

July 28, 2010

**A daily roundup of recent news stories and opinion pieces about Tennessee transportation, water and flood control infrastructure**

For the full story, click the headline or use the link.

**[Tennessee To Get \\$200M In Federal Aid For Flood Relief \(Tennessean/Theobald\)](#)**

More than \$200 million in federal aid will soon head to Tennessee to help communities recover from May's devastating floods. The House passed a \$58.9 billion supplemental funding bill on Tuesday for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan that includes the flooding assistance. The legislation now goes to the White House, where President Barack Obama is expected to sign it. The House vote was 308-114. Among the state's nine House members, only Reps. Steve Cohen, D-Memphis, and John Duncan, R-Knoxville, voted against the legislation. Approval of the flood aid is a victory for the Tennessee congressional delegation, especially Republican Sen. Lamar Alexander, who inserted the provisions as a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee. State officials also credited the efforts of Democrat Rep. Jim Cooper of Nashville. The aid was one of a few non-military provisions to survive a months-long political battle in which House and Senate members from both parties sought to use the must-pass war funding bill as a vehicle for funding other goals, such as preserving teaching jobs.

<http://www.tennessean.com/article/20100728/NEWS01/7280361/Tennessee+to+get++200M+in+federal+aid+for+flood+relief>

**Across the State Line****[As Some States Close Highway Rest Stops, Others See Roadside Revenue \(Stateline\)](#)**

Anyone making a long drive through New Mexico next year may want to plan bathroom breaks strategically. State officials are considering closing nearly half of the state's 32 highway rest stops, in a move that could save the state up to \$1.6 million in maintenance costs. New Mexico is the most recent case in a rash of rest-stop closures that has affected states from Vermont to California. Facing enormous budget deficits, many states have raided transportation funds, forcing them to shut down all but the most necessary of operations. For Arizona, Louisiana and Virginia, the shuttering of roadside rest stops has become one of the most visible signs of the current budget crisis. In Delaware, however, the story couldn't possibly be more different. Last month, Delaware unveiled a sparkling new 42,000-square foot welcome center on the busy Interstate 95 corridor. Not only did Delaware not spend a dime constructing what amounts to a \$35 million mini-mall in the highway median. The rest stop actually makes Delaware money. The state's contract with HMSHost, a company that runs retail operations at many airports, gives Delaware a percentage of revenues from sales of gas, food and other goods — at least \$1.6 million per year for 35 years.

<http://www.stateline.org/live/details/story?contentId=501568>

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