Michael Reeves, President; Duffy Hinkle, Vice President of Membership and Marketing; and Joe Kiely, Vice President of Operations represented Ports-to-Plains.  Cal Klewin, Executive Director represented the Theodore Roosevelt Expressway and Deb Cottier, Director, represented the Heartland Expressway.

As you can see from the listing below and the downloadable document the emphasis was on the needs of rural transportation infrastructure.  The message to work towards solutions that address the Highway Trust Fund insolvency together with a significant infrastructure investment plan that extends beyond private dollars were well received by our federal delegations.

Additionally the importance, especially for our agriculture economies, in approaching trade agreements was equally well received.  The federal delagation in Texas also received an update on the efforts to expand Interstate 27.  Having your voice with us in April will strengthen that messaging.

**UPDATE ON STATUS OF CORRIDOR**

**PORTS-TO-PLAINS ALLIANCE CAUCUS**

**FAST ACT IMPLEMENTATION**

**HIGHWAY TRUST FUND INSOLVENCY**

* Highway Trust Fund is insolvent--current user revenues cannot support current spending
* FAST ACT contained another temporary general fund bailout
* A long-term, sustainable HTF fix is a P-to-P priority
* Congress should look for opportunities in 115th Congress to fix the HTF
	+ Possible legislative vehicles: big tax reform bill, modest tax reform bill, infrastructure bill, any omnibus-type budget/spending bill
* P-to-P urges Congress to fix the HTF this year
* P-to-P supports new highway user fees or increased user fees (e.g., gas tax increase) dedicated to HTF
* P-to-P will speak out in support of Members who take the tough vote to fix the HTF by increasing user fee revenues

**TRUMP INFRASTRUCTURE PROPOSAL**

* President Trump made infrastructure a priority before the election.
	+ $1 trillion over 10 years in “core infrastructure”
	+ Deficit-neutral
	+ No federal funding
	+ Instead, private sector financing incentivized by tax credits
* His “state-of-the-union” address last week reaffirmed his commitment to a $1 trillion initiative to build a 21st century infrastructure
	+ One noteworthy change: the President indicated that public and private funding would be needed
* P-to-P supports increased investment in infrastructure
* One major concern: as originally proposed, the Trump plan would not help rural areas
	+ By relying on private sector financing, a project will need to be able to generate a revenue stream to pay back the private investors so that they can recoup their investments
	+ On transportation projects, this means tolls
	+ Typically, only high-volume projects in dense urban areas will be able to generate sufficient revenue through tolling
	+ This means projects in rural areas will generally not qualify because rural projects won’t be able to generate sufficient revenue to repay investors
	+ This must be fixed
* The original Trump Infrastructure Initiative must be modified to ensure that rural areas receive their fair share of the investment
* There should be an emphasis on multi-state corridors connecting rural America to urban centers and the 21st century national economy It will most likely take a public investment component to make this happen
	+ The President’s mention of public funding in his speech is a step in right direction
* Please urge the House/Senate leadership and the House T&I Committee/Senate EPW Committee leadership to ensure that rural areas receive a fair share of any increased infrastructure investment and that it be targeted to multi-state rural corridors

**IMPORTANCE OF TRADE TO THE ECONOMY**

* Canada and Mexico were America's two top export markets
	+ P-to-P states have seen an 89% increase to Mexico and 52% increase to Canada in the value of truck exports since 2004
	+ $1.3 trillion worth of trade depends on Canada and Mexico
* Agriculture relies on exports
	+ U.S. agricultural exports are projected to account for 32.6% of gross cash earnings in 2016
	+ The top three markets for U.S. agricultural exports are China, Canada, and Mexico … are expected to account for 47% of total U.S. agricultural exports in FY2016
* As Trade and Trade Agreements come before Congress, please carefully evaluate the impact on U.S. exporters.