

# A Century of Service to the U.S. Transportation Construction Industry

It all began in 1902. ARTBA's founder, Horatio Earle, was president of the League of American Wheelmen when he drafted a constitution for an association of road builders. The day after Christmas 1901, he sent 200 letters to better roads supporters inviting them to meet. The four "founding fathers" who gathered at the Cadillac Hotel in New York City on February 13, 1902, approved Earle's constitution and created the American Road Makers (ARM). It was the first association of its kind, though many others would follow.



*Horatio Earle*

The American Road Makers was renamed the American Road Builders Association (ARBA) in 1910. In 1977, it became the American Road and Transportation Builders Association (ARTBA).

From its inception, ARTBA took a very active role in lobbying for the interests of the transportation construction industry. Today, the industry ARTBA represents generates more than \$200 billion in U.S. economic activity annually and sustains the employment of 2.2 million Americans. ARTBA advocates strong federal investment in the nation's transportation infrastructure to meet public needs and demand.



ARTBA helped pass the Federal-Aid Road Act of 1916, which established the first sizeable appropriation of federal funds for road improvements and cemented the federal government's role in transportation development. Since 1916, ARTBA has been a major force in the development of all federal transportation policy and legislation.

In the early 1900's, the association launched the "Road Show," which brought industry leaders together for an annual exposition of construction equipment and machinery. Later, the Construction Industry Manufacturers Association (CIMA) would take over the show, but continued to maintain the close relationship between the two organizations that exists today. The "Road Show" continues as CON-EXPO-CON/AGG.



*ARTBA was instrumental in the creation of the Highway Trust Fund and legislation to create the Interstate Highway System construction program.*

In the 1950's, ARTBA was involved in the creation of the Highway Trust Fund and was a primary driver of the historic legislation to create the Interstate Highway System construction program.

In the 1960's, the association successfully sought congressional approval for creation of a cabinet-level U.S. Department of Transportation. In 1968, the ARTBA Board of Directors approved the creation of The Road Information Program (TRIP). With \$5,000 "seed contributions" from ARTBA and CIMA, TRIP launched an educational effort to publicize road needs on a national and state level.

In 1969, ARTBA expanded its activities to include other modes of transportation. Advisory councils were created for highways, airports, and public transit. Other advisory groups for safety and railroads were added in 1974 and 1976. In the 1970's, ARTBA proposed the original legislative concepts for two federal programs that today represent the industry's fastest growing market segments—the 4-R program of highway resurfacing, reconstruction, rehabilitation, and replacement, and the federal bridge repair and replacement program.



In the 1980's, ARTBA led the movement to dramatically increase the level of federal funding for highway, airport, and mass transit projects and lead the private sector push for the first dedicated federal gasoline tax increase in 23 years.

The association also became a recognized leader in the safety arena. ARTBA held two national conferences on highway work zone safety in 1985 and 1994, and an international conference in 2001. In 1998, ARTBA helped establish the National Work Zone Safety Information Clearinghouse.

In the 1990's, ARTBA continued to focus on financing issues, but also greatly expanded its activities in the regulatory and legal arenas. ARTBA successfully sued the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Corps of Engineers on proposed expansion of wetlands and clean air regulations that threatened the indus-

try's market. Since 1993, ARTBA has been involved in numerous environmental litigation and regulatory activities, defending the transportation construction industry's market interests against assaults launched by extremist groups. In 1999, ARTBA expanded the scope of this effort, organizing a strategic litigation alliance for the industry, the Advocates for Safe and Efficient Transportation (ASET).

In 2001, ARTBA's views were reaffirmed by a U.S. Supreme Court ruling, knocking down the so-called "migratory bird rule" that the Army Corps of Engineers had been using to



U.S. Supreme Court

expand its regulatory authority over wetlands. In 2000, ARTBA obtained a first-ever federal court decision that the Sierra Club and its allies could *not* challenge a regional transportation plan under the "citizen's suit provision" of the Clean Air Act. The provision allows for the awarding of attorney's fees to suc-

cessful plaintiffs. Extreme environmentalists had been using this provision routinely across the nation to file cases to block highway projects. ARTBA also beat back a proposed injunction to stop dozens of road projects in California and created legal pressure that sped up a court settlement in Atlanta, Georgia, allowing dozens of highway projects to move forward.

In 1989, ARTBA launched a \$1.5 million "Building A Better America Through Transportation" campaign that helped frame the debate on the federal surface transportation program reauthorization. The resulting 1991 legislation, the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA), authorized a record \$155 billion for federal highway and mass transit capital programs for six years. In 1994, ARTBA established an ISTEA Reauthorization Task Force to develop the industry's policy positions for the next reauthorization—the first national association to do so.

In 1995, ARTBA invited national construction, general business, labor, tourism, energy, agriculture and modal groups to join it in the formation of the Alliance for Truth In Transportation Budgeting. Its mission: push legislation to take the four federal transportation trust funds off-budget to eliminate revenue diversion and protect programs from future budget cuts. More than 100 organizations eventually participated.

The Alliance's activities were credited by many for helping establish the "budgetary firewalls" in 1998's Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (TEA-21), which guarantee virtually all incoming federal gas tax revenues are invested for their intended purpose—improving our nation's surface transportation system. In 2000, the Alliance helped secure congressional approval of a three-year federal aviation reauthorization bill that provides a significant boost in investment for airport construction.

ARTBA initiated the Transportation Construction Coalition (TCC), which it co-chairs, in 1996. Its mission: coordinate goals and support lobbying activities on funding issues and the surface transportation program reauthorization. The TCC provided the unprecedented vehicle to allow all facets of the transportation construction industry to speak with one voice and pursue a collective industry-specific agenda in the development of TEA-21. Twenty-eight construction associations and labor unions participate. The TCC's grassroots campaign was instrumental in achieving the more than \$200 billion record federal investment levels in TEA-21.

In 1998, ARTBA launched the "PRIDE in Transportation Construction" campaign which it views as a multi-year effort to educate elected officials and the general public about the transportation construction industry's many contributions to the American economy and way of life.

In 1999, ARTBA started laying the groundwork for the TEA-21 reauthorization, with the establishment of a member driven task force charged with developing the association's legislative recommendations. And in 2001, the Task Force issued a report calling for a minimum \$50 billion annual highway program to meet the needs of the nation's transportation infrastructure and ARTBA began building support for the proposal on Capitol Hill.

ARTBA is a full-service association with more than 5,000 members. It conducts conferences, publishes a newsletter, a magazine, educational materials, and maintains a comprehensive Internet website ([www.artba.org](http://www.artba.org)). ARTBA has a number of standing committees, policy advisory councils and professional development sections that work on issues to promote the effectiveness and efficiency of the transportation construction industry. It also conducts training programs and endorses a comprehensive business insurance program.

The association has eight membership divisions: contractors, planning and design, transportation officials, traffic safety, materials and services, public-private ventures in transportation, education and research, and equipment manufacturers.

ARTBA's members have extensive knowledge and experience in building the road, rail, airport, public transit, port and waterway facilities of the United States. Its unique federation structure and 100-year track record have no parallel in the U.S. construction industry. A diverse and talented volunteer leadership, active chapters and grassroots members and a highly qualified, interdisciplinary staff all work together to make ARTBA "The Driving Force in Transportation Construction!"

