

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF  
STATE HIGHWAY AND  
TRANSPORTATION OFFICIALS

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THE VOICE OF TRANSPORTATION

# **Preliminary National Review of Interstate Highway Rest Areas**

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# Topics for Discussion

- National Survey results on Interstate Rest Areas –numbers; reasons for closure in the last five years; other observations
- Options for VDOT and other State DOTs

# Results from 41 States and one Canadian Province

- Current # of Interstate Highway Rest Areas: Mean: 25.3;
  - Min: 0
  - Max 88
- Number closed in last 5 years: Mean: 3.2;
  - Min: 0
  - Max: 23
  - ((individual states with more than 5 closures: AZ: 11/16; KY: 7/31; LA: 23/32; MO: 5/35; ME: 6/20; Ontario:11/23; TX: 10/70; VA: 19/42)
- Number Privately Run : Mean 1.3;
  - Max: 23
  - ((almost all are grandfathered in federal law))
- Number of idling stations for a fee currently installed: 0

# Reasons Stated for Closure

- Budget shortfall
- Large Capital Cost to replace buildings and parking lots which have passed their useful lives
- Nearby urban facilities off the Interstate to meet traveler needs—particularly truck facilities
- Security and criminal activity
- Conversion of some to just truck parking facilities
- Closing of welcome centers but maintain bathrooms
- Failed septic systems—high cost of replacement
- Reconstructed interchanges

# Options for State DOT's

- Raise revenues (user fees, etc.) statewide and maintain services at rest areas
- Support federal statutory changes—either wholesale relief as advocated by AASHTO or pilots along key Interstate corridors—e.g. I-95
- Federal law changes have been problematic—the USDOT has sided with AASHTO in every recent reauthorization—to no avail; the toe under the tent—the truck idling reduction facility allowance –was repealed in the SAFETEA \_LU Tech Corrections Act, June 6,2008

# Options for State DOTs (Cont'd.)

- Promote more off the ROW rest areas with the private sector (including the possibility of contiguous parcels as IO did; or near an Interchange as UT did)
- Make use of the Interstate Oasis Program – FHWA policy published on Oct 18,2006----- signing and monitoring off-site truck stop facilities; and a small federal pilot truck parking grant program \$6.5 m per year-last year FY 2009