

## **Rothermel Says America's Infrastructure Is Failing Apart**

Democratic District Leader Bob Rothermel, who also serves as the executive director of the Community Advocacy Center, says that the infrastructure of our country is falling apart. He said that according to an analysis by civil engineers concludes that our nation's transportation, water and energy systems have shown very little improvement since they were given a grade of D-plus in 2001.

The report which which was released this month by the American Society of Civil Engineers that assessed the trends over the last two years in the condition of 12 categories of our infrastructure, that included bridges, roadways, energy and drinking water.

### **The Society**

S report blamed the deteriorating infrastructure on such factors as weak economy, population, growth, the threat of terrorism, which caused money to be delivered to security and limited federal programs.

The other eight categories of infrastructure are aviation, transit, schools, dams, wastewater, solid waste, hazardous waste and navigation. The "2003 Progress Report for America's Infrastructure" showed no progress for schools which received the worst grade - D-minus in 2001 from the society. The report showed that three out of four school buildings are inadequate. The society estimates that it will cost more than \$127 billion to build new classrooms and to modernize outdated schools.

Energy transmission that was rated a D-plus in 2001, and the society said the trend is declining. Investment in transmission fell by \$115 million annually, to \$2 billion a year in 2000 from \$5 billion in 1975. The actual capacity increased by only 7,000 megawatts a year, 30 percent less than needed to keep up with the demand for power.

Rothermel said, "Our roads have never been worse, our nation is failing to even maintain the substandard conditions that currently exists. The average rush hour expanded by more than 18 minutes between 1997 and 2000." . The report also shows no improvement on our bridges. With 27.5 percent of our nations bridges being structurally deficient or obsolete in 2000. Our transportation systems have shown signs of decline, despite the increased spending over the past six years. The system cannot be maintained because it is being outpaced by the growth of ridership.

Rothermel said, "Wake up America! Everything is falling apart. In May the Bush administration proposed spending \$247 billion on roads, bridges and mass transit, that is 13 percent more than the previous six-year plan. The chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Rep. Don Young, has proposed a \$375 billion spending plan which will be paid for by indexing the gasoline tax to inflation. He noted that the report reinforced his serious concerns about the state of the U.S. infrastructure. We must do something before it's too late."