) the President;

1 (2) the Committees on Transportation and In-
2 frastructure and Natural Resources of the House of
3 Representatives; and

4 (3) the Committees on Environment and Public
5 Works, Energy and Natural Resources, and Com-
6 merce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate.

7 (c) TRANSPARENCY.—A report submitted under sub-
8 section (a) or (b) shall be made available to the public
9 electronically, in a user-friendly format, including on the
10 Internet.

11 **SEC. 8. FUNDING.**

12 For each of fiscal years 2008 through 2010, upon
13 request by the Commission—

14 (1) using amounts made available to the Sec-
15 retary of Transportation from any source or account
16 other than the Highway Trust Fund, the Secretary
17 of Transportation shall transfer to the Commission
18 \$750,000 for use in carrying out this Act;

19 (2) using amounts from the General Expenses
20 account of the Corps of Engineers (other than
21 amounts in that account made available through the
22 Department of Defense), the Secretary of the Army,
23 acting through the Chief of Engineers, shall transfer
24 to the Commission \$250,000 for use in carrying out
25 this Act; and

5 The Commission shall terminate on September 30,
6 2010.

Attest: NANCY ERICKSON,
Secretary.