

John C. Schroer

Commissioner, Tennessee Department of Transportation
President, American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials

John C. Schroer was appointed Commissioner of Transportation by Governor Bill Haslam in January 2011. He is the 29th commissioner of the state agency that oversees a statewide transportation system including highways, rail, airports, waterways and transit. Under Commissioner Schroer, TDOT has remained debt-free and has prioritized safety, economic development opportunities, and the maintenance of Tennessee's infrastructure investments.

In 2017, Commissioner Schroer worked with Governor Bill Haslam to develop and pass the IMPROVE Act to provide increased funding for transportation for the first time in 30 years. The IMPROVE Act legislation funds 962 road and bridge projects across all 95 Tennessee counties. The conservative, responsible and user-based approach raises the gas tax by six cents and diesel tax by 10 cents, each over the next three years. It also increases the user fee for electric vehicle owners and allows local voters, through a referendum, in the state's largest counties and its four largest cities to impose a surcharge on taxes they already collect to be dedicated to transit projects.

On the national level, Commissioner Schroer serves as the 2017/2018 President of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), an organization composed of peers from all DOTs across the nation. As President, Schroer is leading the efforts of AASHTO and state departments of transportation to work with the Trump Administration and Congress to enact an infrastructure package and a new long-term, sustainable transportation reauthorization bill. The impacts of new technologies such as autonomous, connected and electric vehicles on the nation's transportation infrastructure are top priorities for Schroer. Prior to his appointment as President, Schroer served in several top committee positions at the association, including Chairman of the AASHTO Standing Committee on Finance and Administration and chair of the association's Strategic Management Committee.

During his tenure at TDOT, Commissioner Schroer has initiated a number of successful programs dedicated to increasing highway safety. The *Protect the Queue* program, which was created in 2013, stresses to all TDOT employees and partnering agencies the importance of protecting drivers caught in a traffic queue. Employees across the state are now trained on effective queue management, and statistics show a 19% reduction in secondary crashes. This equates to 20 fewer secondary incidents, and could represent four lives saved. As much as 25% of all traffic incidents are secondary crashes, and up to 20% of those involve serious injuries or fatalities. Commissioner John Schroer feels strongly TDOT can do more to protect innocent motorists from these secondary crashes by not only clearing the roadway as soon as possible, but also by aggressively alerting drivers of the slow-moving traffic ahead.

Commissioner Schroer also partnered with the Tennessee Department of Safety and Homeland Security to create the nation's first-ever *Traffic Incident Management Training Facility*. It features real roadway types and provides a safe environment for first responders to receive vital training.

Under Schroer's leadership, TDOT has also invested more than \$250 million since 2011 to complete approximately 700 safety projects. The effort to drive down fatalities and make roads safer has gained TDOT national recognition including the Federal Highways 2017 National Roadway Safety Award.

Using his background in real estate development, Commissioner Schroer has remained committed to running TDOT much like a private business. He completed a top-to-bottom review of the agency soon after his appointment. This effort resulted in the merger of field maintenance and field construction staff, which initially saved \$43 million and exceeded the FY 2017 goal of \$21 million in recurring savings. The Expedited Project Delivery (EPD) program is credited with saving \$610 million. Thirty-six projects under development were initially evaluated to confirm transportation needs were being met with the most effective design solution. The process has allowed several critical projects to move forward, yielding more logical and justifiable improvements.

Commissioner Schroer has worked diligently to strengthen TDOT's partnerships with communities. During his first four years, he achieved his goal of visiting all 95 counties in Tennessee and every summer/fall since has boarded a bus to embark on his annual Project Tours across the state. These tours provide an opportunity for state and local officials to view projects in their areas and to have open dialogue with TDOT's leadership. Schroer firmly believes these efforts result in smarter investments and greater benefits to cities and towns.

A former school board member, Commissioner Schroer has continued his commitment to education by implementing TDOT Reconnect, offering support services like transcript review, program and financial aid advisement for employees who want to go back to school and the creation of a TDOT specific certificate, in partnership with the Board of Regents and Tennessee College of Applied Technology. The Commissioner says his proudest accomplishment to date has been supporting 173 TDOT employees who went back to school to get their GEDs.

Prior to his TDOT appointment, Commissioner Schroer became Mayor of Franklin, Tennessee, in 2007. During his tenure, he was involved in the Middle Tennessee Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), serving on its executive committee. By virtue of his position as mayor, he was a member of the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) and served as its treasurer. As Commissioner of Transportation, he continues to be a member of each of those public bodies.

As Mayor, Schroer was instrumental in implementing financial policies that led to AAA ratings from both Moody's and Standard & Poor's, putting Franklin in the top ranking of cities across the country. He also played a crucial role in capital planning and prioritization by instituting several key changes in process and managing Franklin's budget in difficult economic times. Commissioner Schroer was a member of the Middle Tennessee Mayor's Caucus and served on its executive committee.

Prior to his election as mayor, he was a member of the Board of the Franklin Special School District for 13 years, serving as its chairman for eleven of those years. He served on the Board of the Tennessee School Board Association as Treasurer and Vice President.

An Indiana native, Commissioner Schroer received a bachelor's degree in business from Indiana University. After graduation, he moved to the Franklin area and subsequently received an MBA from the University of Tennessee. He spent ten years in the commercial real estate financing business before beginning a real estate development business in Franklin. Commissioner Schroer and his wife, Marianne, have three children and one grandson and are members of Franklin First United Methodist Church.