

National Association of Regional Councils



2006 NARC Policy Brief

NARC policies are developed yearly from consultations with and information provided by the association's working groups, committees and its membership. The policies provide a context for NARC's national agenda on significant national and legislative issues. Each policy brief includes a rationale for NARC's position on topics relevant and important to America's regional councils and metropolitan planning organizations, metro and rural, large and small.

Freight and Goods Movement

Issue: Freight and Goods Movement

Background: Freight and goods movement is at the heart of the American economy. The nation's \$1.75 trillion transportation infrastructure makes it possible to move \$6 trillion worth of freight each year. Transportation services make up a substantial portion of the economy—about 11% of the gross domestic product. Over 13 million people work directly or indirectly in transportation services

Despite the importance of freight and goods movement to the economy, investment in the system has lagged behind amounts needed to accommodate growth. To simply maintain the nation's already crowded interstates and highways at their current level of service, about \$34 billion more is needed per year. Even more money is needed to actually improve road conditions for motorists and truckers. Railroads will need to invest up to \$175 billion over the next 20 years, principally through private financing sources. To accommodate the 827 million enplanements expected by 2008, airport capacity will need to be expanded by the equivalent of ten airports the size of Chicago's O'Hare.

Policy Recommendations:

- NARC is committed to exploring new ways to address regional and national goods movement issues by partnering with shippers, service providers, and other associations on new funding strategies.
- NARC will advocate for new legislation addressing goods movement as a national priority.
- NARC should remain active member of the Coalition for America's Gateways and Trade Corridors, and support the coalition's legislative work.
- NARC will support the Projects of National and Regional Significance (PNRS) and Intermodal Connectors Programs.

For additional information, contact Fred Abousleman, Director of Transportation, National Association of Regional Councils, 1666 Connecticut Ave. NW, Suite 300, Washington, DC 20009; 202/986-1032, ext. 216; fax: 202/986-1038; e-mail: fred@narc.org.