BIO: Dr. Ali Maher is a professor of civil and environmental engineering and the director of the Center for Advanced Infrastructure and Transportation (CAIT), a National USDOT Transportation Center (UTC) at Rutgers University. Dr. Maher is the principle investigator of FHWA’s Long term Bridge Performance Program and has more than 25 years of experience in all aspects of transportation infrastructure engineering and management. He is a pioneer in development of agency/academia/industry collaboration and partnerships in the U.S. Under his leadership CAIT has become a center of excellence in advanced transportation infrastructure and management research and education. He has authored more than 150 papers and reports in prestigious journals and proceedings dealing with a multitude of civil and transportation infrastructure issues and a frequent invited speaker at technical societies and public forums.

ABSTRACT Federal, State, and local transportation agencies are responsible for the stewardship and management of the more than 590,000 bridges in the United States. This involves many planning, operational, maintenance, and economic challenges. To help overcome these challenges and foster the next generation of bridge and bridge management systems, the Federal Highway Administration’s (FHWA’s) Office of Infrastructure Research and Development launched the Long-Term Bridge Performance (LTBP) program in April 2008, a major strategic initiative designated as a flagship research project. The LTBP program is intended to be a minimum 20-year research effort, with the global objective of collecting scientific-quality data from the Nation’s highway bridges, as critical node-points of the highway transportation network. The data and information collected in this program will provide a more detailed and timely picture of bridge health, improve knowledge of bridge performance, and ultimately promote the safety, mobility, longevity, and reliability of the Nation’s highway transportation assets. The program was created in legislation for surface transportation enacted by the U.S. Congress in 2005: the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). Funding will continue for the LTBP program in the current legislation, Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21).