



BIPARTISAN POLICY CENTER

Dear Candidates:

The next president of the United States will take office at a time of great opportunity – and great risk. While technological advances hold promise for a brighter future, America’s degrading infrastructure undermines our economic competitiveness and quality of life. The president will face difficult decisions about prioritizing investments to meet the needs of a growing population. With the fundamental importance that infrastructure has for our health, safety, economic mobility and more, we urge you to make modernizing America’s infrastructure a central feature of your campaigns, and, if elected, a priority within your first 100 days of office.

For much of the last century, America’s infrastructure cultivated innovation. Our interstate highway system facilitated commerce and travel across the country. The nation’s power grid expanded until virtually every household had access to electricity. These investments helped this country raise the standard of living and become the strongest economy in the world.

But today, our roads, rails, bridges, and airports are becoming liabilities rather than sources of strength. Thousands of miles of water pipes are past their useful life, with leaking and broken pipes causing 1.7 trillion gallons of water to be wasted every year. A recent report by the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) found that \$3.3 trillion will be needed for U.S. infrastructure through 2025. Only \$1.9 trillion is available from existing sources, leaving a gap of \$1.4 trillion. ASCE estimates that if the gap is not filled, infrastructure deficiencies would cost every family in America an extra \$3,400 each year. By 2025, the economy would lose \$4 trillion in GDP, resulting in 2.5 million lost jobs. These statistics are more than just numbers; Americans see the impact of this underinvestment every day when commuters sit in traffic on the way to work, families question the safety of their water, and businesses watch costs jump as congestion slows the delivery of goods and services.

These staggering figures are the reason we joined the efforts of the Bipartisan Policy Center’s Executive Council on Infrastructure, a working group of corporate CEOs and executives drawn from the financial, industrial, logistics, and services industries who are committed to increasing investment in our nation’s infrastructure. As political leaders ourselves, we also recognize that government cannot address the full extent of this crisis alone. Fortunately, the private sector is ready to step up to the plate with resources and expertise to help meet the nation’s infrastructure needs.

However, outdated policies, regulatory burdens, and a fundamental lack of needed data create barriers that prevent productive partnerships between the public and private sectors. As a nation, we have failed to adopt new project financing and delivery methods that would help communities build, maintain, and



BIPARTISAN POLICY CENTER

operate their infrastructure with less risk and at a lower cost. As a result, American infrastructure is an unattractive option for many private investors, who are deploying their capital to more receptive shores. The United States is leaving billions of dollars on the table that could be used to provide urgently needed infrastructure for America's cities, counties, towns, and rural areas.

To address these barriers, the Executive Council has proposed a **New American Model for Investing in Infrastructure**, focused on increased transparency, full accounting for life-cycle costs, and perhaps most importantly, a true partnership in which the public and private sectors share the risks, costs, and benefits of infrastructure investment. The New American Model seeks to empower states and local communities to enter into innovative partnerships suited to their unique needs, creating an environment that welcomes private capital rather than pushing it away.

In our recently released report, [*Bridging the Gap Together: A New Model to Modernize U.S. Infrastructure*](#), we offer specific recommendations for implementing the New American Model. Our plan is both innovative and pragmatic, designed to achieve tangible results through concrete actions that will increase transparency, simplicity, and collaboration. Putting the New American Model into practice will lead to faster delivery of not just more, but also higher quality infrastructure projects, delivering benefits for today's Americans and for future generations.

Campaigns are by definition politically charged. Even in this difficult environment, infrastructure stands out as one of the few issues on which both parties can agree. Leading off the next administration with a proposal that incorporates the principles of the New American Model for Investing in Infrastructure could be the foundation of a collaborative agenda that would set the stage for success. It is also one of the most effective things you could do to strengthen America's economy.

Americans are eager to see that you will address the infrastructure challenges they face every day. We stand ready to assist you in developing proposals to modernize our infrastructure, built on the principle of shared responsibility between the public and private sectors.

Sincerely,

Governor Haley Barbour

Representative Steve Bartlett

Representative Eric Cantor

Secretary Henry Cisneros

Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa