



Construction Industry Round Table

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A force for positive change in the design / construction industry

11/14/2018 – Momentum for Transportation Ballot Initiatives Slows

While the overall number of successful ballot measures aimed at funding transportation projects remained about what has been seen in past elections (approximately 75% success rate), mounting resistance to spending plans is showing up in higher negative or no votes. This is most apparent in the largest ten measures (in terms of total dollars), where only half of them passed for a combined \$26 billion (with 92% of those dollars accounted for by only two FL measures), and those failing worth \$22 billion.

There may be a number of factors involved, not the least a general lack of trust in government, but there is also some evidence that use of the funds collected are being diverted. In a 2010 Reason Foundation policy study it was estimated that nearly a quarter (23.3%, and likely higher since the study) of all Highway Trust Fund user-tax dollars were being diverted to what can be called “non-highway” uses. This phenomenon is not isolated to *federal* dollars as determined by a Cato Institute study that found many *state* user-tax funds are also being used for purposes not strictly defined as highway needs. While diversion of funds may seem harmless and even convenient, they may have undercut the general public’s appetite for spending measures and hurt the overall trust that the funds will be spent on their intended purpose.