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IOWA: WORST BRIDGES IN THE UNITED STATES

Where Are 2020 Candidates’ Plans to Fix Problem?

Des Moines, IA – December 19, 2019 – As part of a paid communications program ahead of the Iowa Caucuses, ReBuild USA today launched a six-week radio, digital and billboard ad campaign across Iowa highlighting the extreme public safety danger caused by Washington’s failure to enact a federal infrastructure package.

“Iowa has the worst bridges in America,” said Lori D’Orazio, National Political Director at ReBuild USA. “As a consequence, the ‘most structurally deficient bridges in the United States’ pose daily safety and transportation risks to Iowans and the 2020 Presidential candidates, campaign staff, and reporters traveling across the state. Over the next six weeks, ReBuild USA will be raising awareness about this problem to find out from the candidates what’s their plan to fix it.”

Iowa’s “worst in the nation” bridges have been reported extensively by national experts and the state’s biggest news organizations:

- “The bad news: Iowa has the most structurally deficient bridges in the United States, with just under 20% of the state’s bridges classified structurally deficient in 2018, according to the [ASCE] report.” ([Des Moines Register](#), May 3, 2019)
- “Iowa is number 1 in ‘structurally deficient’ bridges with 4,675, which is 19.4 percent of the state’s bridges.” ([WHO-TV](#), April 9, 2019)
- “Iowa is first in the nation with the number of structurally deficient bridges, with just under 20% structurally deficient in 2018.” ([American Society of Civil Engineers](#), May 3, 2019)
- “Additionally, Iowa is home to the highest number of structurally deficient bridges in the nation.” ([American Society of Civil Engineers](#), May 3, 2019)
- “Stacked up against all 50 states and the District of Columbia, Iowa was rated No. 1 for ‘structurally deficient bridges’ in 2016, according to a report by the [American Road & Transportation Builders Association \(ARTBA\)](#).” (WQAD-8, February 16, 2017, [WQAD](#))

“Iowans, ReBuild USA and our hundreds of thousands of supporters across the country can’t afford to wait – we need federal investment in infrastructure now,”



said D’Orazio. “We’re sharing our 10-point plan to upgrade and rebuild our nation’s infrastructure, and we encourage all candidates for president to endorse the [plan](#) or release one of their own that fully addresses America’s infrastructure needs.”

Additional details on Iowa’s infrastructure crisis:

- 4,675 of Iowa’s 24,123 bridges are deemed structurally deficient, putting Iowa first in the nation in number of structurally deficient bridges. Overall, the state has identified 15,350 bridges in need of repairs. More than 1.2 million vehicles cross these dangerous bridges each day.
- River flooding can overwhelm old levees and dams. Of Iowa’s 4,018 dams, 1,384 (34 percent) were built before 1970 and are more than fifty years old. Another 793 (24 percent) were built in the 1970s and will reach fifty years of service over the next ten years.
- This year, flooding has caused an estimated damage of \$1.6 billion and an estimated 23,540 structures were impacted, 1,201 structures were majorly impacted or destroyed, and 4,244 commercial parcels were affected.
- 29% of Iowa’s major roads are in poor or mediocre condition and 15% of Iowa’s rural roads are in poor condition.
- The average Iowa driver pays \$362 more a year because of the state’s poor roads and bridges.

To hear the radio ad, [click here](#). To view additional ads and for more on our communications in Iowa, visit www.rebuildusa.org and follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

ReBuild USA is a 501(c)(4) supported by [North America’s Building Trades Unions](#). Launched in 2016, ReBuild USA advocates for a bipartisan federal infrastructure bill to fix the numerous dangers and economic losses that result from dangerous roads and bridges, unmet energy needs, and poor safety and training standards that endanger the lives of workers and the general public.