



WHY ARE BICYCLING AND WALKING NATIONAL ISSUES?

Bicycling and walking are national issues that deserve federal funding because bicycling and walking address our:

National Transportation System

- Twelve percent of all trips in the United States are made by bicycling or walking. This is a 25 percent increase from 2001.¹
- Bicycle commuting has increased even faster, rising by more than 40 percent nationwide between 2000 and 2008.²
- A small reduction in driving causes a large drop in traffic. We saw this in 2008, when, due to rising gas prices, the number of U.S. vehicle miles travelled dropped 3%, translating to a near 30% reduction in peak hour congestion across the country.³

National Economy

- The bicycle industry supports an estimated 1.1 million jobs and generates nearly \$18 billion in federal, state and local taxes.⁴
- Between 16 million and 20 million bicycles are sold in the United States every year – more than the number of cars and light trucks sold in the U.S. combined.⁵
- In Wisconsin, bicycling generates nearly \$1.5 billion a year in total economic impact, many times greater than the \$9 million in federal funding spent annually on bicycle and pedestrian projects in the state.⁶

National Obesity Epidemic

- An adult who bicycles regularly typically has a level of fitness equivalent to someone 10 years younger and a life expectancy two years longer than the national average.⁷
- Children who walk to school have higher levels of physical activity throughout the day and higher levels of cardiovascular fitness.⁸

National Traffic Safety Problem

- Bicyclists and pedestrians account for 13 percent of the tens of thousands of traffic fatalities that take place on our nation's roadways every year, yet these modes of transportation receive less than one percent of federal safety funding.⁹

National Oil Dependence

- The transportation sector accounts for 70 percent of our nation's oil consumption, with two-thirds of that consumption going to fuel passenger cars and light trucks.¹⁰
- In 1989, the transportation sector's petroleum consumption surpassed the U.S. petroleum production for the first time.¹¹

National Climate Change Issue

- The transportation sector accounts for 30 percent of the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the United States and remains the fastest growing major source of GHG.¹²
- Simply increasing the share of all trips made by bicycling and walking a few percentage points could lead to fuel savings of around 3.8 billion gallons a year and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 33 million tons per year. This is equivalent to replacing 19 million conventional cars with highly efficient hybrids.¹³

When America Bikes, America Benefits

Footnotes:

- ¹ National Household Travel Survey 2009, FHWA Office of Policy.
- ² 2008 American Community Survey, US Census Bureau.
- ³ INRIX National Traffic Scorecard, <http://scorecard.inrix.com/scorecard/summary.asp>. (Last accessed 6/2/09)
- ⁴ Outdoor Industry Foundation, "The Active Outdoor Recreation Economy," 2006.
- ⁵ National Bicycle Dealers Association, 2008; U.S. Bureau of Transportation Statistics, 2008.
- ⁶ Maggie Grabow, et al., "Valuing Bicycling's Economic and Health Impacts in Wisconsin," 2010.
- ⁷ Lawrie, et al., "Pathways to Prosperity: The Economic Impact of Investing in Bicycling Facilities," N.C. Department of Transportation Division of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation, Technical Report, July 2004.
- ⁸ R. Paffenbarger, et al., "[Safety in numbers in England.](#)" CTC, 2007
- ⁹ U.S. Bureau of Transportation Statistics, Research and Innovative Technology Administration, and Department of Transportation, "Pocket Guide to Transportation 2009," 2009.
- ¹⁰ Transportation Energy Data Book, U.S. Department of Energy, 2009.
- ¹¹ Ibid.
- ¹² Environmental Protection Agency, "Greenhouse Gas Emissions from the US Transportation Sector 1990-2003," March 2006.
- ¹³ Thomas Gotschi and Kevin Mills, "Active Transportation for America," Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, 2008.