

# Ports-to-Plains Alliance 2026 Federal Advocacy Brief

## Executive Summary

The Ports-to-Plains Alliance Corridor is a nationally significant, multi-state trade, agriculture, and energy corridor connecting Mexico, rural America, and Canada. Spanning 2,300 miles across nine states, the Corridor strengthens economic security, supply-chain resilience, and rural prosperity. While nearly half of the Corridor has been upgraded, more than 52 percent remains outdated and unsafe—making coordinated federal action in 2026 essential.

## Why It Matters to Congress

✓ Economic & National Security	✓ Agriculture & Rural Prosperity
✓ Energy & Grid Reliability	✓ USMCA Trade with Canada & Mexico
✓ Freight & Supply-Chain Resilience	✓ Cost-Effective Congestion Relief



## Corridor Role & National Impact

**Agriculture:** Supports a \$540+ billion sector and connects producers to Canada and Mexico, which account for ~25% of U.S. agricultural exports.

**Energy:** Serves the Permian, Eagle Ford, Anadarko, Niobrara, and Bakken regions, along with renewable energy supply chains.

**Trade:** Facilitates commerce tied to \$1.5 trillion in annual U.S. trade with Canada and Mexico.

## The 2026 Opportunity

The upcoming surface transportation reauthorization provides Congress with a unique opportunity to complete a nationally significant corridor through predictable funding, coordinated planning, and Future Interstate delivery tools.

## Specific Legislative Asks

- Multi-State Future Interstate Highway Formula Program
- Multi-State Future Interstate Feasibility Study
- Expanded Future Interstate Designation & Numbering
- FY 2027 Congressionally Directed Spending and Community Project Funding Support



## Bottom Line for Congress:

Ports-to-Plains is not a regional request—it is a national infrastructure solution that maximizes prior federal investment while strengthening trade, energy security, and rural America.

# America Needs A Multi-State Future Interstate Highway Formula Funding Program

## *Impacts of IH System Are Dramatic*

- The Interstate Highway System has enabled a cumulative \$3 to \$5 Trillion in added national GDP since 1970.
- Freight costs per ton-mile have dropped 55% due to gains in efficiency.
- Rural counties with interstate access report 19% higher per capita income than those counties without.
- Future interstate corridors will replicate this strong return on investment.



## *Time For A Solution*

- There is currently NO dedicated federal funding to plan and construct Future Interstate Highways.
- Congress should make a Multi-State Future Interstate Highways Formula Funding program part of the next federal surface transportation reauthorization bill with dedicated funding.
- Funding would be distributed to State DOTs based on the number of unconstructed miles of multi-state authorized Future Interstate in each state.
- States would be required to use the formula funding to plan and construct multi-state interstates.
- Guaranteed federal funds for the program would be in addition to each state's Highway Trust Fund rate of return calculation.
- States would have the flexibility to determine annual priorities for corridor development.

# America Needs A Data Driven Vision Interstate Feasibility Studies

## **National Connectivity**

- A strong Federal role in surface transportation that will evolve to meet the national interest;
- A commitment to make more effective use of taxpayers' funds for national interest;
- Adequate system connectivity to accommodate network flows of Interstate travel and commerce, including traffic from other important passenger and freight transportation modes;
- System access to growing centers of population and economic activity;
- System resilience through redundancy or other means as appropriate; and
- Responsiveness to national defense needs.

## **Make the Future Measurable**

- What are the **Safety Benefits** for Upgrading the Corridor to an Interstate?
- What is the **Travel Time Benefit** of Upgrading the Corridor to an Interstate?
- How will the Interstate **Improve Freight Movement**?
- How will the Interstate **Help the Energy Industry Get Products to Market**?
- How will the Interstate **Help the Tourism Industry**?
- How will the Interstate **Improve Congestion and Reliability**?
- What is the **Cost to Upgrade** the Corridor to an Interstate?
- What are the **Economic Impacts and Return on Investment** of an Interstate Upgrade?
- **Long-term Economic Returns** for Upgrading the Corridor to an Interstate
- Determination of **Areas Preferable and Suitable for Interstate Designation**
- What are the **Potential Funding Sources** for an Interstate Upgrade?