THE HIGH PRIORITY PROJECT PROGRAM

(111–25)

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
HIGHWAYS AND TRANSIT

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON
TRANSPORTATION AND
INFRASTRUCTURE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

APRIL 28, 2009

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U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
Washington, DC 20515

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Chairman

David Heymsfeld, Chief of Staff
Ward W. McCarragher, Chief Counsel

John L. Mica
Ranking Republican Member

James W. Coon II, Republican Chief of Staff

April 27, 2009

SUMMARY OF SUBJECT MATTER

TO: Members of the Subcommittee on Highways and Transit

FROM: Subcommittee on Highways and Transit staff

SUBJECT: Hearing on the "High Priority Project Program"

PURPOSE OF HEARING

On Tuesday, April 28, 2009, at 10:00 a.m., in room 2167 Rayburn House Office Building, the Subcommittee on Highways and Transit will hold a hearing to discuss specific High Priority Project ("HPP") requests of Members of Congress. The hearing will be an opportunity for Members to provide information to the Subcommittee and to the public about the type, location, total cost, and benefits of the HPPs that they will request in the upcoming authorization. The hearing is part of the Committee's effort to ensure greater transparency and accountability in the upcoming surface transportation authorization legislation.

BACKGROUND

On April 2, 2009, the bipartisan leadership of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and the Subcommittee on Highways and Transit sent a letter to all Members of the House of Representatives outlining new transparency and accountability principles for Member-designated HPPs within the upcoming surface transportation authorization legislation.

Under current law, the U.S. Department of Transportation, States, Metropolitan Planning Organizations, and transit agencies are responsible for the large majority of investment decisions. HPPs designated by Members account for only a small portion of the investment within the legislation. However, Members of Congress are uniquely accountable to their districts; as such, the HPP process gives them the ability to invest in worthwhile projects critical to their districts that may otherwise not be funded. The Committee will accept requests for HPPs to ensure that the diverse

needs of districts – urban, suburban, and rural – are addressed with the investment provided in this legislation.

To address concerns that have been raised with HPPs in the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), and prior surface transportation legislation, the Committee is implementing a series of reforms that will bring an unprecedented level of transparency and accountability to the process.

BACKGROUND ON HIGH PRIORITY PROJECT REFORMS

- The Committee requires all projects to meet eligibility criteria under Title 23 (Highways) or Chapter 53 of Title 49 (Public Transit) of the United States Code to ensure that HPPs comply with highway and transit program objectives. In addition, the Committee specifically prohibits HPPs funding for non-surface transportation projects, such as funding of transportation museums, horse trails, historic battlefields, and other non-transportation projects.

- The Committee requires Members to provide specific information on the type, location, total cost, percentage of total cost that the request would finance, and benefits of the project, in order for the Committee to effectively analyze the merits of project requests.

- The Committee requires Members to specifically identify funding to finance at least 80 percent of the total cost of the phase or segment of the project requested by either (1) the amount requested by the Member; or (2) the amount requested by the Member and other specifically designated Federal, state, local, or private funding sources. The intent of this provision is to increase the likelihood that construction of the project will be underway during the term of the Act.

- To ensure that HPPs have significant state or local support, the Committee requires Members to provide at least one letter of support for the project from the state Department of Transportation or affected local government or governmental agency.

  The Committee requires such government to specify the process which will be followed to provide an opportunity for public comment (such as the Environmental Impact Statement or other permitting process that requires public review) on the project.

  The Committee also requires such government to identify other Federal, state, local, or private funding sources that may be used to advance the project.

- To ensure greater transparency and accountability for HPPs, the Committee establishes the following transparency and accountability principles:

  - Members are required to certify that neither the Member nor his or her spouse has any financial interest in a project requested;

  - Members are required to post all requests for projects on the Member's website;

- The Committee will afford the U.S. Department of Transportation at least 20 days to review all project requests to ensure that the projects meet program eligibility criteria;
- A list of all Member-designated Surface Transportation High Priority Projects that are included in the bill will be posted on the Committee website; and
- A copy of all Member financial interest certifications for HPPs that are included in the bill will be posted on the Committee website.

➢ The Committee intends to repeal prior ISTEA and TEA 21 project designations that have not proceeded to construction or have remaining unused funds to ensure the effective use of highway and transit funds.

Any Member who would like to testify at this hearing should contact the Subcommittee on Highways and Transit at (202) 225-9989 to arrange a specific time to testify.

X

U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

James L. Oberstar
Chairman

David Heymsfeld, Chief of Staff
Ward W. McCarragher, Chief Counsel

Washington, DC 20515

John L. Mica
Ranking Republican Member

James W. Coon II, Republican Chief of Staff

April 2, 2009

Dear :

The Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure is crafting new surface transportation authorization legislation to replace the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) (P.L. 109-59), which expires on September 30, 2009.

This legislation will transform our surface transportation programs by strengthening the current Federal-state-local partnership, ensuring that programs meet specific performance-based metrics, and providing for greater transparency and accountability for Federal, state, and local decision-making.

Under current law, the U.S. Department of Transportation, States, Metropolitan Planning Organizations, and public transit agencies are responsible for the vast majority of surface transportation investment decisions. Although the current Federal-state-local partnership has served highway and transit systems well, not all communities are treated equally in the decision-making process.

To complement the work done by these agencies, and to ensure that the needs of the communities that we represent are full partners in these important programs, a small percentage of the overall investment of the authorization bill will be available for Member-designated, High Priority Projects ("HPPs"). As elected Members of Congress, we are uniquely responsible and accountable to our constituents; as such, we must be responsive to them by investing in worthwhile projects critical to our districts that may otherwise not be funded. The Committee will accept requests from Members of Congress to designate funding for High Priority Projects to ensure that the diverse transportation needs of our districts – urban, suburban, and rural – are addressed with the investment provided in this legislation.

The new authorization legislation will include a strong focus on performance and accountability, and these same high standards will be applied throughout the High Priority Project submission and selection process. To address concerns that have been raised with the Member-designated High Priority Project program authorized in SAFETEA-LU and prior surface transportation legislation, and to ensure that projects that receive funding in this surface

transportation authorization act result in tangible transportation and safety benefits, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure has adopted the following principles for Member-designated High Priority Projects:

- **The Committee requires all projects to meet eligibility criteria** under Title 23 (Highways) or Chapter 53 of Title 49 (Public Transit) of the United States Code to ensure that HPPs comply with highway and transit program objectives. In addition, **the Committee specifically prohibits HPP funding for non-surface transportation projects, such as funding of transportation museums, horse trails, historic battlefields, and other non-transportation projects.**

- **The Committee requires Members to provide specific information on the type, location, total cost, percentage of total cost that the request would finance, and benefits of the project,** in order for the Committee to effectively analyze the merits of the project request.

- **The Committee requires Members to specifically identify funding to finance at least 80 percent of the total cost of the phase or segment of the project requested by either (1) the amount requested by the Member; or (2) the amount requested by the Member and other specifically designated Federal, state, local, or private funding sources.** The intent of this provision is to increase the likelihood that construction of the project will be underway during the term of the act.

- To ensure that HPPs have significant state or local support, **the Committee requires Members to provide at least one letter of support for the project from the state Department of Transportation or affected local government or governmental agency.**

  The Committee requires such government or agency to specify the process that will be followed to **provide an opportunity for public comment** (such as the Environmental Impact Statement or other permitting process that requires public review) on the project.

  The Committee also requires such government or agency to **identify other Federal, state, local, or private funding sources** that may be used to advance the project.

- To ensure greater transparency and accountability for HPPs, **the Committee establishes the following transparency and accountability principles:**

  - **Members are required to certify that neither the Member nor his or her spouse has any financial interest in a project requested;**

  - **Members are required to post requests for projects on the Member's website;**

- **The Committee will afford the U.S. Department of Transportation at least 20 days to review all project requests to ensure that the projects meet program eligibility criteria;**
- **A list of all Member-designated High Priority Projects that are included in the bill will be posted on the Committee website; and**
- **A copy of all Member financial interest certifications for HPPs that are included in the bill will be posted on the Committee website.**

➢ **The Committee intends to repeal prior ISTEA and TEA 21 project designations that have not proceeded to construction or have remaining unused funds** to ensure the effective use of highway and transit funds.

The Committee will accept HPP requests that adhere to these specific principles beginning on April 27, 2009, and ending on May 8, 2009. Members will have the opportunity to submit project requests through the Committee's online database, which will be located at http://hpp.transportation.house.gov. Members will be required to submit both electronic and hard copies of all High Priority Project requests. Online answers to the enclosed questionnaire will be required for each project submission.

We strongly recommend that Members immediately begin to compile the information and letters of support necessary to complete their project requests.

To assist Members in this process, the Committee will hold a series of staff briefings and question-and-answer sessions for Congressional staff, as follows:

Date	Time	Location
April 8, 2009	2:00 p.m.	2167 Rayburn HOB
April 15, 2009	2:00 p.m.	2167 Rayburn HOB
April 24, 2009	10:00 a.m.	2167 Rayburn HOB
May 1, 2009	2:00 p.m.	2167 Rayburn HOB

In addition, on April 28, 2009, in room 2167 of the Rayburn House Office Building, the Subcommittee on Highways and Transit will hold a hearing to receive testimony from Members of Congress regarding project requests. Although participating in the hearing will not impact the inclusion of a requested project in this legislation, the hearing will provide an opportunity for Members to publicly discuss the needs of their district and the merits of their project requests. If you are interested in participating in this hearing, please contact the Subcommittee on Highways and Transit staff at (202) 225-9989.

If you have any questions about the High Priority Project submission process, please have your staff contact Jackie Schmitz of the Majority staff of the Subcommittee on Highways and Transit at Jackie.Schmitz@mail.house.gov or (202) 225-9989, or Dan Veoni of the Republican staff of the Subcommittee on Highways and Transit at Dan.Veoni@mail.house.gov or (202) 225-6715.

We believe that Member-designated projects can play an appropriate role in the upcoming surface transportation authorization act, and that the High Priority Project reform principles will ensure that projects that receive funding will result in tangible transportation and safety benefits. We appreciate your willingness to work with us to ensure that this process meets the highest standards of transparency and accountability.

Sincerely,

James L. Oberstar, M.C.
Chairman

John L. Mica, M.C.
Ranking Member

Peter A. DeFazio, M.C.
Chairman
Subcommittee on Highways & Transit

John J. Duncan, M.C.
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Highways & Transit

Enclosure

MEMBER-DESIGNATED SURFACE TRANSPORTATION
HIGH PRIORITY PROJECT REFORM PRINCIPLES
Prepared by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure Majority Staff
April 2, 2009

To address concerns that have been raised with the Member-designated Surface Transportation High Priority Project (HPP) program authorized in the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA–LU) and prior surface transportation legislation and to ensure that projects that receive funding in this surface transportation authorization act result in tangible transportation and safety benefits, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure has adopted the following principles for Member-designated High Priority Projects:

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  The Committee also requires such government to **identify other Federal, state, local, or private funding sources** that may be used to advance the project.

Member-designated Surface Transportation
High Priority Project Reform Principles
April 2, 2009

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  - **Members are required to post requests for projects on the Member's website;**
  - **The Committee will afford the U.S. Department of Transportation at least 20 days to review all project requests to ensure that the projects meet program eligibility criteria;**
  - **A list of all Member-designated Surface Transportation High Priority Projects that are included in the bill will be posted on the Committee website; and**
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- **The Committee intends to repeal prior ISTEA and TEA 21 project designations that have not proceeded to construction or have remaining unused funds** to ensure the effective use of highway and transit funds.

HEARING ON THE HIGH PRIORITY PROJECT PROGRAM

Tuesday, April 28, 2009

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HIGHWAYS AND TRANSIT,
Washington, D.C.,

The Subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 10:00 a.m., in Room 2167, Rayburn House Office Building, the Honorable Peter A. DeFazio [chairman of the Committee] presiding.

Mr. DEFAZIO. The Subcommittee on Highways and Transit is now in session. This hearing today is limited in scope to testimony by individual Members on their potential high priority projects.

This is a different approach than has been taken historically with high priority projects, first called when I came to Congress demonstration projects. They have always had some controversial element to them.

When I was first elected, Ronald Reagan had vetoed the Surface Transportation Bill, the Highway Bill. I then was allowed the opportunity as a new Member to put in a small project to study a needed bridge replacement in my district. When I was then meeting with the editors of the largest newspaper in my state a few months later, the Oregonian, during the inquisition which it was like in those days, they asked what does this demonstrate. I said it demonstrates that I understand the needs and priorities of my district and that I can deliver. They just sort of dropped it at that point.

That is the key here. Does all wisdom reside in the bureaucracy? Should all of the money be allocated either through the political appointee, the Secretary of Transportation, or through the various State departments of transportation, most of which are generally unelected bureaucrats with some direction from their legislatures, governors, or commissions?

The firm conclusion that I would come to over the years is no. There is room for some designated spending by Members of Congress who better understand the needs of their district and the degree of attention which those needs have received from their State departments of transportation, legislatures, or the Federal Department of Transportation bureaucracy.

However, that is not to say that we want to replicate some of the more notable problems in the past. So we have totally reformed the process. We are going to make it a transparent process.

Members are going to have to post their requests to the Committee on their websites very similarly to what is being done in Ap-

propriations. Then after and when we determine what allocations will be available to Members, they will probably have to revisit and refine those requests. It is unusual in that we are moving forward without making allocations to individual Members where they can tailor their projects and requests into that number, so I do admit it is a bit difficult for Members. Then their name will be forever associated with those requests when and if these are included in the legislation. This is part of a much larger process that is moving forward.

We have done, I think, 27 hearings on reauthorization or authorization now. The staff has been drafting for months. They reviewed every one of the 108 program expenditures of the Department of Transportation. We are going to very substantively reduce the number of programs or move, perhaps, to a small number of functions to dramatically streamline the Department of Transportation bureaucracy and the Federal Transportation Administration.

We are very interested in providing for more prompt project delivery; lowering overhead costs; and moving toward a practical least-cost designs, solutions, and planning in dealing with the major problems that confront our Country. Member projects will have to fit into that context. They will have to meet our new National priorities. They will have to address those concerns to be included in the legislation later.

This is a process that is ongoing. We have a sense of urgency as I have stated previously here. If we do not achieve authorization by October 1st for the next Federal fiscal year, absent a waiving of all the rules and some significant borrowing or appropriation of new funds, our spending—and the numbers are moving around a bit—but our spending or investment on highways and transit would drop somewhere between 30 and 40 percent for the next Federal fiscal year.

That would be a disaster. It would more than offset any stimulus effect that came from the earlier legislation this year with some transportation spending. So we have a sense of urgency.

Last week Chairman Oberstar and I met with principal Democrats on the Senate side to initiate discussions on principles and moving forward. We are moving forward with drafting and hope to have a bill in the not too distant future for public discussion.

With that, I would turn to my colleague, Mr. Duncan from Tennessee.

Mr. DUNCAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

On the last Highway Bill, we had three days of hearings in which Members came and presented their different projects. I see that what you have done this time is scheduled all of these Members to be here sort of one at a time. I guess we will have to see how that works.

I do want to welcome our former colleague, Mr. Blumenauer back who was such a great Member of this Committee.

The last Highway Bill was $286 billion. That is a lot of money. But when you think about that that was to cover a six year period spread over 50 States, then you see that it really wasn't enough to meet all the needs that we have.

Then you think that last year the Government Accountability Office came out with a report that said the Pentagon had a $295 bil-

lion cost overrun on just their 72 largest weapons systems. Now you think about that. That didn't count how much cost overruns in all the thousands of other large, medium, and small contracts that they might have had. And that wasn't the total cost of those 72 contracts. That was the cost overruns on those 72 largest weapons systems, $295 billion. It is an astounding figure.

Of course, now we are working on this new Highway Bill. Chairman Oberstar and I think both sides on this Committee want to try to avoid the two year delay that we had the last time. So we have already been having, as Chairman DeFazio said, many hearings. Then last week Chairman Oberstar presided over a couple of closed door meetings between some of the key people involved. So hopefully we are going to move on this in the House and do our duty. Then we will see what the Senate does.

Thank you very much for being here. This is very important to this Nation as I have said many times. There is a very legitimate Federal or National interest in the work that we do on this Subcommittee and in this Full Committee.

People in Oregon sometimes use the roads in Tennessee and vice versa. People in California use the water systems on occasion in New York. We all use the airports in the different States and the ports and so forth.

So I am proud to be a Member of this Committee and this Subcommittee. I look forward to doing one of the best Highway Bills ever. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Thank you.

With that, I recognize the Chairman of the Full Committee for some brief remarks. Chairman Oberstar?

Mr. OBERSTAR. Thank you very much. I listened to your opening comments, Mr. Chairman, while I was in the anteroom meeting with others. I think you summed it up very well. I just want to take this time to thank you for that succinct analysis of where we are.

It is serious outlook for the future of the Highway Trust Fund. But we are building on the legacy left by all these predecessors represented in the portraits ahead of us. They all worked hard to lay a good foundation. We are going to build on that foundation. We are going to build it together. We are going to build a good and strong future for transportation in America to move our economy.

The challenges you laid out are exactly the ones we need to address. Today we are going to hear from Members and that is exactly what I am going to do. I am going to listen and hear what they have to say.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

With that, we turn to our colleague Earl Blumenauer who used to be an esteemed Member of this important Committee before he moved off to other undertakings. Mr. Blumenauer?

STATEMENT OF HON. EARL BLUMENAUER, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF OREGON

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Duncan, and Chairman Oberstar.

I would like to think that I am just out now being a one person Subcommittee on resources for this Committee, looking forward to making sure you have what you need to do your job right.

Mr. OBERSTAR. If the gentleman yields, an adjunct professor member of the Committee.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. As you see fit, Mr. Chairman.

I do deeply appreciate the hard work that this Subcommittee and Full Committee has done getting a running start on reauthorization. You have had terrific hearings. You have made a strong record of support, not just for reauthorization of the Surface Transportation Act, but literally for a major rewrite of the Bill as is referenced. I strongly urge that you build on that record, establishing for the first time a real purpose in this Bill.

I am going to split my testimony, if I could, into two parts. I wanted to just talk briefly about the overview and then some specific items that I think are consistent with that.

What you are doing is a critical part of a new vision for rebuilding and renewing America. It is not just about protecting and optimizing existing transportation infrastructure. More than ever before, this is about revitalizing the economy and strengthening our communities while we protect the planet from global warming.

Your Committee has already started along this path of energy conservation and greenhouse gas reduction. I hope that you in the reauthorization will continue to be bold because transportation represents 30 percent of our Nation's greenhouse gasses. We can't meet our goals without your help.

I strongly urge that you put the I back into ISTEA, intermodalism, having a higher standard in this new vision. As you are sorting through this, I hear that you are talking about more uniformity. Everybody must plan and deliver for this new era. I find that exciting.

I hope that you will work with us to extract more value from the Federal partnership. Provide more statutory guidance on cost effective projects and apply it to all transportation modes. If it is good enough for light rail lines, it ought to be good enough for an interchange.

I urge that your Committee adjust and harmonize match ratios. A formula should not determine the transportation solution.

We must also work together to streamline this process to become more performance driven for environmental protection and public participation.

I do want to be your partner on the Ways and Means and Budget Committees to make sure you get the resources you need, generating more money after you create this new vision and make the Federal Government a better partner.

In pursuit of more resources and for the future, I strongly urge that you include in this Bill an expanded pilot project on vehicle miles traveled. We have been pioneering that work in Oregon. Please help us extend it to all 50 States so that together we can design a transportation funding program for the future.

You will receive from me in written testimony emphasis on five specific major projects. One is a Columbia River crossing which is a huge undertaking combining both Oregon's and Washington's resources to cross the Columbia River on the I-5 corridor, one of the

Nation's vital trade routes. Please work with us to refine the toll authority and to do a better job with not just freight movement but pedestrian, transit, and light rail connection from Vancouver to Portland.

I will be submitting second a request for the Portland-Milwaukee light rail extension that will continue to build on what we think is the best national light rail model to showcase not just what light rail does for our region, but what it has done nationally.

Third, I will be submitting legislation—actually introducing it this week—that I hope will be incorporated into your Bill. It is not just to expand the Portland streetcar system, but to literally jumpstart a national movement building on the Small Starts Provision that we worked on together in the last reauthorization but that the previous Administration couldn't figure out quite how to administer. I will be offering a bill to expand, refine, and direct it.

Fourth, I am confident that under your leadership, Mr. Chairman and Mr. Chairman, the Bike and Pedestrian Program will enter a whole new era through expanding safe routes to school and other trail and pedestrian programs. We will have some modest suggestions for what might happen for the showcase in our region.

Finally, you will receive a request from me for some funding on Portland's Sellwood Bridge, an example of how one local government struggles to meet massive regional needs and really does not have the resources for something that goes beyond its specific jurisdiction.

I deeply appreciate the hard work that you have done and the opportunity to share my thoughts. As I say, I will follow up with written testimony about specific projects. But I am hopeful that we can work together on the resource side and the vision side. You are laying the foundation for one of the most important economic and environmental developments beyond just transportation. I look forward to working with you. I really appreciate the chance to share some thoughts and observations today.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Thank you, Mr. Blumenauer. I have one very quick question because we will try to get caught up and get back on schedule. I didn't quite understand your comments about the match, when you are talking match not by formula.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I hope that as part of what you are doing, there is an opportunity to look at harmonizing match ratios.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Oh, I see. I understand.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I am sorry.

Mr. DEFAZIO. I missed that.

Thank you and we will look forward to the details on your particular priorities. Obviously, I am quite familiar a number of them, being a frequent visitor to the Portland area. I look forward to working with you on those.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Thank you very much. I appreciate your courtesy.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chairman, did you have any questions?

Mr. OBERSTAR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I greatly appreciate Mr. Blumenauer who is always a fount of ideas and new initiatives.

We are going to concentrate on cost effectiveness guidance. More than that, it is going to be direction for cost effectiveness. Performance based, we are going to move from a prescriptive program to

a performance based program. We are going to have more openness, accountability, and visibility as we are doing in the Stimulus program. The hearing we will have tomorrow will be the precursor.

But I wanted to come to your suggestion of a pilot program for vehicle miles traveled. I have followed the Oregon experience very closely. I participated in a demonstration of a VMT initiative at the Humphrey Transportation Center at the University of Minnesota.

Why do we need a pilot program? Why don't we just phase this in? It is going to be done; it is something we have to do. Why not just move it ahead? There are many suggestions that it will take five or 10 years. I think it can be done in far less than that, maybe two years.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Chairman, I agree with you. I think we are further along both with the technology and the understanding that if we don't move to a vehicle miles traveled formula, we are locked into an inevitable downward spiral that is going to make your job and our job on Ways and Means untenable.

The reason I suggested expanding the pilot project is we find that as we have been able to get more people involved, they understand and they are more comfortable with it. I think the impediment to a national vehicle miles traveled is less technological than it is in terms of public perception.

I sincerely believe that if you would help us with a pilot project that could be undertaken on a voluntary basis in every State in the Union, we would be able to increase the public awareness and comfort. It would hasten the day that we could make the transition.

I have been very pleased with what the reaction has been to the pilot project. If you would put this in your reauthorization so we could do it in the next couple years across America, I think we could build acceptance and awareness and refine it.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Under other circumstances, I think that would be a very good, thoughtful suggestion. But I would prefer to have Mr. DeFazio convene a meeting of all the best think tank minds—not a hearing but a meeting—and engage both the Republican and Democratic sides of the Committee. I would prefer to have a discussion, get all the ideas out on the table, and work on an implementation program. I am at a point of impatience with more studies. Thank you.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Thank you. Are there any other Members with urgent questions?

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I am sorry if I misspoke. I am not talking about a study. I am talking about demonstrating in each State in the Union how it works, raising the comfort, and answering the questions that people have. I agree with you.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Pilot is in the category of a study. We need an action program.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Okay, thank you.

Next, we have the Honorable Dean Heller.

STATEMENT OF HON. DEAN HELLER, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEVADA

Mr. HELLER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee for the opportunity to spend a few minutes here in front of you to discuss some of the needs and merits of Federal invest-

ment into Nevada's transportation system. Hopefully I will make some of your decision making a little bit easier. I don't know if I will succeed at that but I will give it a shot.

Today, perhaps more than ever, Nevada depends on a strong transportation system for commerce and mobility to support economic stability and job growth.

The State of Nevada, like other States, counties, and communities is currently facing difficult financial deficits. Funding for transportation projects is needed to accommodate Nevada's rapidly growing population, especially during these tough economic times.

Nevada's transportation programs are facing a severe funding shortfall crisis. Our State's highway system needs are expected to be $11 billion by 2015. Nevada is currently facing a $3.8 billion shortfall for the 10 largest projects planned for completion in 2015. Compounding all of this, highway construction costs rose 99.7 percent nationally and highway construction inflation has risen nearly 44 percent in the past few years, far exceeding general inflation.

As Members of the Committee, you may know that Nevada's population exploded from 1950 to 2000, increasing more than 1,200 percent. Since 1990, Nevada's population grew 133 percent with nearly one million new residents, the fastest rate of growth in the Nation. Annual vehicle miles traveled on Nevada roads exploded from 10 billion miles in 1990 to 22 billion in 2006. The number is expected to increase to 35 billion vehicle miles by 2010.

Almost every major road leading into and out of both the Reno metropolitan area and the Las Vegas Valley area needs to increase capacity just to keep up with growth as well as meet the demands of tourists traveling in Nevada. Tourism is the lifeblood of Nevada's economy. Thirty-nine million people visit Las Vegas annually and 53 percent of them arrive by automobile or bus on U.S. highways.

In addition, Interstate 80 and Interstate 15 are among the busiest truck freight corridors in the Nation. That traffic is expected to increase significantly in the future as the United States increases its overseas trading relationships. Increased trade will mean more ships arriving in western ports with goods that will need to be transported both to and across Nevada and to other States.

Interstate 80 is the lifeline for the city of Reno and Sparks and it also goes through the towns of Fernley, Lovelock, Winnemucca, Battle Mountain, Elko, Wells, and West Wendover on its way through the State. Many of these areas are growing. Maintaining and expanding I-80 infrastructure will alleviate traffic, improve traffic safety, and help small businesses grow in all of these communities.

These facts demonstrate that Federal funding for surface transportation projects is critical to the future of Nevada. The Surface Transportation legislation that the Committee is currently working on could provide the foundation for unprecedented investment in Nevada and throughout the United States.

I stand beside Nevada's communities, counties, and the State to provide a top ranked transportation system that supports Nevada's economy and mobility in a fiscally, socially, and environmentally smart manner. I look forward to working with every Member of the Committee on measures that will ensure the Federal Government

remains a faithful partner in meeting the demands of Nevada's rapidly growing transportation system.

Mr. Chairman, again, thank you for your few moments and minutes to express some of the concerns and virtues necessary to keep Nevada's transportation system solid.

Mr. DEFAZIO. I thank the gentleman. Obviously, your testimony very well makes the case that we are dealing with an integrated national system. Demand may not originate with Nevada but Nevada is dramatically impacted by demand elsewhere. I appreciate you making that point.

Mr. HELLER. Mr. Chairman, thank you.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Do any other Members of the panel have questions? Mr. Duncan?

Mr. DUNCAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Congressman Heller.

I was interested to hear your testimony because I do know of the explosive growth in and around Las Vegas. I read last year that two thirds of the counties in the U.S. are losing population. That really surprises people in my area. I represent the Knoxville area and it happens to be also one of the fastest growing parts of the United States.

We have got to take a lot of that into consideration when we do this Highway Bill. On the other hand, I don't want to see everybody jammed into 30 or 35 megapolises. So I hope we also do what we can for the rural areas.

But I was interested in your 39 million people coming to Las Vegas. I also represent a big portion of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and that is by far the most heavily visited National Park. We get three times what any other National Park gets, but that still is only a little over nine million visitors a year to the Great Smoky Mountains. So that 39 million is a pretty impressive figure to me. I can understand why you are here before us today. Thank you very much for your testimony.

Mr. HELLER. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Do any other Members of the Committee wish to speak?

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Chairman?

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chairman, certainly.

Mr. OBERSTAR. I just want to thank our colleague for his astounding numbers. Those are rocking numbers: 39 million a year with 53 percent by car and bus. I have been to the airport at Las Vegas. I have been in and out of it many times. It seems every organization in the Country wants to hold a conference in Las Vegas.

Mr. HELLER. I hope it continues to be that way, too.

Mr. OBERSTAR. You probably want more of them to go to Reno. [Laughter.]

Mr. OBERSTAR. So I am astounded. Your suggestions of investments are well placed.

We just want to remind each of the witnesses today again of standards the Committee has set, that projects have a public hearing; have a local sign off; and that you are prepared to assure the 80 percent non-State—that is 80 percent Federal—share of funding for projects, to assure that these projects will be completed in the timeframe of the legislation or at least substantially underway.

We have had the situation in years past where Members have a $10 million project need. We put $1 million into it and then the State says, fine, where are the other $7 million; we will put up $2 million. We have seen that happen over the last 18 years and we want to avoid that for the future. What happens is the project is never undertaken and money is then recision bait for the Office of Management and Budget or the Appropriations Committee instead of that money remaining in the Highway Trust Fund and going to transportation projects. As a transportation dependent State, you want to see those dollars well used.

Mr. HELLER. I appreciate it, Mr. Oberstar. I will keep those criteria in mind as we move forward. Thank you.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Thank you.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Thank you. If there are no other questions, we will move on. Thank you, Mr. Heller.

Mr. Larsen from my neighboring State of Washington.

STATEMENT OF HON. RICK LARSEN, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF WASHINGTON

Mr. LARSEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to testify before the Subcommittee on behalf of high priority project requests. First off, I just want to say I look forward to working with you and Chairman Oberstar to make a significant investment in our Nation's transportation infrastructure and build a foundation for future economic growth as we rewrite the Federal Surface Transportation legislation.

In February, President Obama and Congress took an important first step to modernize our roads, bridges, and transit; to create jobs; and to help our economy recover by passing the economic recovery package. Recovery dollars are already going to work in Washington State and in my district.

In fact, just yesterday the Washington State Department of Transportation announced that they had obligated over 50 percent of their economic recovery funding 51 days ahead of schedule. That makes Washington State one of about five or six States to obligate that much money.

In Snohomish County in my district, a project to repave a worn-out section of Interstate 5 has already gone out to bid and is expected to employ approximately 60 workers during construction.

In Whatcom County, the Whatcom Transportation Authority will combine economic recovery dollars with a Federal appropriation to buy 11 new buses to help replace their aging fleet. Whatcom Transit saw the highest ridership increase in the Country last year, so these new buses will help them keep up with skyrocketing ridership.

In Washington State, Recovery projects are addressing pressing local needs, creating jobs, and coming in ahead of schedule and under budget. Despite these successes, the Recovery package only funds a small percentage of the investment our Country needs to invest in our aging transportation infrastructure.

In Washington State, our Department of Transportation and metropolitan planning organizations selected their Recovery projects from a list of hundreds of shovel-ready projects. As we write the next Surface Transportation Bill, it is clear that our Na-

tion needs a significant investment in our transportation infrastructure to modernize our roads, bridges, and transit; to create jobs; and to set the foundation for future economic growth.

The top transportation priorities for my district in the next authorization are highway safety, freight mobility, and ferries. In addition for pushing for specific policy changes to the current authorization, I have approached the high priority project process with these three issues in mind.

Highway safety is a top priority for my district. My district includes U.S. Highway 2, a stretch of highway where there have been over 50 fatal accidents since 1999. The communities along this 50 mile span of U.S. 2 and the Washington State Department of Transportation have partnered to implement safety improvement projects throughout the corridor. The U.S. 2 Route Development Plan, or RDP, has identified over $1 billion in projects to enhance and reduce congestion on U.S. 2.

In the next authorization, one of my priority project requests is a $10 million project to construct safety improvement projects in this corridor between the cities of Snohomish and Gold Bar. This highly traveled corridor experiences a large number of accidents. A key priority among the possible projects is the intersection of U.S. 2 and Bickford Avenue. This location has experienced a significant number of collisions in the last five years and was identified as one of the highest rated projects on the U.S. 2 Route Development Plan.

Freight mobility is a priority for my district and for Washington State. In 2007, Washington State freight systems supported over one million jobs in freight dependent industry sectors. Washington State's transportation infrastructure including our northern border crossings; Interstate 5; the Burlington Northern Santa Fe and Union Pacific rail lines; the ports of Everett, Seattle, and Tacoma; and all of our intermodal connectors are all critical in supporting the movement of freight.

I intend to request a high priority project in my district to help freight move safely and efficiently across the U.S.-Canadian border. The Blaine Freight and Passenger Rail Improvement Project will construct additional rail line capacity to keep the import and export of freight to and from Canada moving efficiently. It also provides additional siding track to allow for safer inspection of freight traffic coming into the U.S. at the U.S. Customs and Border Protection facility. This additional siding track has the added advantage of allowing freight train inspections to occur off the main line, helping to ensure that Amtrak Cascades passenger trains operate on time.

Ferries are an important top priority for my district and Washington State. The Washington State ferry system is the largest system in the U.S. It carries over 25 million riders annually. They are an integral part to our transportation infrastructure of Washington State. They are an extension of the highway system and provide public transportation to help thousands of my constituents get to work and to return home.

I intend to request project funding for the Anacortes multi-modal ferry terminal in my district. Washington State ferries provide the only public transportation access to several of the San Juan islands

and all these routes depart from the Anacortes ferry terminal. This project will replace existing terminal buildings and five spans of the passenger overhead loading system. It will also pave terminal access lanes and parking lots.

I would also encourage the Subcommittee to improve and expand the overall Federal investment in ferry transportation. Tomorrow Senator Murray and I will introduce the U.S. Ferry Systems Investment Act of 2009. Our legislation would make a more robust investment in the Federal Ferry Boat Program. It would also mandate that half of those funds be distributed by formula to help ensure that significant funding is directed to the largest and most important public ferry systems. Half of the funding as well would continue to be distributed on a discretionary basis, which would help initiate and expand ferry services throughout the country. I believe these changes would significantly improve the current program and provide our Nation's ferry systems with the resources they need to improve public safety, meet growing demand, and create jobs to keep our economy moving.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for this opportunity to present my project requests for the next Surface Transportation Authorization. I look forward to continuing to work with you and the rest of the Subcommittee to invest in our Nation's transportation infrastructure and set the foundation for future economic growth.

Mr. DEFAZIO. I thank the gentleman. Thank you for pointing out the intermodal needs with ferries, the border problems, and freight movement.

I thought the number you gave on Highway 2. The total need for that one highway in one State is $1 billion. That just underlines how huge the unmet needs are nationally. We see that every year in the American Society for Civil Engineers and we have seen other folks. The commissions quantify it, but when you reduce it down to just one highway in one State and put out those numbers, we realize that we need a tremendous amount more investment.

Mr. Duncan, do you have any questions?

Mr. DUNCAN. I have no questions, but I want to thank our colleague, Congressman Larsen, for being here. I have been out to his district several times over the years and in the vicinity to visit the Boeing operation and some other things. I know the projects he is talking about are very, very important. So I thank you for taking this time to come here and be with us today. Thank you.

Mr. LARSEN. Thank you, Mr. Duncan.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Thank you. Do any other Members have questions? If not, then we will move on. Thank you, Mr. Larsen.

We move to the Honorable Bill Posey.

STATEMENT OF HON. BILL POSEY, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF FLORIDA

Mr. POSEY. Thank you, Chairman DeFazio and Ranking Member Duncan, for the opportunity to come before you and share with you some of the needs for east central Florida.

There are several transportation products that are important to east central Florida. I will use my time here this morning to share with you three of the highest priorities. These projects meet the qualifications for the Committee and each is high on the list of the

local metropolitan planning organizations. Later this week, I will be submitting all of the data and support letters that the Committee has requested.

First, I would like to ask the Committee to consider providing funding for the Palm Bay Parkway. The Palm Bay Parkway is well underway with planning by Brevard County, the city of Palm Bay, the city of Melbourne, and the Melbourne Airport Authority in full concert. The funding will help speed this project along, obviously.

The Palm Bay Parkway was conceived in the 1990s to address regional mobility needs in southern Brevard County and northern Indian River County, to alleviate congestion on all major parallel roads including I-95, to improve access to Melbourne International Airport and the major employers near the airport, and to enhance public safety by providing additional evacuation capability for significant populations within limited evacuation options. The Palm Bay Parkway will aid in hurricane evacuations, obviously.

The Palm Bay Parkway has been in planning for more than 15 years and is now moving forward. The general public and elected officials are very much aware of the need for the Parkway and actions are being taken to move this project forward. The potential to create new construction, commercial and service jobs, and residential neighborhoods on the property transverse the Parkway is substantial.

The Parkway consists of two interchanges along I-95. It will provide a western loop around the city of Palm Bay, connecting both the northern end of Palm Bay to the north end of near Melbourne and the Melbourne International Airport.

In 2007, Brevard County commissioners issued a revenue bond which raised an estimated $21 million. Over 40 percent of the bonds' proceeds were allocated to the Parkway.

Second, citizens in Indian River County have several projects that are important to improving traffic flow in and around the county. While one of these projects is new construction, the others add more lanes to already existing roads. I will be submitting funding requests on their behalf later also.

Finally, I would ask the Committee to give consideration to providing funds for the Hoagland Boulevard/Pleasant Hill Road. That is in Osceola County. It is a corridor of a 3.8 mile roadway connecting two State highways, U.S. 192 and U.S. 1792. The project is an important link in the regional transportation network in central Florida. It provides direct access to Kissimmee Gateway Park and airport and to designated enterprise zones critical to economic development in Osceola County.

Osceola County and the city of Kissimmee have jointly completed preliminary engineering and alignment analyses for the project as of last December.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to come before you. My staff and I are looking forward to working with you to meet our Nation's infrastructure needs.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Thank you for the testimony. The gentleman makes a good case regarding how what would seem to be a local project has tremendous economic development and, again in dealing with airports, intermodal implications. I appreciate your highlighting those factors to the Committee. Thank you.

Mr. Duncan?

Mr. DUNCAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank our colleague, Congressman Posey, for being here to present what I know are great needs. I am familiar with his part of Florida. There has been such a population explosion over the last 25 or 30 years all through Florida so I know there are a lot of needs down there.

Congressman Posey is a new Member, but he has already gotten off to a great start in becoming a very effective Member for his district. I appreciate your being here with us today. Thank you very much.

Mr. POSEY. I know the days are long and you have a lot of people coming before you. I can't tell you how much I appreciate your courtesy and your attention. Thank you.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Brevity is appreciated and will be rewarded. Thank you.

Ms. DeGette, the Honorable Diana DeGette from Colorado?

STATEMENT OF HON. DIANA DEGETTE, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF COLORADO

Ms. DEGETTE. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Duncan, and Members of the Committee. I thought I would come down today and update you on a couple of exciting transportation developments going on in the Denver metropolitan area.

Some of you were in Denver last summer and you saw the historic Union Station development, which is a multi-modal development. It is very exciting because it is in the core of my district, in the core of Denver. It is an historic train station that is being rethought to be the transportation hub, not just for rail, but also for light rail, for a hard rail system out to the airport, and for and many other projects. This is a personal favorite of Chairman Oberstar's, I know, and I am excited about it. It really helps cement Denver as the national model to how to complete major transportation projects.

The second thing I would like to talk about this morning is the expansion of light rail throughout the metropolitan Denver area in a project known as FasTracks.

Mr. Chairman, all of these projects have been on time, under budget, and maybe most importantly they have had the full support of all of the voters in the regional area. That has helped us tremendously in building out this entire project.

With respect to Union Station, Union Station is going to be the core of Denver's FasTracks program. It is going to connect downtown Denver by light rail and commuter rail to the suburbs in all four directions. Also there is enhanced bus service, Amtrak accessibility, and pedestrian and bicycle options with Union Station.

In the last transportation reauthorization, the Committee wisely named Union Station as a project of regional and national significance. What we are looking at doing right now, one of our top priorities, is developing out the connection between Union Station to Denver International Airport. Those of you who have flown into DIA know that the airport is some distance away from the city center and so having a viable public transportation option will really be helpful.

Turning to the FasTracks program, that program is six light rail and commuter rail lines. It was approved by the voters. It is one of the top priorities of the business community. It is really a good example of what a lot of western cities—not just Denver but Portland and other cities—are doing as well because it is moving into all of the suburbs which are developing, albeit at a smaller pace with the economy.

So the FasTracks build-out that we still need to do is going to include 18 miles of bus rapid transit and 21,000 new parking spaces. It is going to serve 91 percent of the households in the metropolitan areas.

We do have a couple of problems with the FasTracks funding that I think are probably shared by every single light rail program in the Country. Soaring commodity prices last year sent the costs through the roof. That was a real problem for the RTD, the Regional Transportation District, in meeting its budget. Oil, concrete, steel, and copper reached record level prices.

RTD underwent cost containment measures, including design changes in some areas and some innovative public/private partnerships in other areas. But what basically has happened is the increase in commodity prices last year has slowed the build-out of the project. One of the effects of the economic downturn is those commodities are also going down, so that may help in the future.

So in closing, I would just want to thank the Committee for its great commitment to these projects over the years. I urge you to consider continuing with these two projects in the days ahead. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. DEFAZIO. I thank the gentlewoman for her testimony. As she points out, the Federal Government has been partnering with your community in achieving some tremendous success in intermodal transit. This airport connection is very exciting. I look forward to the day when we might experience that.

We really like the "on time, under budget" part. Perhaps there is something to be learned there either by the Federal Transit Administration or by other agencies. We will investigate some of how you were able to pull off that miracle.

Mr. Duncan?

Mr. DUNCAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was also going to mention that we love to hear those words, "on time and under budget," because we get into all these projects where there are problems. In fact, I remember years ago when I was chairing the Aviation Subcommittee, we had a big hearing one time about the Denver Airport and some of the problems that you were having at that time.

I know there is a lot of need. I was visited and I am sure the Chairman was visited by a group from Boulder to discuss the transportation needs between Denver and Boulder.

Thank you very much for being with us.

Ms. DEGETTE. I was telling someone yesterday that though the baggage system has been worked out now for about 15 years in Denver, people still ask me if their luggage is going to get lost. The baggage system works great and it is all working. Thank you very much.

Mr. DUNCAN. Thank you.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Does anybody else have any questions? Yes?

Mrs. MILLER OF MICHIGAN. If I could, really quickly? You were talking about the intermodal system that you are doing out there. I haven't had an opportunity to be there in several years. Is part of that a high speed bus with a dedicated bus lane? Is there anything with the bus system out there that you are improving as well as this?

Ms. DEGETTE. A high speed bus is not a part of that particular program, although as part of the whole build-out of FasTracks we have dedicated HOV lanes. Of course, buses use those lanes as well.

But the bus system, which was the traditional public transportation system in the Denver metropolitan area, is being incorporated into this light rail system that we have in addition to the bike lanes and the commuter lanes and all of that so that it all works together. That is always a help in these situations.

Mrs. MILLER OF MICHIGAN. I see. Very good. Thank you.

Ms. DEGETTE. Thank you very much.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Thank you.

The next is the Honorable Buck McKeon. He is running a couple of minutes late so we will go into a brief recess. My colleague, Mr. Sires will take the Chair upon his arrival. With that we stand in indefinite, short term recess and will take Mr. Boozman next.

[Recess.]

Mr. SIRES. [Presiding] The Honorable Congressman McKeon, any time you are ready?

STATEMENT OF HON. HOWARD P. 'BUCK' MCKEON, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Mr. MCKEON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to testify on one of the most important California transportation projects: improvements to Interstate 5.

Interstate 5 is one of the most regionally significant transportation corridors and goods movement arteries in California, perhaps in the Country. You can see on the map that I have here the portion there that is blown up. Here, Santa Clarita, is where I live.

Interstate 5 goes from Washington down to the border. It is a very important part of the interstate project that was built in the 1950s. The I-5 is absolutely vital for efficient goods movements from the ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles to destinations in California, Oregon, Utah, and Washington. Moreover, the I-5 is an essential international trade artery connecting the west coast industry with Canada and Mexico.

We are often tragically reminded of the importance of this freeway and the goods movement it facilitates after a disaster such as the seismic event in 1994, the Northridge earthquake. It shut down, right in here, it shut down all of the bridges coming north and south from Route 14 and from the I-5. There was really no other major way to get through.

They did a great job of rebuilding. In fact, what they did was everybody worked together. They had three major bridges there to build to put that back together. They worked night and day and had it done in six months. We paid a bonus to the workers and did

it cheaper than the normal process would have been. In six months they wouldn't have even had the building permits. But still, it is a major weakness that we have there at that point.

Playing such a prominent role, this nationally designated high priority corridor faces some significant challenges. Despite the nearly unanimous community support, the sheer size, scope, and cost of the Gateway Improvement Project pose significant obstacles. Even with a robust Federal investment, such a project will require unprecedented collaboration of effort and resources from all efforts and sectors. That is why I am asking this Committee to support the Santa Clarita-Los Angeles Gateway Improvement Project.

This project will help relieve congestion along one of the most heavily traveled portions of the I-5, which currently experiences 48,000 daily hours of delay that costs motorists $204 million a year. I live right here. This picture is going south. Here there is a mountain pass.

I have to leave for the airport when I am coming back early in the morning at about 4:30 a.m. Then I can get to the airport for my 7:50 a.m. flight. If I leave 15 minutes later, it takes about an hour longer. It is amazing what that happens.

It will also reduce a mixing of commercial trucking and passenger vehicles. Trucks are supposed to take about one lane but they take two. There are only four lanes through there so it just backs up for miles.

Moreover, the improvements in efficiency are projected to increase air quality by almost 50 percent. The Santa Clarita-Los Angeles Gateway Improvement Project will accomplish this task through two major enhancements.

I grew up down here in the San Fernando Valley area. We have always had bad air quality down in the LA basin but when I moved out to Santa Clarita over 40 years ago, there was no problem with the air. Now it is sometimes worse than in the LA basin. A lot of it is because of that traffic that can't get over the mountain and down below.

The Santa Clarita-Los Angeles Gateway Improvement Project will accomplish this task through two major improvements, as I said. First the project will extend existing high occupancy vehicle, HOV, lanes for several miles along I-5. Second, it will incorporate dedicated truck climbing lanes along steeper portions of the freeway.

The HOV lanes will provide badly needed efficiency at peak times for this key stretch of highway that serves as a gateway to and from the Los Angeles community for thousands of commuters every day. We have people that are driving from clear up in here down into this basin every day. I have seen Route 14 backed up for miles and miles in the morning. It is amazing. The HOV lanes would extend from the Route 14 interchange to Parker Road, a key stretch of highway badly in need of increased capacity.

The other aspect of the project is the incorporation of dedicated truck lanes from Route 14 to Pico Canyon Road and Lyons Avenue. As truck volumes continue to increase along a path that is projected to double by 2030, the I-5 truck lanes will dramatically improve the flow of goods movement in the corridor, regionally, and internationally. This will help to keep America's ports competitive

with new ports in Mexico and Canada. In Southern California, this goods movement represents a direct economic impact of more than $90 billion in economic activity. It supports 690,000 jobs.

The importance of this project is strikingly evident by the overwhelming local support from the communities that depend on the I-5 from industry, local government, and private citizens. Several key businesses have joined together to support this. Members of our delegation have joined together to support it. Even the California Department of Transportation, Caltrans, and the Metropolitan Transit Authority—which have numerous high priority projects—have placed an increased urgency on improvements to this I-5 corridor.

So in closing I would ask this Committee to make an investment not only in the future of the Santa Clarita Valley but in the future of California by supporting my request for the Gateway Improvement Project. This is something that, because of the regional status, is too big really for just the local people here. They have put up a lot of money and they are willing to match as much as they can. But the State of California, the Governor, has shown that $222 billion of projects are needed in the State. So the State is also going to need help to make this happen. Thank you very much.

Mr. SIRES. Thank you, Congressman McKeon.

Congressman Duncan, do you have a question?

Mr. DUNCAN. I don't have any questions. But I will say that the most recent study that has come out says that we lose at least $78 billion a year just due to congestion, people sitting in traffic. I am sure a significant part of that must come from that Southern California area. I know I have been visited and I am sure Chairman DeFazio and Chairman Oberstar have been visited by a couple of groups from Southern California already to talk about the great needs that are out there. I think all of us or most of us have probably been on Interstate 5 and are a little bit familiar with the needs out there.

I do remember, though, many years ago I went on the Congressional plane with the big delegation to go to former President Nixon's funeral. They had a couple of buses for us when we landed and we were on I-5. It was just totally empty. I said to Congressman Gallegly, where is all that traffic you all are always complaining about out here? I said, there is not a car on this road. What it was was that they had the entrances and exits all blocked off for us so we could get to that funeral. So I did get to ride on it one time when there wasn't a car in sight.

Mr. MCKEON. It was the same thing when we had that 1994 earthquake. President Clinton came out and the same thing happened. We got on that freeway and I had never seen anything like that before. It was like an airport runway. But that is a very rare occurrence. We were making a lot of people mad that were sitting on the side streets that wanted to get on those freeways.

Mr. DUNCAN. You did mention one other important thing, though, that we need to consider in this bill. It seems that when we give incentive bonus type contracts out that work is done much more quickly and everybody is happier.

Mr. MCKEON. That is something. I don't know how you do that in a bill like this but if there is something that can be done to

cause that kind of incentive, I think we could get a lot more bang for our buck.

Mr. DUNCAN. Thank you very much.

Mr. SIRES. Does anyone else have anything to add?

Congressman, I can't see it from here. Is that downtown Los Angeles where it goes right through, Interstate 5?

Mr. MCKEON. This is I-5.

Mr. SIRES. But on the bigger picture there?

Mr. MCKEON. This is Interstate 5.

Mr. SIRES. That goes right through downtown Los Angeles? Is that what I see on the bottom there?

Mr. MCKEON. Right. This is this and here is Los Angeles. It does go all the way through, all the way down to the border and all the way north to Canada.

This was built, remember, as part of the construction of the freeway system when Eisenhower was President and did the interstate transit. It was built for defense purposes so that we could get people from one part of the Country to another quickly.

Eisenhower, after World War I, was sent—you all know, I am sure, the story—he was sent with others to go across the Country. In those days, they had mules and they had very inadequate equipment. He said it took him months to get across the Country. Some days they maybe could only go a mile or so a day. He remembered that. So when he became President, that was the motivation to do the interstate transportation system.

I think it is time now that we really upgrade it and bring it into the 21st century.

Mr. SIRES. Thank you, Congressman.

Mr. MCKEON. Thank you.

Mr. SIRES. Mr. Brown, would you like to begin?

STATEMENT OF HON. HENRY E. BROWN, JR., A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

Mr. BROWN OF SOUTH CAROLINA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know this has kind of come at short notice but I appreciate the opportunity to serve on this Committee. This has been my 9th year.

Back in the last reauthorization bill, TEA-LU, we were able to get an interstate system into South Carolina designated as a high priority. We were able to get some funding at that time to get the design, the right-of-way, some of the environmental impact statements, and these preliminary things out of the way.

As we look at this reauthorization bill, I would hope that we would become a little bit more innovative in our process. I know that we really haven't looked at the overall highway system—I know Buck alluded to it earlier—since Eisenhower, back in the 1950s. So I think we need to go back and revisit some of the corridors that were missed back in the 1950s and to go back and readdress those.

I know we all talk about the lost hours and lost energy in delay time on our road systems. In fact, I heard somebody today say something like 50 tankers a year of fuel is consumed just in delay on the highways.

I would like to talk just a little bit about I-73. It starts up in Michigan and comes down through the other States into South

Carolina. It comes into Myrtle Beach. Myrtle Beach is a destination of choice for around 14 million tourists a year. It doesn't have anything but secondary roads. So we are looking for some relief for that congestion coming into that region. The total project cost would be about $2 billion for the Federal share. We would like to certainly hope that this project would be one of the projects that would be looked at as we revisit the interstate system.

I would hope that this Committee would take a longer look at not only just I-73 in South Carolina but the other corridors that need to be addressed as the population shifts from the Northeast down to the Southeast and also to the Midwest. My petition would be to take another look at I-73 and try to get some additional funding to complete this system plus the other corridors that are necessary throughout the Nation.

Another thing I would like to see us do is to make it, I guess, easier to build highways. I know that we built Cooper River Bridge, which we named for Arthur Ravenel, under design-build method. It came in under budget and also under time. So I would hope that somehow we could incorporate some language in this reauthorization bill to allow for other types of construction rather than just the normal process which we go through as we build our highways. I think the design-build method certainly would be something that I would like to see us implement.

Mr. Chairman, with that I will just yield back the balance of my time and entertain any questions.

Mr. SIRES. Thank you, Mr. Brown. Does anyone have a question? Thank you very much.

Mr. BROWN OF SOUTH CAROLINA. Thank you.

Mr. SIRES. Mr. Boozman, welcome.

STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN BOOZMAN, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF ARKANSAS

Mr. BOOZMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for allowing me to have the opportunity to testify today. I have been on the Transportation Committee since I arrived in Congress and it really has been an honor to serve with all of you.

I am here talking about the I-49 highway. This highway, once complete, would run from New Orleans to Kansas City, up through and all the way to Canada. It would provide a route all the way from the Canadian border down to the port of New Orleans.

I have Vanna and her assistant here to help us. As you can see, most of our interstate system is built east and west. There are very few north-south corridors.

This system is one of those that is almost constructed. Major portions of the route are already constructed in Louisiana, from Lafayette to Shreveport, as well as other sections in Arkansas and Missouri. But with the completion of the Missouri portion, which is a small stretch here, we will have interstate all the way from the western portion of Arkansas all the way to the Minnesota border. We have a section in Arkansas that needs to be completed and a little bit in Missouri.

Myself and Mike Ross have been working hard on this and right now we have records of decision for the sections that will be signed

by the Federal Highway Administration. Construction funding is really the remaining obstacle to completion of the interstate.

Construction and completion of I-49 will support the creation of up to 206,290 new jobs. Once complete, I-49 will provide more than $817 million in annual savings to the Nation's economy by reducing travel time, transportation costs, and congestion. Over six years, these savings will total over $4.9 billion or more. The total cost to construct I-49 is estimated at just over $4 billion.

It is a significant freight distribution, intermodal corridor that will service the deep water ports of south Louisiana, New Orleans, Houston, Beaumont—four of the top five ports in the Nation by tonnage—as well as the Great Lakes ports of Duluth-Superior, Chicago, Gary, and Milwaukee and one of the Nation's most important freight distribution hubs, Kansas City. So again, I think as you can tell this really is a very, very important project. It is something that many of us have been working on for several years.

The good news is that we have had significant funding in the past. We had significant funding in the last reauthorization. We will be working, hopefully with your help, to acquire more funding.

I want to echo, I think, what the previous speakers have been talking about in the sense of identifying areas of National priority. I think with the limited funding that we are going to have with the next reauthorization that we really do need to look back towards the Eisenhower years when we created the interstate system. I think that with limited funding that we really do need to address areas that have significant congestion—those are scattered out throughout the United States—and to use the funding that we have to most advantageous way that we can.

So I would ask that the Committee look at this very, very hard. I would ask for support from the Committee as we go forward with reauthorization. Thank you very much. I yield back.

Mr. SIRES. Thank you, Mr. Boozman. Does anyone have a question for Mr. Boozman? Thank you very much.

Welcome Ms. Edwards.

STATEMENT OF HON. DONNA F. EDWARDS, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF MARYLAND

Ms. EDWARDS OF MARYLAND. Thank you. Good morning, Mr. Chairman. I really appreciate the opportunity to be here today to discuss a specific high priority request in the 4th Congressional district in Maryland. I am a Member of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, a new one, and this Subcommittee.

I think it is important for me to be on the record to discuss a couple of projects in my district. You will notice that they are related because I believe in a systems approach to developing transportation so that it works for an entire corridor. These represent only a few of the projects, obviously, that are a priority in our State and our district but that would be of great importance to this Committee as we are thinking about how to develop infrastructure in a systemic way.

I began to be a champion about 10 years ago for rail over the Wilson Bridge to improve the I-95 corridor moving commercial traffic as well as commuter traffic in this district. This Committee put a lot of money into rebuilding the Nation's only Federal bridge. It

is designed for rail but rail is not there, so it is the final piece of the puzzle for the Wilson Bridge.

It serves Maryland, D.C., and Virginia but the entire I-95 corridor extends from Maine down to Florida and beyond.

In fact, I think right now we also have business, for example, at the Pentagon and Andrews Air Force Base. If one wanted to get from the Pentagon onto Andrews Air Force Base, public transportation is definitely not the way to do it because you could spend hours going from bus to bus to bus to Metro. Rail across the Wilson Bridge would actually connect the Pentagon, the National Airport, and important development corridors in addition to Andrews Air Force Base. So you can see, Mr. Chairman, how that would be an important project for us, really improving the capacity and the mobility along the I-95 corridor.

The first step to getting rail over the Bridge is to analyze the transit options for the Bridge. The analysis will only cost $1 million and will help get us one step closer to rail over the Bridge. The Capital Beltway South Side Mobility Study, published in February 2009, confirmed that a demand exists for alternative options for the Bridge, including transit. A furthering of this study would help us get further down the field.

I believe, as you can hear, that it is really important for us to invest in rail as a component of our Nation's infrastructure.

I assume that many of us have been reading the Washington Post, our paper of jurisdiction here, about the Purple Line. It is a proposed 16 mile light rail or bus rapid transit line in the State of Maryland along suburban Washington, D.C. that extends from Bethesda to New Carrollton in Prince George's County.

This is important because it says to us, we are going to build around and connect communities by rail instead of continuing these sort of spokes of road traffic, thereby taking congestion off of our roadways and improving our environment. So I believe that we have to make a significant investment in rail in the Purple Line.

We are already well down the track with environmental analyses and impact statements. The Maryland Department of Transportation is preparing a recommendation for a local alternative for the alignment. Everybody is on the same page about the direction we need to go with this project. Authorization of it will have a really tremendous impact in my distract.

Then, as well, we support reauthorizing BRAC-related improvements that are important in that Andrews Air Force Base corridor that I spoke of, connecting the employees of Andrews as well as all of the communities and the businesses that are served at this important facility. It will improving the economic development prospects as well. I believe that transportation should be a hub for economic development, as it would for the BRAC-related improvements. The roads leading up there are not quite complete yet and it is important to get that on the table.

Lastly is the Corridor Cities Transit Project. Again, there is a connection with each one of these projects for economic development, environmental investment, and investment in the Nation's 21st century infrastructure. This is a 13.5 mile light rail or bus rapid transit line in Montgomery County down through Rockville,

connecting through with our development along the Purple Line and rail on the Wilson Bridge.

So we envision a fully invested and robust transportation corridor in the Washington metropolitan area that serves so many of our Federal buildings and facilities and Federal infrastructure. The study is already being conducted by the Maryland Department of Transportation. The project really would have a tremendous, important impact in this community.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman, for my testimony. I will make certain to submit something very complete for the record. I look forward to working with this Subcommittee on these projects. Thank you.

Mr. SIRES. Thank you, Ms. Edwards. Does anyone have a question? Thank you very much.

Mr. BOCCIERI. [Presiding] Good morning. This is Congressman Boccieri from Ohio's 16th district. It is an honor to Chair this. Congressman Oberstar said don't get too comfortable here.

But nonetheless we wanted to have the opportunity to recognize the Honorable Charlie Dent from Pennyslvania to discuss his projects with respect to the Transportation Committee.

STATEMENT OF HON. CHARLES W. DENT, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA

Mr. DENT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate this opportunity to share with the Subcommittee some of the transportation needs of my commonwealth and Pennsylvania as well as my district, the 15th district, which includes the Lehigh Valley and parts of the upper Perkiomen Valley into Montgomery and Berks Counties. There are a few things I wanted to say. I have organized my projects in a way that deal our high priority projects, bridge projects, safety projects, and transit as well as some other projects and long range initiatives.

The first thing is that Pennsylvania is a State where we have a large number of structurally deficient bridges, perhaps more than nearly any other State. There may be one or two with as many or more, but we are near the top of the list. Bridges have been a longstanding issue for us and we are feeling a great deal of pressure to make some very significant improvements in that regard.

With respect to high priority projects, one project that I am heavily involved with and our regional planners are involved with, as is our commonwealth, is what we call the American Parkway Project, a bridge over the Lehigh River connecting the American Parkway on both east and west sides of the east and west banks of the River. This would connect Route 22, a major artery in my Congressional district, with center city downtown Allentown, giving us a north-south connector that we very desperately need. We have strong east-west connectors but we are in need of a very strong north-south connector in the city of Allentown to open it up for more economic development initiatives. This would be a very significant project for our area.

For this project, the final cost estimates are somewhere between $60 and $70 million. A great deal of funding for the project has already been secured. I intend to use my position to help advance

that particular project even further. Again, it is the American Parkway Project, a bridge over Lehigh River.

The other initiative that is also very significant is the Route 22 renovations, particularly between 15th Street and Airport Road. This is one of the more heavily congested highways in America. Again, it is a road that really connects western Lehigh County just west of Allentown to the eastern area which straddles the New Jersey State line.

This highway just sees an incredible amount of traffic volume and we have some safety issues as it relates to the exit ramps and entrance ramps on that highway, particularly in Lehigh County right near Fullerton Avenue as well as 7th Street and MacArthur Road. We are trying to make some very significant improvements. I would like to use this Surface Transportation Bill as a way to help improve those interchanges at Fullerton Avenue especially as well as MacArthur Road.

Another issue, too, in my district in the extreme southern portion is what I like to call 309 Connector in Montgomery County, the Sumneytown Pike Connector that would connect essentially the northeast extension of the Pennsylvania Turnpike with Route 309. It is an east-west connector that is a very high priority for that segment of my district.

All of these projects are on the Transportation Improvement Program, or the TIP as we refer to it. These projects tend to have strong support from our regional planners.

Bridges, quickly I wanted to mention a few bridges. One we like to call the Coplay-Northampton Bridge is structurally deficient and is in desperate need of repair. This is one of the most significantly deficient bridges, I believe, anywhere in the commonwealth and probably anywhere within my Congressional district.

Another bridge of great significance is the 8th Street Bridge or the Alburtis Meyers Bridge. Alburtis Meyers Bridge is in the city of Allentown. It is a grand old bridge but, again, is in need of some significant repairs.

There are other bridges as well that have been identified, again by our counties and our municipal planning organization, MPO. They have established these as significant priorities for the region and ones they would like me to advance going forward.

Other safety projects include the Route 100/Claussville Road intersection in Lehigh County where we have had some fatalities. Again, we need to make some very significant changes to the grading and to the overall intersection at that location in a somewhat rural area of my district. Another safety project is along the same Route 100/Route 29 intersection, again in Lehigh County in the southern part of my district.

Beyond that, we also have some mass transit or transit projects including an alternative analysis proffered by our regional organization, LANTA, the Lehigh and Northampton Transportation Authority. They are looking at developing an alternative analysis for a rapid speed bus to see if there is a way to better connect the people within our district and move them more quickly through the district as an alternative to perhaps a light rail system. That is also being studied at this time in a separate analysis.

Also, bus purchases are also critical. One final mass transit project, what we like to refer to as the Quakertown-Stony Creek Rail Project, connects essentially the Lansdale area to the Quakertown/Shelly area by rail, passenger rail. We are looking at an alternatives analysis, which is nearly complete. We would like to further advance that particular initiative through the Surface Transportation Bill so that is something I will be working on very closely. I know my colleague, Bucks County Congressman Patrick Murphy, is also very much involved with that particular project as well. We will have some language for that as this process moves forward.

At this time, I would like to also mention that I believe it is important for the commonwealth of Pennsylvania, a State that receives a great deal of cross-State traffic, that the funding formula to the States also reflect and would protect States like Pennsylvania that have a great deal of cross-State traffic to make sure that the funding formula does compensate them for the amount of interstate traffic that runs through our commonwealth. I know many of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle probably share that view. That is something else I want this Committee to consider as we move forward.

At this time I would like to yield back and thank the Chair for allowing me this opportunity on the spur of the moment to present some priorities for my district. Thank you.

Mr. BOCCIERI. Thank you, Mr. Dent. Are there any questions for Mr. Dent?

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Chairman, I don't have any questions but I do want to say I am sorry I missed our colleague, Mr. Boozman's testimony. I was in the anteroom there and I heard most of it over the television. I also know that he and our colleague Charles Dent have both been outstanding Members of this Committee.

We are going to make sure that when we work on this Highway Bill, Chairman DeFazio, Chairman Oberstar, Mr. Mica, and I have all agreed that we are going to really try and take care of the Members of this Committee. All of the people on this Committee have very important needs in their districts. That is one of the reasons why people do serve on this Committee, to try to do some things for their districts. This Committee usually is filled with people who are workhorses rather than show horses and want to try to do good things for their people.

With that, I want to commend Mr. Dent and Mr. Boozman for their testimony.

Mr. BOCCIERI. Thank you, Mr. Duncan. Truly, these are not red or blue projects. These are about American projects and making our Country stronger.

Mr. DUNCAN. I will say, too, about Ms. Edwards that I should have mentioned her, too. I did catch the last of her testimony. She has become a very active Member of this Committee in a very short time.

I wish I could have gone on that trip with you that you were on here this last time. I heard some good things about that. We need to get you involved in some of these trips we take around the U.S. also. We go visit a lot of these projects and that is a good thing to do, too. Thank you.

Mr. BOCCIERI. There is no question. She is a superstar.

The Chair right now is going to recognize the Honorable Chris Carney from Pennsylvania.

STATEMENT OF HON. CHRISTOPHER P. CARNEY, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA

Mr. CARNEY. Thank you, Mr. Chair and thank you Mr. Duncan. I was very heartened to hear your words just a moment ago that you will take care of the Members of this Committee. That is great to hear.

Certainly we know there is no shortage of very worthwhile projects across the country, projects that we would have liked to have seen funded to a larger extent in the stimulus bill. But it is what it is and we are where we are today. We have to look at a number of projects that make sense in terms of first of all, economic efficiencies in moving freight around the country in an efficient manner. We also must look in terms of environmental efficiencies in stopping congestion and in terms of reducing the pollutants that are caused by trucks idling for half an hour, 45 minutes, or an hour at a time in chokepoints across the country.

Certainly one project in my district qualifies on this score. That is the Central Susquehanna Valley Thruway, which actually is a project that has been on the books for almost 40 years. The Thruway was designed and put on the books because the regional planners saw the chokepoint in the Northumberland, Snyder, and Union Counties area of Pennsylvania that I represent.

Unfortunately, their foresight has come to pass and we now have a very significant chokepoint in this part of the district. Also, it is basically part of the interior of eastern seaboard so that, really, this chokepoint affects the transportation of commerce throughout the eastern seaboard basically from New England down clear into Dixie. The fact is that hours and hours are lost here in terms of transit on this chokepoint. Lives, unfortunately, are lost as well. Trucks do idle for an hour sometimes trying to cross a two lane bridge, and they pour tons and tons of pollutants weekly—not annually but weekly—into the atmosphere.

So the project that I really want to point to today, and there are certainly many, but the Central Susquehanna Valley Thruway is one that I really want to stress.

In fact, in 2007 actually, Chairman Oberstar came to the district to view this project. He actually got stuck in the traffic jam. He thought there was an accident or something but, truth be known, it is just the normal traffic flow there. He is familiar with this road since he traveled it many times himself as a younger man.

But the point is that it is projects like this one that not only provide sort of the regional economic stimulus that is necessary but also free up the freight to move along the eastern seaboard.

In addition to that, I represent an enormous rural district. My district is about 1,100 square miles larger then Connecticut. It is not shaped like Connecticut, unfortunately, but it is quite large. We have a number of rural highways that also have been neglected for about a decade that really need whatever help we can provide them. I intend to do that from my chair on this Committee.

Finally, I want to mention just briefly a rail project that is also necessary to help relieve congestion on our highways. This is the Lackawanna Cutoff that would run from eastern Pennsylvania, roughly the Scranton/Wilkes Berre area, across through Pike County into New Jersey. This rail cutoff would actually, if it was put into place, relieve much of the commuter traffic from eastern Pennsylvania going daily into New York City.

In fact, as hospitable as our friends in New Jersey are, they don't like the thousands of Pennsylvania cars daily clogging their highways, especially Route 80. What they would like to see, and certainly we would like to see in conjunction, is the Lackawanna Cutoff which would be a portion of this new rail system. It would actually take commuters into New York City daily and bring them back daily, and thereby relieve an enormous amount of congestion.

We have to think about these projects in terms of what they mean together. We can't think about a road without thinking about a railroad. We can't think about a railroad without thinking about modes of transportation to get people where they are going once they arrive at the general destination. So we have to think about these things in intermodal terms. The Lackawanna Cutoff is certainly one of them that really deserves our attention.

I thank the Chair and I thank the Ranking Member for the time to testify this morning. It is important, the work we are doing here. What we end up doing today and this week and this month and this year in this Committee will determine the transportation future of this Nation for generations to come. So it is no small matter what we are doing. Thank you very much. I yield back.

Mr. BOCCIERI. Thank you, Mr. Carney.

Before we move to the question session, we want to recognize the esteemed Chairman of our Committee, Congressman Oberstar.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You look good sitting in that chair. Mr. Duncan, you have been very patient.

I just want to come back to, before I address Mr. Carney's comments, Mr. Duncan's reference earlier in the hearing to the need for emphasis on rural roads. As we address the problems of the metropolitan mobility and the chokepoints of congestion, we have to remember that 15 percent of the Nation's surface transportation milage is in urban areas but 50 percent of the vehicle miles traveled are in metropolitan areas. While we address those needs, we also have to make sure that goods can move from rural areas into the metropolitan centers of this Country.

We will have a very heavy emphasis on rural roads in the next authorization bill. We have to engage the States and U.S. DOT in developing a program to raise the quality of rural roads to at least a 10 ton level. We have to prioritize those investments to ensure that as our farms grow fewer in number but larger in size; as more commodity has to be moved in the spring planting time for seed, fertilizer, limestone, and so on that support good quality farmland; and as in the fall the harvest has to be moved efficiently to market the roads are an assistance not an impediment to rural transportation.

We have to make sure that there is adequate capacity in the next transportation bill to achieve that. I appreciate the gentleman from Tennessee making that reference. Mr. Mica has already discussed

that with me. We are going to ensure that there will be a sizable emphasis on rural transportation in the next bill.

As to Mr. Carney's reference to the Lackawanna Cutoff and the need for intermodalism, we need our rail system but the railroad can't deliver to your doorstep. Trucks do that. And we need an adequate program for trucking. We have to address the chokepoints throughout this country.

The United Parcel Service, for every five minute delay their trucks experience nationwide, they lose $100 million in overtime costs to drivers, in late delivery fees, and in penalties. That is why we have to address the mobility issue of freight goods movement in our economy.

We must squeeze the most that we can out of the several modes, making them work together more efficiently. It is not good enough to have a multi-modal system. It has to be intermodal. I appreciate the gentleman's emphasis. I thank the Members.

Mr. DUNCAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Chairman Oberstar and Mr. Carney. I have been through parts of your district, Mr. Carney. It is a beautiful part of the United States.

Those are important needs that you mentioned. Chairman Oberstar did refer to something I said earlier in which I said that I read in the National Journal last year that two thirds of the counties in the U.S. are losing population. But I also always learn from Chairman Oberstar, and he mentioned in a meeting the other day that the latest study by the Texas Transportation Institute showed that congestion was at a point of costing us at least $78 billion a year now. The next study, I think you said, was going to probably be closer to $87 billion. Most of that is in and around these urban areas, these megapolises, and it is costing this nation hugely.

What I think we need to do is come up with sort of a modern Homestead Act in which we give people tax incentives and other types of incentives that maybe we can come up with to remain in or move to these two thirds of the counties that are losing population. There should be a way that we can do that. I think it is important also that we make sure that we have good transportation to and from those areas because people in the small towns and rural areas generally have to travel further distances to get to their jobs. I think we need to keep that in mind.

But we will work with you, Mr. Carney. I appreciate your testimony. Thank you.

Mr. BOCCIERI. Thank you. Will there be any Members who have any additional questions for Mr. Carney?

Okay, before we move to our next esteemed colleagues, I want to take the liberty to recognize a friend of mine who is out there. Colonel John Williams is a Lieutenant Colonel at the Air Force Base that I serve, the 910th Airlift Wing in Ohio. We have deployed together on a number of rotations around the world to Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom.

He is First Officer with United Airlines and he is here today with two Captains, Captain John Barton and Captain Jim Smart here representing United Airlines. So thank you for coming today. I understand that Captain Barton was President Obama's captain after he was elected. Thank you for your service, Colonel Williams and thank you for what you do for United Airlines, all three of you.

Now we are going to be moving onto the Honorable Geoff Davis from Kentucky and the Honorable Steve Driehaus, a colleague of mine who I served with in the legislature to talk about some very important projects in the greater Cincinnati/Kentucky region of Ohio and Kentucky. Thank you.

STATEMENT OF HON. GEOFF DAVIS, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF KENTUCKY

Mr. DAVIS OF KENTUCKY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Duncan, and Chairman Oberstar. I appreciate the opportunity to share for a few minutes today. Congressman Driehaus and I have been working on this since he came into Office. We are here to talk about the need for a funding mechanism for mega-projects of national significance.

The Brent Spence Bridge Project is the interstate highway bridge that crosses the Ohio River between Cincinnati and northern Kentucky between our two districts. It is nationally significant as an infrastructure corridor and it is critical to our economy.

Congress, as we all know since many of us have been part of this discussion, has repeatedly discussed the need to make serious investments in our national infrastructure. The 2009 Highway Bill presents a significant opportunity to fulfil that need. Through this process, Congress must find a new way to manage mega-projects of national significance.

As you know, funding for these projects is a matter of great concern to Chairman Oberstar and Ranking Member Mica. I commend them for their vision of developing a rational process whereby projects of national significance will be objectively identified and funded based on merit with national infrastructure corridors. Despite these attempts in the past, Congress has not established a sufficient mechanism for funding mega-projects whose benefits are national but whose costs are so high that they can't be funded by one or two States.

The Brent Spence Bridge Project will ultimately cost between $2 and $3 billion to complete. However, when we compare that to the more than $417 billion annually that the bridge carries for our economy and Congress, the cost is clearly justified. However, Ohio and Kentucky would both have to dedicate their entire State transportation budgets for over a year, in spite of everything else, to accomplish this project.

Major transportation bottlenecks cost thousands of hours of delay and have a negative impact on individual travelers, commuters, families, truckers, shippers, and receivers particularly when the routes they travel are hostage to underfunded infrastructure nodes. I think the Chairman had a point and example of the cost to jobs of the United Parcel Service for each five minutes of delay. We can multiply this thousands and thousands and thousands of times over for revenues lost ultimately for job creation.

The Woodrow Wilson Bridge between Maryland and Virginia just southeast of downtown Washington, D.C. is traveled daily by some in the room today. In 1993, 200,000 vehicles crossed that bridge each day. The Wilson Bridge carries Interstates 95 and 495 across the Potomac River. The bridge supports a transportation corridor

of national significance connecting the southeastern and the northeastern United States.

At the time, the U.S. Department of Transportation estimated the value of freight trucked across that bridge was the equivalent of 1.3 percent of the entire gross domestic product of the United States. By the mid-1990s, the bridge was carrying 250 percent of the traffic volume for which it was designed. The bridge only had three lanes but it carried five lanes worth of traffic trying to squeeze through. This became a bottleneck with national significance, causing tens of thousands of hours of delays to American travelers but most of all to commerce.

Neither Maryland nor Virginia could assume the $2.5 billion cost of the project, which was several times their annual State-wide infrastructure budgets combined. Additionally, there was no Federal program to fund projects of national significance.

If Congress had not authorized special funding for the Wilson Bridge, funding that paid for the majority of the cost of the project, the Wilson Bridge may have come close to closure with economic impacts that would be felt far beyond the D.C. area throughout the eastern seaboard of the United States. Congress helped resolve that funding issue and the Woodrow Wilson Bridge project was completed. However, the resolution was cobbled together through exception rather than through a cohesive, strategic decision making and prioritization.

The 2009 Highway Bill needs to include a mechanism for dealing with major infrastructure projects with a national impact.

The Brent Spence Bridge connects Kentucky to southwestern Ohio between my district and Congressman Driehaus's district in Cincinnati. This is a project I personally have been working on for nearly five years. However, the bridge also connects Canada to Florida via I-75, as well as Ohio to the western United States via I-71. It feeds traffic and freight into Chicago via I-74 and all the way to Alabama via I-65. This bridge affects commerce in over 60 Congressional districts in Georgia, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio, and Tennessee.

It was designed to carry 80.000 vehicles per day but will soon have to accommodate nearly 200,000 vehicles per day. Indeed, this Bridge is functionally obsolete yet it carries $417 billion in freight annually across the Ohio River for Federal commerce. That is roughly 3 percent of the U.S. gross domestic product in 2008 or twice what the Wilson Bridge's carriage was in commerce daily. By 2030, the amount of that freight is expected to increase to $830 billion.

In other words, this bridge is a critical piece of essential infrastructure to the American economy. In the next Surface Transportation Bill, we will have an opportunity to ensure that the I-71, I-74, and I-75 corridors continue their roles in our national transportation system by building a new bridge at their crucial intersection. The achievement of this goal would support or create 83,000 jobs permanently and save businesses and motorists approximately $784 million annually.

The Brent Spence Bridge is but one example of a transportation mega-project that is critical to the American economy. I urge all my colleagues to ensure the 2009 Highway Bill includes a program for

dealing with nationally significant projects. I thank you all for time, especially the Chairman for his interest in intervention in such national projects in the past. I yield back my time, Mr. Chairman.

STATEMENT OF HON. STEVE DRIEHAUS, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF OHIO

Mr. DRIEHAUS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Duncan, and the Chairman Oberstar of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee for allowing us to testify before you today. I also want to thank Congresswoman Schmidt who was a big supporter of this project as well in eastern Cincinnati.

This project—and I am not going to go over the numbers that Congressman Davis just went over—but when we talk about projects of regional and national significance, I don't know that we have a better example of that then the Brent Spence Bridge. I would refer to you the map behind me which shows, as Congressman Davis suggested, I-75 connecting northern Michigan and Canada all the way to southern Florida. But at the Brent Spence Bridge at the Ohio River, you have I-75 coming together with I-71 and I-74 all at the same time. Three major interstate highways are crossing one of the largest rivers in the country on one of the busiest bridges that we have in the country.

As Congressman Davis has already outlined, the cost of replacing this span would exceed the total appropriation for both Ohio and Kentucky in highway funds on an annual basis. Now, we have already put, in the Federal government, almost $59 million in SAFETEA-LU projects associated with the Brent Spence Bridge. We have made tremendous progress due to leadership of Congressman Davis and others; and of our Senators on both sides of the River, on both sides of the isle.

We are now to the point where the folks in Cincinnati and the folks in northern Kentucky are ready to come together on a single proposal to erect a parallel bridge that would separate the traffic of I-75 and I-71 to accommodate the tremendous amount of commerce that is currently going across the Ohio River.

When you look at the Federal Register, Mr. Chairman, I would refer to you the Federal Register of October 24th of 2008 where the Department of Transportation, through its rules, defines projects of regional and national significance. It states that "a multi-State project, meeting the definition of an eligible project under 505.5 of this Section, shall have eligible project costs that are quantified in the project proposal as equal to or exceeding the lesser of $500 million or 75 percent of the amount of the Federal highway assistance funds apportioned for the most recently completed fiscal year to the State in which the project is located that has the largest apportionment."

In this case, that would be Kentucky. As Congressman Davis has already indicated, this exceeds not just Kentucky but also Ohio. The total cost of the project is somewhere between $2.5 and $3 billion. So when we talk about reasons for this Committee coming together and this Congress coming together, to recognize that there are significant spans that need to be funded that fall outside of the typical parameters of this Committee, I believe that this project

should be the example used in our country of this Committee coming together to recognize the dependence of this type of span for the international commerce that takes place throughout the United States.

So I yield back the rest of my time, Mr. Chairman. With that, I also want to thank Mr. Cole and his staff for the tremendous work that has been done on this already. With that, I yield back my time, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. BOCCIERI. Thank you, Congressman Driehaus and Congressman Davis. I have a quick question. I know Congressman Driehaus and I worked in a State legislature in Ohio. The funding mechanism in the State of Ohio is based primarily on congestion and traffic mitigation with just a small portion of emphasis given to economic development. Does the Kentucky Department of Transportation have that same limitation?

Mr. DAVIS OF KENTUCKY. Essentially, it does. As you well know from being a State legislator, oftentimes there are geographic considerations that take place in the statehouse that will not necessarily address the economic priorities for growth.

This is such a large project and we have so many pressing needs in our rural counties, as Ranking Member Duncan pointed out that many States have in his earlier testimony, that we are not adequately suited even within our funding mechanism. As I stated previously, it would take our entire transportation budget over a period of several years to be able accomplish such a project and meet our basic needs for maintenance and upgrade.

Therefore, the real issue, particularly with the amount of national commerce involved—and both Congressman Driehaus and I agree—is that it is in the interests of the Federal government nationally to elevate this project.

Mr. BOCCIERI. Congressman Oberstar?

Mr. OBERSTAR. I want to thank both the Members for their presentation. They both provided good, factual information.

Congressman Davis, you rightly sized up the Wilson Bridge. I was engaged in the conference on TEA-21 when we reached the agreement on the Wilson Bridge. At the time I pointed out that it was carrying 1 percent of the gross domestic product of the United States. But the goods were being backed up all the way up into New York because of the slow times crossing the Wilson Bridge.

What will be the benefits of an improved Brent Spence Bridge?

By the way, I didn't know Brent Spence but when I was in graduate school working in the mail room of the House of Representatives, I delivered mail to his office on the 6:00 a.m. shift. So I knew of Brent Spence. It is fitting that he has a bridge named after him.

What will be the delivery time benefits from the improvements you are proposing for this facility?

Mr. DAVIS OF KENTUCKY. Before deferring to Congressman Driehaus, the one thing that I can say is there would be sustained growth within our tri-State region and the creation of 83,000 permanent jobs. More importantly, with growth of the population, looking at the challenges that our automotive industry and manufacturing industry in general is facing in the United States, it would provide a clear corridor to better synchronize logistics ship-

ments and transportation all the way from southern Florida to Canada.

There is a significant safety factor on the bridge right now. It is one of the least safe major pieces of infrastructure to travel in the United States. I don't think an adequate price could be placed on life and limb.

But clearly based on $417 billion in commerce, it is something that would pay for itself in relatively short order through the creation of new taxpayers.

Mr. DRIEHAUS. I would just point out that as we have discussed previously, Mr. Chairman, this is in fact the heart of an intermodal system in Cincinnati and northern Kentucky. Consider the barge traffic and the facilities that are currently underway, and the rail traffic that is being considered and designed in greater Cincinnati both for commuter rail as well as freight, and how both will then add to the complement of traffic going across the Brent Spence Bridge. This is really a convergence of all of those activities when it comes to international commerce.

This location is so central to so many markets throughout the Midwest, connecting the North and the South, that it seems clear to us that the amount of traffic will exceed rather dramatically. As a matter of fact, we are expecting an increase of up to $830 billion by 2030 in real dollars in terms of commerce crossing that bridge.

But I think you have to keep in mind, and I think you have to put it within the proper context, that we are not just going to see an increase in truck traffic and car traffic across the Ohio River. What you are going to see is a tremendous increase in both rail and freight as well as the traffic along barges coming down the Ohio River. This is a critical piece of that intermodal system.

Mr. OBERSTAR. There is no question about it, you both have stated the case very well. What I would like you to do is supplement your presentation with the current cost of congestion and the time spent in truck traffic on the approaches to as well as crossing over that bridge. And what the new vision will create for transportation? How is what you are proposing going to reduce travel times and thereby improve productivity?

This improvement of productivity, and improvement of performance, and accountability, and transparency is going to be a centerpiece of the new transportation program that we are going to write in this Committee.

You have got a document there.

Mr. DAVIS OF KENTUCKY. To your point, Mr. Chairman, Congressman Driehaus has provided a document both our offices have from our joint transportation authority in Cincinnati and northern Kentucky. This is the summary document and what we would like to do is prepare and submit it.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Why don't you have someone summarize the summary and answer that question for me?

Mr. DAVIS OF KENTUCKY. Essentially, in the briefing that we received last week by the various groups of engineers who have looked at this project going out over the next 30 to 40 years, the top two alternatives that have been looked at and the ultimate one that will be recommended will provide free flow of traffic at peak periods through the projected growth and capacity in the long term.

I can't give you the precise numbers right now but we can get you that for the record. It would be substantive. More importantly to your point on throughput, this bridge is a node that sits effectively within eight hours of approximately 80 percent of the American population. So it in fact sees a very high amount of tractor trailer transit.

Mr. OBERSTAR. I have asked our staff to gather from U.S. DOT and from the Maryland, Virginia, and D.C. Departments of Transportation information on what are the benefits of this $2 billion investment we made in the Wilson Bridge. We need to be accountable. We need to show the public what they are getting for their investment. This is a case study in hand. Your case is a study for the future. If you can help us with that information, it would be very useful. Thank you for your splendid contribution.

Mr. DAVIS OF KENTUCKY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. DUNCAN. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. My father grew up in Scott County, Tennessee. When Lyndon Johnson started his war on poverty, that was one of the 10 poorest counties in the U.S. It was a very common thing for most of the young people to leave and go North to get jobs. There were 10 children in my dad's family. Three of his sisters moved to Cincinnati when they were young and two of his brothers moved to Dayton. So I have been up many, many times to visit aunts and uncles and cousins in that area. In fact, we have so many relatives there that this past summer we had a Duncan family reunion at Fort Mitchell, just very close to the bridge that you are talking about. I have been across that bridge many times so I know the need.

One thing I did miss, though, and maybe somebody was talking to me, was what is the total cost of this project? I didn't catch that.

Mr. DRIEHAUS. The total cost of the project is between $2.5 and $3 billion.

Mr. DUNCAN. $2.5 to $3 billion?

Mr. DRIEHAUS. The request being made in this bill is around $800 million, which will allow us to begin construction and move forward over the next six years. We have design, we have to purchase the right-of-ways, and do some of the environmental assessments. But we believe this will get us well into construction with around $800 million in this bill.

Mr. DUNCAN. How come there is such a wide gap? $500 million is a pretty wide gap.

Mr. DAVIS OF KENTUCKY. There are two reasons for that. The first reason is the original range represents a couple of the different options that a broad consensus committee came up with looking at the traffic options. The second is largely driven by the economy. Fluctuations in the cost of energy and hence the cost of transportation, fuel, steel, and concrete or cement are going to be driven largely by the macroeconomy at the time. So there is some projection for what the cost would be. Were those costs to substantially decrease, the bridge cost would decrease commensurably.

Mr. DUNCAN. How long would it take to complete the project?

Mr. DRIEHAUS. We think it is about seven years before the total completion.

Just to supplement what was said concerning the cost, we are looking at an alternative that would be building a bridge parallel

to the existing bridge. We believe that would be the lowest cost alternative in terms of purchasing property, especially on the Cincinnati side of the river. There is great concern that if you move the bridge further down the river, further west, that a tremendous amount of property would have to be purchased. Now as it is, we have to look at a transmission facility currently owned by Duke Energy that would have to be relocated. But we believe the alternative that is being proposed at this point, which is the parallel bridge just next to the Brent Spence, is the most cost effective alternative. We have to purchase the least amount of right-of-way under that alternative because so much of the right-of-way is currently controlled.

Mr. DUNCAN. Thank you very much.

Mr. BOCCIERI. The Chair recognizes Congresswoman Edwards at this point.

Ms. EDWARDS OF MARYLAND. Thank you gentlemen for your testimony. Since you mentioned the Woodrow Wilson Bridge, which is near and dear to my heart and in my Congressional district, I just want to suggest to you one if you need any assistance in this, especially from the State of Maryland, please do reach out to us. I will note that the soon to be incoming Deputy at the Department of Transportation, John Porcari, the Transportation Secretary for the State of Maryland was deeply involved in all of the efforts over the years on the Woodrow Wilson Bridge project. He could be of great assistance to you.

There were some tremendous lessons learned both about acquiring the right-of-way, gauging the local communities, and pulling the stakeholders together that ended up bringing the project both on cost and on time, on schedule. So I would suggest to you very strongly as we move forward that you reach out to these important partners on the bridge project. Thank you.

Mr. DAVIS OF KENTUCKY. Thank you. We would appreciate that. Certainly we are looking to learn and the organizations that are involved in partnering are trying to grab best practices from around the Nation. Certainly that is a fine example.

Mr. BOCCIERI. The Chair now recognizes Congresswoman Schmidt.

Mrs. SCHMIDT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to reiterate the importance of the redoing of the Brent Spence Bridge. One of the things that amazes people when I talk about the State of Ohio is that we are either ranked as the fifth or sixth most traveled State in the Union regarding transportation as far as cars and trucks. This bridge is not only functionally obsolete, but in order to accommodate the massive traffic that goes through on a daily basis, they have widened the lanes to the margins. If you have a truck or a car that breaks down, there is absolutely no place for that car or that truck to go. So when Congressman Davis and Congressman Driehaus say that it is an unsafe bridge, it is unsafe due to the fact of the carriage of automobiles that go across it each and every day.

This is something that has been of major importance to the greater Cincinnati/northern Kentucky area for well over a decade. I strongly urge this body authorize the money for the appropriations in the Transportation Bill for this very much needed project.

It is not only important to northern Kentucky and to Ohio, it is really important to the folks from Canada to Florida. Thank you.

Mr. BOCCIERI. If there are no further questions for the gentlemen, thank you for your testimony.

The Chair will now call the Honorable Dr. Bill Foster.

STATEMENT OF HON. BILL FOSTER, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF ILLINOIS

Mr. FOSTER. Thank you, Chairwoman Edwards. I would also like to thank Chairman Oberstar and Ranking Member Mica for giving me this opportunity to testify on behalf of my constituents and their many needs in the communities of the 14th district.

This legislation could not come at a more necessary time for the people of Illinois who are struggling mightily with deteriorating roads and little support from their government to maintain them. As I travel through my district, I repeatedly hear pleas for help in maintaining the basic roads that are the lifeblood of our economy. I stand here on behalf of the people of Illinois and implore you for your support.

The 14th district has many unique needs given the wide range of communities within its boundaries. I have several ex-urban communities managing urban sprawl, including the fourth fastest growing county in the Country. I also have a significant amount of rural farm areas that are having a hard time keeping up with the amount of heavy truck traffic that barrels down Main Street in place of the interstate to avoid paying extra tolls.

For far too long, the residents of my district have suffered under a failed State government which for seven years has been unable to pass a capital bill. So for seven years almost, new Federally funded projects were started to relieve the congestion of a growing metropolitan area. In many instances, maintenance work was put off until the situation became so bad that the local towns had to step in and shoulder the bulk of the costs themselves.

I wish to make a special note of Kendall County, which is the fourth fastest growing county in the Country. It is projected to have doubled its population over 10 years. The influx of an additional 50,000 residents presents unique challenges in building the new infrastructure to accommodate all the new residents along with the usual upkeep on existing roads.

These communities have been held together through a series of patchwork efforts that are a testimony to the entrepreneurial spirit of 14th district residents and their representatives. But their efforts are not sustainable for long term development. Illinois is only now coming out of a dark time where partisan political fights have trumped the needs of the people. When citizens are more hopeful that Springfield will start to hear their cries for help, Washington must also heed their call. Our citizens must know that we are spending their money wisely and in ways that benefit them.

Along with the immediate needs and short term benefits, we have an obligation to think also of regional long term planning. There are upcoming projects that we will be requesting that are exceptional opportunities to plan for 15 or 20 years into the future, to set the destiny of our districts and communities. This includes

cultivating area for traditional industrial growth along with green collar jobs.

My district is in a unique position of partially encompassing a growing hub of industry and intermodal transportation. Two intercontinental rail lines intersect adjacent to the intersection of two interstate highways in Stewart and Rochelle, all connected by this pair of small towns that took the initiative upon themselves to connect these modes of transportation. These towns own and operate their own small rail line to encourage competition and economic growth for the factories and the green energy plants located there.

With a small investment of Federal money to improve their highway and handle the increased volume of industrial traffic, this small town shows the great potential for growth. It can be a beacon of good news in a swarm of gloomy economic predictions. I predict that this will be one of the smarter, more efficient ways to spend Federal money that will show an excellent return on our investment.

Recently residents of my district along with many communities along the Elgin, Joliet, and Eastern Rail, the EJ&E, have been burdened with the unfair cost of a one sided rail merger. Canadian National's merger with the EJ&E has saddled many communities including Aurora, the second largest city of Illinois, with a price tag to mitigate the disruptive flow of traffic and emergency services along the railroad. As we speak, CN is battling in court to even further reduce the bare minimum of their share for the mitigation costs for this increase in traffic.

I, along with my fellow colleagues whose districts are effected by this, will be pushing as hard as we can for Federal assistance to these communities. We have had many productive conversations with the Chairman in the past on this and we are looking forward to working with him on this important issue.

Finally, I wish to commend the Chairman and the Committee for recognizing the systemic inequity that exists in normal transportation funding. While the stimulus package extended millions to communities to assist in their needs, my home State of Illinois decided that towns and communities with a population of under 5,000 would not qualify to receive funds.

I was distraught when I heard that because these small towns in rural Illinois are the communities that often need this assistance the most. This is why the Chairman's recognition of these inequalities and support for rural communities in the priority project requests is greatly appreciated. Small towns across my district are also grateful that their needs and concerns are being considered fairly.

Thank you again for taking time to hear my thoughts and concerns. I feel privileged to be able to serve the people of Illinois in my capacity. I only hope that my efforts will bear positive results for my constituents. Thank you.

Ms. EDWARDS OF MARYLAND. [Presiding] Thank you, Mr. Foster. We will be in a short recess until the next Member arrives.

[Recess.]

Good afternoon, Mr. Melancon. It is nice to see you this morning. Thank you for your testimony.

STATEMENT OF HON. CHARLIE MELACON, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

Mr. MELANCON. Thank you, Chairwoman Edwards. I appreciate the opportunity to be here. If I could, I would like to thank Chairman Oberstar and Ranking Member Mica as well as you for allowing me the opportunity to come before you today to advocate for Louisiana Highway 1's inclusion as a high priority project within the next Surface Transportation legislation.

First I want to thank the Committee for recognizing the importance of Louisiana 1 in SAFETEA-LU a couple of years ago. Without the Committee's significant investment in this high priority corridor, LA-1 would not be under construction right now. I understand that the contractor is working towards bringing the new bridge into service as early as August of this year and I would hope that maybe some of the Members of the Committee might travel to south Louisiana to see this investment.

To remind the Members of the Committee, Louisiana Highway 1 provides critical access to Port Fourchon, which is Louisiana's southernmost port and which supports nearly 90 percent of deep water oil and gas production in the Gulf of Mexico.

While every Member has infrastructure in their district that is important, few can boast the direct financial benefits that Louisiana Highway 1 offers to my district and to this Country. A 2008 economic impact study conducted for the greater Lefourche Port Commission and the South Louisiana Economic Council concluded that a three week loss of services or access to Port Fuschon [phonetic] would result in a loss of nearly $10 billion in sales at the U.S. firms. It would also cost over $2.8 billion in household earnings and a loss of 77,440 jobs in this Nation during that period.

As we recall too well the economic impact of a shut-in oil and gas industry as we experienced after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, make these findings more than just an economic estimate. We have felt the tangible harm caused when the Gulf of Mexico's oil and gas production was forced to stop after those two horrendous storms.

As phase one of the Louisiana Highway 1 Project nears completion, my request to the Committee this year is to assist in the construction of phase two of the project. This next phase will extend the elevated highway from Port Fourchon within the levy system some 30 miles north to the city of Golden Meadow, Louisiana. This phase is estimated to cost $360 million. While I certainly do not expect that the Committee will fund the entire project—but I can always hope—at this full amount, I hope that the Committee will again recognize the importance of LA-1 as a critical energy corridor for this Country.

The Committee's previous foresight enabled the construction of phase one of the project. We hope to build on that success in this reauthorization. I want to thank you and the Committee for this opportunity to speak with you today. I look forward to working with you on this transportation authorization measure. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

Ms. EDWARDS OF MARYLAND. Thank you, Mr. Melancon. I will just remind you that as for many of our Members testifying today, hope does spring eternal. Thank you.

Mr. MELANCON. I thank you very much.

Ms. EDWARDS OF MARYLAND. The Committee will stand in recess until our next Member is available to testify.

[Recess.]

The Chair recognizes Mr. Hare of Illinois.

STATEMENT OF HON. PHIL HARE, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF ILLINOIS

Mr. HARE. Thank you, Madam Chairman. First I would like to thank Chairman DeFazio and his hard working staff for holding this important hearing. This Subcommittee possesses a tremendous responsibility in laying the foundation of America's progress, not only in terms of surface transportation but in terms of jobs and livelihoods. The upcoming Surface Transportation Authorization legislation will affect more than mobility; it will affect how our economy functions and how we live our lives.

In my testimony today I will highlight several examples of how I envision this bill helping to improve the lives of the people of west, central, and southern Illinois by laying out the high priority projects which I intend to pursue. I commend the Chairman for holding this hearing and the Committee effort to ensure greater transparency and accountability in the upcoming Surface Transportation Authorization legislation.

My number one transportation priority is restoring Amtrak passenger rail service from the quad-city area of Illinois to Iowa and to Chicago. I am submitting a request on behalf of the Illinois Department of Transportation for the amount of $22.7 million for track improvements that will restore this vital infrastructure and transportation system.

The quad-cities are the first major stop along the most highly populated corridor without Amtrak service to Chicago. Plans to expand service from Chicago to the quad-cities include continued service from the quad-cities to Iowa City, to Des Moines, and to Omaha.

According to a 2008 feasibility study, Amtrak forecast the quad-cities, with the metropolitan population of 400,000 plus residents, to have an annual ridership over 110,000 between the quad-cities and Chicago. With 10.2 million people living in the corridor's major metropolitan areas, the total ridership is expected to skyrocket with each additional stop. For example, when service is extended from the quad-cities to Iowa City, ridership to Chicago jumps to 187,000 people annually.

The quad-city region will experience economic growth resulting from Amtrak service including between 550 to 825 new jobs, an $11 to $16 million increase in household income, and a $52 to $77 million increase in property values.

I am also submitting several HPPs that fall under the highway title of the reauthorization. All these projects will improve the safety of the traveling public as well as foster economic growth by creating jobs. One of these is the reconstruction of the Brighton-Bunker Hill Road, part of Highway 14 in McCook County, Illinois. Reconstruction of the road will allow 80,000 pounds trucks to use the new road, thereby improving commerce and strengthening the economy of McCook County.

Another such HPP request that I am submitting is on behalf of the city of Galesburg, Illinois for the North Seminary/North Kellogg Street Overpass Project. This project will enhance neighborhood safety, emergency response, and capacity needs of the infrastructure by providing separated areas to reduce delays and congestion in the downtown area resulting from increased train traffic on the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Chillacathy [phonetic] subdivision while preserving the historic and aesthetic nature of the community.

I will also submit a request for expansion of U.S. Highway 34 from Gulf Port to Mammoth, Illinois on behalf of the Western Illinois Economic Development Partnership. Highway 34 as it stands is one of the busiest and deadliest two lane roads in the State of Illinois. This two lane road is used by large semis driving goods to and from a local ethanol plant and to distribution centers that are located along Highway 34. This road also connects Interstate 80 in Iowa and Interstate 74 in Illinois and is often used as a shortcut between the two interstates by semis, increasing traffic on this narrow road and endangering people's lives.

On behalf of the 336 Coalition, I will submit a request for Illinois Highway 336 from Peoria to Macomb, Illinois. This project will provide the only four lane facility through Fulton County and will connect the new Illinois 336 facility recently completed between Macomb and Quincy, Illinois with interstate 74 in the eastern and northern portions of the State. This new four lane, 65 miles per hour facility will alleviate traffic congestion on Illinois 116 as well as several other two lane State routes along the corridor.

Lastly, I will highlight a project that has both regional and national significance, replacement of the Interstate 74 bridge, which I will pursue funding for in the appropriate title. The I-74 bridge corridor is extremely important to the commerce of the area, providing for movement of people and freight to employment centers, entertainment venues, and commercial and industrial sites including the quad-cities international airport.

This project will replace the I-74 bridge which is functionally obsolete and has never met interstate standards. The spans were built sometime between 1935 and 1959, both for local interstate traffic, and were retrofitted to become Interstate 74 in the 1970s. The bridge has no shoulders. It is carrying nearly 78,000 vehicles per day but was designed to carry less than 50,000 vehicles per day. Crashes along portions of the Interstate 74 corridor exceed three times the national average for similar corridors as described in the draft environmental impact.

I thank you, Madam Chairman for allowing me to insert my statement into the record. Thank you very much.

Ms. EDWARDS OF MARYLAND. Thank you, Mr. Hare. Are there any questions by Members for Mr. Hare?

The Chair now recognizes Mrs. Napolitano of California.

STATEMENT OF HON. GRACE F. NAPOLITANO, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Thank you, Madam Chairwoman. Thank you for allowing us to have some time to discuss high priority programs

in our districts. I thank Mr. DeFazio, Ranking Member Duncan, and fellow Members of the Subcommittee.

I urge the Committee to continue to designate and fund the most important project in my area, the Alameda Corridor East Grade Separation Project in San Gabriel Valley as a project of not only regional but also national significance. I am also offering these remarks not only on my own behalf but also on behalf of my distinguished colleagues representing the San Gabriel, Congressman David Dreier, Congressman Gary Miller, and Congressman Adam Schiff, who also join me in support of the ACE, Alameda Corridor East San Gabriel Valley Project.

This is a project that runs out of the two ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, goes up into Los Angeles, and then runs through my whole district. It covers 54 grade crossings which are not separated. Only 20 are designated to be separated. Ten are scheduled for funding and the other 10 are in limbo. What that means is that although they may be able to increase the expediting of the handling of the unloading of the vessels, they will get to Los Angeles and then they are going to run into slowdown in my whole district because there are grade crossings, 54 of them, to lead them out into the rest of the United States.

I certainly want to thank my colleagues on this Subcommittee for their support on the Alameda Corridor East in San Gabriel Valley Project in the past by designating it both as a national high priority trade corridor and also as a project of regional and national significance. It handles 45 to 55 percent of the Nation's goods. That means that out of those two ports, the rest of the material comes to the rest of the United States. This corridor facilitates the movement of goods from those ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach through the San Gabriel Valley to, of course, the rest of the waiting business in the Nation.

As Congress seeks to encourage national economic recovery, significant infrastructure in transportation projects will play a key role in creating much needed jobs in the construction sector. The Alameda Corridor East San Gabriel Valley Grade Separation Project will not only create jobs but will help unclog the trade corridor bottlenecks at the leading freight gateway for our Nation.

In fact, projections show that the grade separations will eliminate a 300 percent increase in auto and truck traffic delay at crossings, resulting in up to a 160 percent increase in rail traffic and a 40 percent increase in vehicular traffic. Now, I understand that currently there are 80 trains a day going through my whole district. This increase is going to be to 120 trains per day crossing 54 street crossings of which only 20, some day in the future, will be separated to allow traffic to go through unrestricted.

The 20 separations the project will construct at the busiest crossings of this valley will help eliminate 221 tons of air pollution from emissions annually at the worst air basin in the Nation.

Grade separations deliver vital safety benefits including the elimination of delays for emergency responders as well as of the possibilities of deadly collisions between trains, vehicles, and pedestrians. We know people don't want to wait. They go around the arms and sometimes get into very heavy accidents, sometimes even fatalities.

The grade separation which will commence construction this year on Novalis Street [phonetic] is in my Congressional district. This will eliminate the potential for crossing collisions, which are projected by the Federal Railroad Administration to occur at this crossing once every four years. They have already done the math.

Committee Members and leaders are justifiably concerned that the Federal commitments made available through prior Transportation Authorization legislation remained little used or dormant. I share that concern and I am pleased to report that the Alameda Construction Authority has expended or obligated 95 percent or more of the $135 million in Federal funds made available through the TEA-21 legislation with the remainder obligated next month. Of the more than $65 million made available through SAFETEA-LU, the ACE Construction Authority has expended or obligated 65 percent with the remained to be obligated by early fall of this year.

The ACE Construction Authority has a commendable record in completing projects on time and on budget. It has made significant progress toward completing the first 10 grade separations in the ACE San Gabriel Valley Program.

While most projects around the Country will request an 80 percent Federal commitment toward their total project costs, the ACE Construction Authority is only requesting 40 percent in Federal share of the $954 million project. They have already secured significant local, State, and railroad funding commitments to help deliver the grade separations projects through construction completion. The Authority can complete the next 10 grade separations projects in its program by the year 2014 if $344 million is secured.

I would like to enter into the record, Madam Chairwoman, a number of records from the councils of government and other entities that support and sustain the information I have just revealed to this Subcommittee. I would like to enter it into the record.

Ms. EDWARDS OF MARYLAND. Without objection.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Thank you. Thank you for your attention. I certainly stand ready to work with my colleagues as we proceed with drafting transportation program authorization legislation. This legislation will present a significant opportunity to encourage economic recovery, improve air quality, mobility, and safety through the support for high priority projects such as the ACE Project in my district which will bring not only a lot of jobs but will also alleviate safety concerns. Thank you, Madam Chairwoman.

Ms. EDWARDS OF MARYLAND. Thank you, Mrs. Napolitano. Do Members have questions for Mrs. Napolitano?

The Chair will stand in recess until our next Member arrives.

[Recess.]

Ms. EDWARDS OF MARYLAND. The Chair recognizes Mr. Schrader. Thank you very much for your testimony this afternoon.

STATEMENT OF HON. KURT SCHRADER, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF OREGON

Mr. SCHRADER. Thank you, Madam Chairwoman. I appreciate you coming back from recess so quickly. Madam Chairwoman, I would like to thank the Committee for the opportunity to testify today on our transportation needs in the 5th Congressional district of Oregon.

As the Committee and the Congress move forward with the transportation authorization, I will be submitting a high priority project request to help support the construction of an important interchange at the junction of Highways 214, 219, and Interstate 5 in Woodburn, Oregon. This Woodburn interchange has been one of the top priorities of Oregonians for a long, long time. The interchange was first constructed in 1950 and last updated in 1975.

It is a major choking point along the Interstate 5 corridor on the west coast through the Willamette Valley. It slows traffic, hurting businesses and impeding freight movement, and it puts the safety of drivers, cyclists and pedestrians at risk. The interchange routinely delays traffic. It has caused countless unnecessary automobile accidents along the main transit route between Portland and the State capital in Salem. In fact, four of the road segments in the area fall within the top 10 percent of the Oregon Department of Transportation's worst crash locations.

Constructing a new, wider interchange with pedestrian protections and a partial cloverleaf design will dramatically increase safety and mobility to accommodate the needs of this growing community and the freight and vehicular traffic in our region.

I will also be submitting a request to aid Oregon's coastal communities. Every year, winter storms come in from the Pacific, making U.S. 101 along the Oregon coast one of the most treacherous routes in our Country. Roads regularly wash out or cover with debris from landslides disturbing the mobility of rural communities that depend on those roads. As the only north-south route on the west side of Oregon's coastal mountains, it is extremely important that we make every effort to relieve that traffic congestion and stoppage.

This modest request will not build a new highway system, but it will significantly alleviate the congestion in Lincoln City were U.S. 101 often narrows. The Oregon Department of Transportation will use these funds to construct a center turn lane to improve that flow dramatically.

Additionally, I will be supporting transit projects that will create jobs and facilitate economic growth in our metropolitan areas. Our State has historically been a leader in progressive solutions to our Country's transportation network issues, particularly in the development and use of light rail and streetcar transit operations. Light rail systems in the Portland metropolitan area are vital to the continued growth of the region.

By authorizing and appropriating funds for the expansion of light rail and streetcar lines in this region, we will build upon the investments we have already made in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. We will immediately be creating jobs both in the new construction as well as in the bourgeoning long term employment from industries supported by the light rail and streetcar systems in metropolitan Portland. Working with local transportation authorities to bring light rail lines south from Portland to Oregon City and streetcars to Lake Oswego will create new trade corridors where the convenience and mobility of a well designed public transportation system will lead to economic growth and job creation on both sides of Willamette River.

I am giving these projects and others like them high priority status because it will provide a demonstrable and achievable benefit to the region, both in the short and long term. Improving the flow of traffic along the Interstate 5 corridor and U.S. 101 will facilitate the flow of goods and capital. The expansion of clean, efficient, and reliable public transportation in the densely populated Portland area will facilitate the growth of our economy and provide people with the opportunity to find work and steady employment.

I have considered these priorities very carefully. I ask the Committee to fund them and others like them. I thank the Committee for hearing me today and considering these requests. Thank you very much.

Ms. EDWARDS OF MARYLAND. Thank you very much for your testimony today Mr. Schrader. I have to say there are many of us around the Country who in working in our communities often look to what Oregon has done with its transportation system as we figure out ours. So I appreciate your testimony this afternoon.

Mr. SCHRADER. Thank you very much, Madam Chairwoman.

Ms. EDWARDS OF MARYLAND. The Committee stands in adjournment.

[Whereupon, at 12:55 p.m., the Subcommittee was adjourned.]

EARL BLUMENAUER
THIRD DISTRICT, OREGON

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Testimony: High Priority Project Program
Subcommittee on Highways and Transit
Congressman Earl Blumenauer

Thank you Mr. Chairman, not just for the opportunity to testify but for all the hard work that your subcommittee has been doing, the terrific hearings that have made a superb record to support not just a reauthorization of the surface transportation act, but a major rewrite of that bill.

I strongly urge that you build on that record establishing for the first time a real purpose for our major transportation bill. That is a critical part of a new vision for rebuilding and renewing America. This is not just about protecting and optimizing the existing transportation infrastructure. More than ever before this is about revitalizing the economy and strengthening our communities while we protect the planet from global warming.
Your committee has already started along the path of energy conservation and greenhouse gas reduction. Please be bold – transportation represents 30% of our nation's greenhouse gases. We can't meet our goals without your strong leadership.

I strongly urge you to put the "I" back into ICE-TEA – Intermodalism, with a higher standard in your new vision.

I strongly urge more uniformity. Everybody must plan and deliver for this new era.

Please work to help us extract more value from the federal partnership, provide more statutory guidance on "cost-effective" projects and apply it to all transportation modes. If it's good enough to require justification for a light rail line, it should also be used to justify an interchange.

I urge that your committee adjust and harmonize match ratios. A formula should not determine the transportation solution. We must also work to streamline this

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process to become performance-driven for environmental protection and public participation.

I want to be your partner on Ways and Means to get you the resources you need – generating more money after you create this new vision and make the federal government a better partner.

In pursuit of more resources and for the future, I strongly urge you expand a pilot project on vehicle miles traveled (VMT) that we've pioneered in Oregon to all 50 states and the District of Columbia as we design a transportation funding system for the future.

You will receive from me in my written testimony five specific areas of emphasis.

One (1) is the Columbia River crossing – a huge undertaking combining both Oregon's and Washington's resources to cross the Columbia River, one of the nation's vital freight routes. Please work with us to refine the toll authority and to do a better job with transit, pedestrian and freight, and connect Vancouver to Portland with light rail.

Second (2), I will be a submitting a request for the Portland / Milwaukie light rail extension that will continue to build on what we think is the best national LRT model to showcase of what light rail does in our region.

Third (3), I will be submitting legislation that I hope will be incorporated into your bill to not just expand the Portland streetcar system, but really jumpstart a national movement building on the small starts provisions in the last reauthorization. My bill would expand, refine, and direct it.

Fourth (4), I'm confident that under your leadership bike and pedestrian programs will enter a whole new era, expanding the safe routes to schools program, and other trail and pedestrian programs.

Finally (5), you will receive from me a request for some funding on Portland's Sellwood Bridge, an example of how one local government struggles to meet regional needs.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts. I will follow-up with written testimony. I salute your work and look forward to being your partner in formulation of this landmark legislation.

The Columbia River Crossing

The I-5 Columbia River Crossing is a long-term, comprehensive and sustainable multi-modal solution to the economic, safety, and environmental challenges caused by the Interstate Bridge over the Columbia River. The bridge and its approaches in Oregon and Washington—a five mile area— cause the worst traffic congestion in the Portland/Vancouver metro region. This area is also one of the biggest bottlenecks on the I-5 trade corridor, one of the nation's top freight routes.

The northbound bridge was built in 1917 for Model Ts. The southbound bridge was built in 1958, but traffic has more than quadrupled in the years since it opened. Today, with just three lanes in each direction, the bridges strain to carry 135,000 vehicles each weekday. Congestion on this crucial corridor already lasts four to six hours a day, stranding motorists in their cars, stalling buses in gridlock, and delaying freight moving up the freeway by truck. As bad as it is today, by 2030, stop and go traffic is projected to increase to 15 hours a day.

In July 2008, local agencies endorsed replacing the Interstate Bridge with a new structure, extending light rail across the Columbia into downtown Vancouver, improving interchanges, and creating a world-class bicycle/pedestrian facility over the river.

The Columbia River Crossing project will offer a long-term comprehensive solution to the challenges on this section of freeway. The project will significantly reduce congestion and safety problems while improving mobility, reliability, and accessibility for all users of this section of freeway, whether they're traveling by automobile, truck, transit, bicycle, or on foot.

In particular, I would like to highlight several key aspects of the project:

Expanded Public Transportation: The limited transit service across the Columbia River does not provide a convenient alternative to driving. The CRC would more than double the number of transit riders over the no build scenario. Transit is projected to carry 6.7 million riders per year, and about 20 percent of commuters are projected to choose transit, compared to less than 5 percent today.

Improved Bicycle/Pedestrian Crossing: The bicycle and pedestrian crossings on the existing bridges are narrow, steep, and immediately adjacent to freeway traffic. A new crossing will include a world class pedestrian and bicycle path that would create direct connections and provide better links to public transit.

Improved Freight Mobility: The Interstate Bridge carries goods from across Oregon, and congestion in the area makes it difficult for trucks to access the Port of Portland, Port of Vancouver, and industrial areas that are accessed from interchanges near the bridge. Each year the existing bridge carries about $40 billion in freight, and this is projected to increase to $70 billion annually by 2030. The bridge is one of the top freight bottlenecks on the nation's highway system, with an estimated 644,200 annual hours of delay for trucks. A replacement bridge would allow freight to move up I-5 much more efficiently and reduce the time and money lost when trucks are stuck in gridlock.

Reduced Seismic Vulnerability: The existing bridge, which is not anchored in firm soil, is vulnerable in a major seismic event. A significant earthquake could cause the bridges to collapse or render them unusable. A replacement bridge would be designed to remain standing even in a 2500-year seismic event, ensuring that interstate traffic would continue to move on the West Coast's principal trade corridor.

Safety: This section of freeway experiences about 300 crashes each year—nearly one every day—that are caused by closely spaced interchanges, short distances to merge onto the freeway, poor sight distance due to the steep bridge hump, and bridge lifts. These safety hazards would be eliminated with a new bridge.

Portland to Milwaukie Light Rail

The Portland to Milwaukie light rail project will implement a major transit improvement to improve livability in the metropolitan region, support the Portland region's iconic land-use goals, and will optimize one of the finest transportation systems in the nation. The project is environmentally-sensitive, reflects community values, and is fiscally responsible. The project expands on what we think is the best national LRT model and showcases the remarkable benefits of light rail for our region.

The new alignment would have the long-term capacity of approximately 5,320 persons per hour, equivalent to the capacity of approximately 3.5 additional highway lanes. By 2030, this line, stretching from the existing Expo Center station in north Portland and the new SE Park Avenue station in Milwaukie, would connect with a one-seat ride 123,600 residents and 221,200 jobs within its station areas.

In-vehicle transit travel times between downtown Milwaukie and downtown Portland would be reduced to 25 minutes, compared to 28 minutes for automobiles and 37 minutes for buses. Similarly, transit times to Portland State University would be 19 minutes, compared to 28 minutes for automobiles and 40 minutes for buses.

The construction of this project will generate jobs in three ways: direct employment tied to the job site; indirect employment through manufacturing building materials or design professions, legal, accounting and real estate; and multiplier or ancillary work in other service areas, building off the expansionary effects of spending in the other areas. Economists currently use a factor of 20 jobs per million dollars of construction to estimate jobs created by projects. The construction component of this project is estimated at $598,759,000, resulting in approximately 11,975 jobs.

Revitalization of the Streetcar Industry

In Portland Oregon, the streetcar has proven a magnet for private development, leveraging billions in new investment. The approval of a new line of the Portland Streetcar—turning our streetcar line into a bona fide system—will create 1,300 new jobs and leverage millions of dollars in new investment along the line. The building of each car not only employs people in my district but involves subcontractors across America, including the hard hit Midwest.

The program, shut down by the Bush administration, is poised to take off in cities ranging from Tucson to Ft. Lauderdale to Seattle. Established systems want to expand and dozens of more cities are designing and planning new systems.

Streetcars cost a fraction of other transportation options and can be built in less than half the time. You can have ground-breakings and ribbon-cuttings in communities from Boise to Cincinnati, from New Haven to Detroit, and even Washington, DC. SAFETEA-LU provided funding to create a US manufactured prototype streetcar. That prototype is currently being manufactured by Oregon Iron Works and is expected to be completed in May, 2009.

This prototype will be the first US produced streetcar since 1952 – 57 years! With scores of cities planning to introduce streetcars in their communities in the coming years, an opportunity is available for a significant manufacturing base to develop. It is estimated that each streetcar produced employs 30 full-time employees and each city's system will require several vehicles.

Following is a summary of my streetcar legislation:

1. The Federal Streetcar Revitalization Act

This legislation would replace the existing Small Starts program to create a program of "Streetcar Capital Investment Grants." Much like the existing Small Starts process, but tailored to the challenges of implementing a streetcar project, communities could apply to these grants from the Federal Transit Administration.

The FTA would award the grants based on the project's effect on local economic development, land use, travel patterns, and greenhouse gas reduction potential, among other elements.

As communities around the country embrace this technology, the federal government must be a better partner in supporting their endeavors. This legislation will accomplish that goal.

2. Fast Starts Act of 2009

The Federal Transit Administration had challenges implementing the Small Starts program created under SAFETEA-LU. As a result, communities around the country expended time and resources to utilize the Small Starts program for streetcar projects. The delay in authorizing these programs created a backlog of projects requiring attention outside of the Small Starts program.

For that reason, I am introducing the Fast Starts Act of 2009. This legislation authorizes a grant program that the Secretary of Transportation can use to expedite streetcar projects around the country.

To be eligible for a grant, the State or local governmental authority applies to the Secretary a certification that their project is supported by an acceptable degree of local financial commitment; has met all necessary environmental requirements to begin construction; and can be under construction not later than March 1, 2012. On the strength of that application, the Secretary can determine the most effective projects and provide a federal match.

The Sellwood Bridge Project

The Sellwood bridge project will replace the 84-year old Sellwood Bridge. The current bridge has a sufficiency rating of 2 out of 100 and is structurally and functionally obsolete. In its current state of disrepair, vehicles weighing more than 10 tons are prohibited from using the bridge, preventing buses, fire trucks, and most freight deliveries from using the bridge.

Without this project, the Sellwood Bridge will eventually need to be closed—a loss of a vital artery between downtown Portland and SE Portland and Clackamas County communities. The existing seismic vulnerability of the bridge will be corrected when a new bridge is in place. Currently, the bridge carries about 30,000 vehicles per day. As a result, the Sellwood and other communities will face longer commutes, increased congestion and air pollution, and economic hardship.

Multnomah County, the City of Portland, and Metro have developed a Locally Preferred Alternative that will provide the necessary structural capacity to safely and reliably carry buses, trucks and streetcars. Unlike the very narrow existing bridge, the new bridge will have enough width for emergency vehicles to pass during heavy traffic and for thousands of cyclists and pedestrians to cross safely. Construction of the new bridge is estimated to create approximately 5,000 family wage jobs, and will preserve many more jobs by providing a reliable connection in this regionally important transportation corridor.

Bicycle and pedestrian facilities will replace the one narrow sidewalk and will bring the bridge into compliance with the American with Disabilities Act. These improvements will also better connect to the trails at both ends of the bridge, increasing bicycle and pedestrian connections to a world-class trail system. The new bridge will also allow thousands of commuters each day to lower their carbon footprint by choosing to bicycle or take mass transit.

A new structure also provides environmental benefits. The new bridge will include state-of-the-art stormwater facilities to capture and treat run-off before it is released to the Willamette River, unlike the existing bridge, which discharges roadway stormwater runoff directly into the Willamette River. Removing the current structure will also eliminate lead-based paint from contaminating the Willamette River.

Charles Boustany Jr., MD (LA-7)
Subcommittee on Highways and Transit
Hearing on
High Priority Project Program
April 28, 2009

Chairman DeFazio and Ranking Member Duncan, thank you for convening this hearing to discuss important transportation projects across the country.

Southwest Louisiana has many critical infrastructure priorities. A majority of our nation's offshore oil and gas supply flows through South Louisiana and all Americans rely on the infrastructure required to get that energy into the marketplace. Louisianians also depend on safe and reliable evacuation routes to protect them from life-threatening storms like Hurricanes Rita and Katrina. I've worked closely with state and local leaders to identify high priority projects that I hope to secure your support for in the upcoming surface transportation authorization bill. I'd like to discuss two important projects today.

One critical project is the long-overdue completion of Interstate 49 South and the I-49 Connector in Lafayette Parish.

Home to 36 percent of Louisiana's population, America's I-49 South Energy Corridor supports a group of energy producers, ports, supply bases and other related infrastructure that sustains the vital production of oil and gas in the Gulf of Mexico and creates tens of thousands of jobs. This 140-mile stretch of U.S. Highway 90 from Lafayette to the Westbank Expressway in New Orleans must be upgraded to accommodate growing commerce along the Energy Corridor. Integrating this important route into the State's freeway system - which will become I-49 South - is a top priority of the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development.

Completion of the I-49 South Energy Corridor is also a national priority. With four of the nation's top ports accessible by the Corridor, it ranks as one of the country's top ten industrial corridors in terms of jobs per capita. Louisiana ports carry nearly 500 million tons of commerce annually – almost 21 percent of all waterborne commerce in the U.S. each year.

No other region of similar size has such a critical impact on our nation's economy. Nearly $150 billion in annual energy revenue flows through the Energy Corridor. It's

also a major source of revenue for the U.S. government with nearly $5 billion each year generated from Louisiana's energy production.

An important component of the Energy Corridor is the I-49 Connector in Lafayette Parish. The I-49 Connector is a critical link through Lafayette that is compatible with the State's planned I-49 South upgrade, providing essential infrastructure to support the Energy Corridor, promoting economic growth and adding key hurricane evacuation routes.

The Connector project will expand the existing Evangeline Thruway U.S. 90/U.S. 167 corridor and will connect I-49 North to the upgraded I-49 South. Construction will begin south of the Lafayette Regional Airport and continue north to the current southern terminus of I-49 which is about five miles.

Completion of the I-49 Connector will also alleviate the heavy traffic burden of Lafayette Parish and expand the opportunity to improve other aspects of the Thruway and surrounding ground transportation.

Another critical project in the 7th District is replacement of the I-10 Calcasieu River Bridge in Lake Charles.

The devastating 2007 Interstate 35 bridge collapse in Minnesota focused our nation's attention towards bridge maintenance and safety. In Southwest Louisiana, the I-10 Calcasieu River Bridge has been declared structurally deficient by the U.S. Department of Transportation.

The Calcasieu River Bridge was completed in 1952 as part of U.S. Highway 90 and was designed in an era of lighter traffic and smaller trucks. It is now a vital component of the I-10 transportation corridor and its replacement remains a top priority. The project has significant long-term public safety and economic implications.

Recent studies show freight transported along the multi-state corridor is valued at $1.38 trillion - making the I-10 corridor integral to our nation's economic growth and a high-quality job creator in the region. The current traffic volume on I-10 in Lake Charles exceeds 50,000 vehicles per day and is expected to grow to 100,000 vehicles in the next 25 years. The bridge also services traffic to the nearby Port of Lake Charles which is the nation's 11th largest port and a key gateway for American trade.

While the bridge is currently safe for travel - it's important that we move forward now to replace the bridge, and I am committed to working to make this important project happen.

I understand the enormous pressure the Committee is under to craft a comprehensive surface transportation authorization bill this year. As a former Member of the Highways and Transit Subcommittee, I've spent a great deal of time listening to testimony in preparation for the reauthorization and know the challenges that lay ahead.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to provide testimony to the Subcommittee today. I respectfully ask that you consider Southwest Louisiana's transportation infrastructure priorities as you begin work on this important legislation. I look forward to working with you in the coming months to enact a comprehensive surface transportation authorization bill this year.

Congressman Charlie Melancon
Testimony before the Subcommittee on Highways and Transit
House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
April 28, 2009

Chairman Oberstar, Ranking Member Mica, thank you for the opportunity to come before you today to advocate for Louisiana Highway 1's inclusion as a High Priority Project within the next surface transportation legislation.

First, I want to thank the Committee for recognizing the importance of LA 1 in SAFETEA-LU a couple of years ago. Without the Committee's significant investment in this High Priority Corridor, LA 1 would not be under construction right now. I understand that the contractor is working towards bringing the new bridge into service as early as August of this year.

To remind the Members of the Committee, LA 1 provides critical access to Port Fourchon, which is Louisiana's southernmost port and supports nearly 90-percent of deepwater oil and gas production in the Gulf of Mexico.

While every Member has infrastructure in their district that is important, few can boast the direct financial benefit that LA-1 offers to my district. A 2008 economic impact study conducted for the Greater Lafourche Port Commission and the South Louisiana Economic Council concluded that a three-week loss of services or access to Port Fourchon would result in a loss of nearly $10 billion in sales at U.S. firms, a loss of over $2.8 billion in household earnings, and a loss of 77,440 jobs in this nation. As we recall too well, the economic impact of a shut-in oil and gas we experienced after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita make these findings more than just economic estimates. We have felt the tangible harm caused when Gulf of Mexico oil and gas production is forced to stop.

As phase 1 of the LA-1 project nears completion, my request to the Committee this year is to assist in the construction of phase 2 of the project. This next phase will extend the elevated highway from Port Fourchon within the levee system some 30 miles north to the city of Golden Meadow, LA. This phase is estimated to cost $360 million. While I certainly do not expect that the Committee will fund the project at this full amount, I hope that the Committee will again recognize the importance of LA 1 as a critical energy corridor.

The Committee's previous foresight enabled the construction of phase 1 of the project and we hope to build upon that success in this reauthorization. Thank you for this opportunity to speak with you today. I look forward to working with you on this Transportation Authorization measure.

Statement of Rep. Harry Mitchell
House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
Subcommittee on Highways and Transit
4/28/2009

--Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

--As we begin our review of the High Priority Project Program, I want to once again acknowledge and thank this committee for the work it did in the 110th Congress to correct an inequity in the program that was promulgated under SAFETEA-LU, and say that I hope the committee will maintain this correction as part of reauthorization.

--I am referring to the higher federal share for high priority projects in states with large amounts of public lands.

--When SAFETEA-LU was first enacted, projects in only six states were allowed to receive a higher federal share: Alaska, Montana, Nevada, North Dakota, Oregon and South Dakota.

--Arizona ranked third in the nation in public lands, but was left off the list.

--As a result, none of the high priority projects in Arizona were eligible for a higher federal share.

--Last year, Congress approved, and the President signed into law H.R. 1195, a bill making technical corrections to SAFETEA-LU. Among the changes included in the bill was a provision allowing high priority projects in states like Arizona, with large amounts of public land, to finally become eligible for a higher federal share.

--This was the right thing to do, and I am grateful.

--I hope that we can incorporate this correction into the reauthorization bill.

--I yield back.

RON PAUL
14TH DISTRICT, TEXAS

FINANCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE
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RANKING MEMBER
DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL MONETARY POLICY, TRADE, AND TECHNOLOGY
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEES:
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, HUMAN RIGHTS, AND OVERSIGHT
WESTERN HEMISPHERE

JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515–4314

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GALVESTON, TX 77550
(409) 766-7013

Testimony of the Honorable Ron Paul

Ron Paul

Before the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee

I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony before this Committee as part of the SAFETEA-LU reauthorization process. Federal investment in transportation infrastructure is of great importance to maintain our nation's economic vitality and the quality of life for our citizens. I am pleased to offer my support for projects within my Congressional District, and respectfully ask this Committee's consideration of funding for these projects.

Port of Galveston

The Port of Galveston submitted two requests for funding under the reauthorization. Each project will provide critically needed enhanced freight mobility and economic development at the Port.

Our Nation's ports play a vital role in economic prosperity, and provide benefits to the American people on a daily basis. Activities in and around the ports in Texas, as with other ports around the country, provide a significant benefit to the local, regional, state and national economies, including employment and contributions to the tax base.

Yet notwithstanding the important role that ports play in our national economy, there are very few federal programs that provide assistance for port infrastructure. Certainly as compared to other transportation programs, port infrastructure assistance remains comparatively low. Thus, with the increased attention that this Committee is likely to give to freight movement as part of the reauthorization process, I would encourage the Committee to include activities at ports as a key priority for federal funding.

Beyond the necessary investment in transportation infrastructure nationwide, improvements in our infrastructure is badly needed in the coastal areas of Texas devastated by Hurricane Ike. The economy of this area continues to suffer, and unemployment remains a problem. While ports have also been seriously impacted by the downturn in the economy, they remain a major source of employment and economic activity. In Galveston, the Port of Galveston is one of the largest employers in the area, yet it and other ports in the region continue to struggle with recovery from the impacts of Hurricane Ike and the downturn in the economy.

The following will provide details on the Port of Galveston's two reauthorization request.

Port of Galveston West Port Entrance Mobility Improvements

The Port of Galveston intends to improve the connectivity between State Highway 275 (Harborside Drive) and Old Port Industrial Road, which will result in a safer and more efficient access for truck

and vehicle ingress and egress from the Port of Galveston's west entrance security check point. Improvements will enhance port security, and assist the region in emission reduction through more efficient rail, truck and auto mobility, as well as improve safety at rail crossings. The second part of the project provides a grade separation on Harborside Drive between 33rd and 37th Streets. This is in an area heavily trafficked by vehicles requiring access to the cruise terminals, including passenger vehicles and trucks providing supplies and services. The grade separation will improve traffic and safety, and provide the opportunity for economic development in an area adjacent to Port property that is currently not feasible for development.

The project will include roadway construction and rail at grade crossing improvements. Construction is necessary to alleviate interactions between truck and passenger vehicle traffic intersecting twenty nine (29) rail crossings and various rail storage yards in the western section of the port and the security check point entrance. The project includes improvements to reroute entrance traffic into the port's west end terminals, facilitate freight mobility, enhance cruise traffic access, repair and upgrade rail grade crossings and improve safety and directional signage. This project is in the 2035 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).and the 2008-2011 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) has not received any federal funding.

The total project cost is $20,455,000, with a request for federal funding of $16,364,000. The Port of Galveston will provide $4,091,000 as its local share.

Port of Galveston Rail Crossing Rehabilitation Project

Throughout the Port property there are twenty nine areas with decades-old timber rail crossings that are in need of refurbishment to improve mobility at the Port. Reconstruction of these grade crossings will not only aid in general traffic flow, but also enhance port security and improve safety of workers and automobile traffic.

The project plans include the removal of over 3,000 linear feet of deteriorated wooden timbers and replacing them with concrete panel surfaces throughout the port, creating a seamless transition across the track.

The project is anticipated to be a cooperative project with the Port and the Class III rail operator that serves the Port's many tenants. It will result in efficient and safe circulation of the multiple modes of traffic and pedestrians that travel throughout the Port. Rehabilitation of rail crossings in both public and restricted areas of the Port will provide critically needed safety improvements that will support continued growth in both the Port's cruise and cargo operations. The ability of cargo carriers to travel across the improved crossings will result in more efficient goods movements. Safer pedestrian travel in the public areas where our cruise passengers, crew members and the general public access our waterfront restaurants, museums and off shore fishing companies will stimulate tourism business that has struggled since Hurricane Ike.

The total project cost is estimated to be $4,516,500. The Port is requesting a federal share of $3,613,200, and will in turn provide a local match of $903,300.

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Assembly
California Legislature

CHARLES M. CALDERON
ASSEMBLYMEMBER, FIFTY-EIGHTH DISTRICT

COMMITTEES
CHAIR, REVENUE AND TAXATION
APPROPRIATIONS
ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT, SPORTS, TOURISM AND INTERNET MEDIA
INSURANCE

April 13, 2009

James L. Oberstar, M.C.
Chairman
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

John L. Mica, M.C.
Ranking Member
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
2163 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Oberstar and Ranking Member Mica:

I write to express my support for the GO RIO Project as you consider the reauthorization of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFE-TEA-LU). GO RIO is an innovative universal access, mass transit initiative which was launched by Rio Hondo College in FY 2006 to increase the number of full-time students who take public transportation. Already in its third year of successful operation, GO RIO has produced extraordinary results, and our transit agency has been proud to be an integral part of this partnership.

GO RIO helped increase the number of full-time students who take public transportation by 50% in just its first year. Nearly two and a half years later, ridership is still on the rise each semester, as more and more full-time students leave their single-occupancy vehicles at home and decide to use clean-burning buses to travel to and from Rio Hondo College. In fact, since the GO RIO pass is universally accepted by all of the agencies in this partnership, students are now using the bus for other destinations, which means that students are clearly adopting a public transit-oriented culture which will motivate them to become users of public transit even beyond college.

In addition to expanding overall student ridership, GO RIO has also: 1) relieved congestion on campus and on the roads surrounding campus; 2) reduced the demand for parking on campus, 3) improved the air quality of the environment in our region; and 4) increased the number of students who are enrolled full-time at Rio Hondo College. With respect to the air quality improvement, GO RIO has reduced over 3 tons of emissions during the first two years, which led to GO RIO being recognized by South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) and awarded with AQIP funds to help subsidize GO RIO.

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SAFE-TEA-LU funding would enable Rio Hondo College to keep this program running until college officials can work with students to approve an increase in the transit fee and work with local civic leaders to increase the subsidies from local governments. The SAFE-TEA funding will serve as bridge funding which will enable GO RIO to maintain its high level of efficiency and guarantee access for all full-time students. **SAFE-TEA-LU funding will replicate the success of GO RIO by assisting three other campuses to start their own mass-transit projects modeled after GO RIO.** In addition, after each new transit project is established, the participating campuses will be able to coordinate so that there is reciprocity and universal access across communities so that students will be able to ride from one part of the Los Angeles region to another. Also, keep in mind that Rio Hondo officials would be willing to continue to help provide in-kind assistance with promotion, program management, and planning to the other participating campuses as they have to colleges in other parts of California in each of the last few years. **The revenue from the student transit fee, the outside funding from the SCAQMD, and the subsidy from local cities will comprise about two-thirds of the cost of running GO RIO over the next two years. With respect to the other campuses, the infusion of SAFE-TEA LU funding will help launch a transit program during the first two-year pilot period before college officials establish a transit fee at the end of the second year which will cover the cost of running the program in subsequent years.**

Please note that college officials will create and distribute surveys to transit users so that the program can be regularly evaluated and so that users have an opportunity to make suggestions on how the program can be improved. Also, college officials will continue to visit local city council meetings and school board meetings so that community members have an opportunity to be updated and to provide valuable feedback Furthermore, college officials will make annual presentations at the board meetings for each participating institution.

This is an innovative partnership which will maximize access to mass transit for in our community. I strongly urge you to give favorable consideration to this request for SAFE-TEA-LU funding.

Respectfully,

CHARLES M. CALDERON
Member of the Assembly, 58th District

California State Senate

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SENATOR RONALD S. CALDERON
THIRTIETH SENATE DISTRICT

CHAIR, BANKING, FINANCE AND INSURANCE

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April 21, 2009

James L. Oberstar, M.C.
Chairman
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

John L. Mica, M.C.
Ranking Member
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
2163 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Oberstar and Ranking Member Mica:

I write to express my support for the *Gateway to Public Transit Project* as you consider the reauthorization of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFE-TEA-LU). Rio Hondo College's *Gateway to Public Transit* will create a secure, safe point of entry to the campus and a designated drop-off area for public transportation buses for all students and visitors to campus.

Rio Hondo College was originally built to accommodate 3,000 students in the early 1960's and is now enrolling nearly 24,000 students. As such, the current infrastructure is in dire need of remodeling to adjust to the increasing number of users. Currently, visitors who arrive on campus and visit the existing guard kiosk line up and often inadvertently cause bottlenecks at the main entrance on College Drive. These bottlenecks cause delays to students and visitors who are trying to drive up College Drive to the upper part of campus. Furthermore, students who use public transportation currently must walk from the bus shelters on Workman Mill Rd. uphill to the bus shelter for tram which is located in Parking Lot 2. College officials need to construct a way for public transit buses to drop students off a little closer to the tram stops to increase efficiency - especially since Rio Hondo College has seen the number of students who use public transportation nearly *doubled* within the last three years.

Gateway to Public Transit will fulfill Rio Hondo's goal of improving access to Rio Hondo College by achieving the following objectives: **enhancing the link between public transportation buses and on campus shuttles; streamlining incoming traffic by eliminating delays and bottlenecks at the current entry point; providing better information services to students and campus visitors, and improving the safety of commuters, pedestrians, bus-riders, students, and all who visit the campus.**

Rio Hondo College is committed to providing funding for at least 20% of this project and is prepared to invest the staff resources necessary to plan and design this project, to communicate with community partners, and to see this project through. SAFE-TEA-LU funding is expected to provide the remaining 80% of the project's expenses.

Please note that college officials will develop project updates and distribute these updates to all of Rio Hondo's business partners, district residents, community neighbors, elected officials, feeder school districts, and other stakeholders. Also, college officials will solicit feedback at local city council meetings and school board meetings so that members throughout the district have opportunities to provide input.

This is a worthy project which will maximize access to Rio Hondo's campus and improve safety for all campus visitors, and optimize security for students. I strongly urge you to give favorable consideration to this request for SAFE-TEA-LU funding.

Respectfully,

Ron S. Calderon
California State Senator
30th District

AR

City of Downey

FUTURE UNLIMITED

April 22, 2009

Arthur T. Leahy
Chief Executive Officer
Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority
One Gateway Plaza
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Subject: Lakewood Boulevard/Rosemead Boulevard at Telegraph Road Intersection Improvement Project 2009 Metro Call for Projects Funding Application

Dear Mr. Leahy:

The City of Downey is pleased to support the City of Pico Rivera's funding application to the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority for the Lakewood Boulevard/Rosemead Boulevard at Telegraph Road Intersection Improvement Project.

This project will be a tremendous asset for both our cities, Pico Rivera and Downey. The Gateway Cities sub-region will benefit from this project over the next several decades by increasing mobility, capacity and vehicle throughput; facilitating goods movement and truck circulation, enhancing traffic safety and improving the operational efficiency of the Lakewood Boulevard/Rosemead Boulevard at Telegraph Road intersection.

I urge you, your staff and the Metro board to support this most important project.

Sincerely,

Brian A. Ragland

Brian A. Ragland, P. E.
Director of Public Works

11111 BROOKSHIRE AVENUE POST OFFICE BOX 7016 DOWNEY, CALIFORNIA 90241-7016 www.downeyca.org

City of Downey

FUTURE UNLIMITED

April 22, 2009

Arthur T. Leahy
Chief Executive Officer
Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority
One Gateway Plaza
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Subject: Telegraph Road Traffic Throughput and Safety Enhancements Project
2009 Metro Call for Projects Funding Application

Dear Mr. Leahy:

The City of Downey is pleased to support the City of Pico Rivera's funding application to the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority for the Telegraph Road Traffic Throughput and Safety Enhancements Project.

This project will be a tremendous asset for both our cities, Pico Rivera and Downey. The Gateway Cities sub-region will benefit from this project over the next several decades by increasing mobility and vehicle throughput, enhancing traffic safety and beautifying the Telegraph Road corridor.

I urge you, your staff and the Metro board to support this most important project.

Sincerely,

Brian A. Ragland

Brian A. Ragland, P.E.
Director of Public Works

11111 BROOKSHIRE AVENUE POST OFFICE BOX 7016 DOWNEY, CALIFORNIA 90241-7016 www.downeyca.org

City of La Puente
15900 E. Main Street La Puente, CA 91744-4719 Telephone (626) 855-1500 Fax (626) 961-4626 www.lapuente.org

April 21, 2009

James L. Oberstar, M.C.
Chairman
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: TRANSPORTATION REAUTHORIZATION REQUEST FORM

Dear Chairman James L. Oberstar, M.C.:

As Mayor of the City of La Puente, I would like to express my support for the City of La Puente's efforts to secure grant funding by the Transportation Reauthorization Request Form. The safety of pedestrians, bicyclist, and motorists presents a tremendous concern, as areas in our City warrant an improved streetscape plan to build a walkable, livable, and economically vital neighborhood.

The City of La Puente, working closely with local neighborhoods and businesses will develop a comprehensive urban design plan to construct a safe, healthy, and revitalized streetscape plan along Valley Boulevard.

I wholeheartedly support this project request form that seeks to increase pedestrian, bicyclist, and motorist safety in our community. If you should have any questions regarding my support, please do not hesitate to contact me at (626) 855-1500.

Sincerely,

Louie A. Lujan, M.Ed.
Mayor, City of La Puente

CHERI KELLEY
Mayor
GORDON STEFENHAGEN
Vice Mayor
JESSE M. LUERA
Councilmember
MICHAEL MENDEZ
Councilmember
RICK RAMIREZ
Councilmember
ERNIE V. GARCIA
City Manager

City of NORWALK

12700 NORWALK BLVD., P.O. BOX 1030, NORWALK, CA 90651-1030 * PHONE: 562/929-5700 * FACSIMILE: 562/929-5773 * WWW.CI.NORWALK.CA.US

The Honorable Grace Napolitano
United States House of Representatives
1610 Longworth Building
Washington, DC 20515

April 21, 2008

Subject: Letter of Support for Alternative Fuel Expansion Buses for Norwalk Transit System

Dear Representative Napolitano:

The City of Norwalk Transit System (NTS) respectfully requests $1,977,941 to purchase expansion alternative fuel buses in the upcoming reauthorization of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). The total project cost is $2,472,426 and our request represents 80 percent of that total cost. **This project has my full support as well as the widespread support of the community.**

The NTS fleet is comprised of 32 buses. NTS operates nine routes, serving seven cities and portions of unincorporated Los Angeles County. More than one third (35%) of NTS bus boardings involve transfers with other transit providers. NTS also provides critical shuttle interface service between the Norwalk/Santa Fe Spring Transportation Center (MetroLink Rail) and the MTA Greenline Commuter Rail Station. NTS now also has expanded its operations to include the cities of Whittier and Santa Fe Springs, CA. Our requested project would help fund the purchase of four alternative fuel (gasoline/electric) hybrid buses, which will enable us to provide expansion service due to a 23% increase in ridership.

This project is meritorious for many reasons. This project helps improve the safety, reliability, air quality and comfort for Norwalk Transit System's riding customers and promotes maintenance and cost efficiency for our agency. In addition, the purchase of alternative fuel buses assists in our efforts to reduce emissions and promote cleaner air for our entire region.

Norwalk will provide the $494,485 required local match over the first three years of the Transportation Authorization for this project using Proposition A and Measure R local return funds. Norwalk residents will be informed of and have the opportunity to comment on this request. **Specifically, the projects are published for public comment by the Southern California Association of Governments, the regional MPO.**

Thank you for your ongoing support of the City of Norwalk's federal priorities. Please contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Cheri Kelley
Mayor

CHERI KELLEY
Mayor
GORDON STEFENHAGEN
Vice Mayor
JESSE M. LUERA
Councilmember
MICHAEL MENDEZ
Councilmember
RICK RAMIREZ
Councilmember
ERNIE V. GARCIA
City Manager

City of NORWALK

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April 21, 2009

James L. Oberstar, M.C.
Chairman
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

John L. Mica, M.C.
Ranking Member
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
2163 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Oberstar and Ranking Member Mica:

The City of Norwalk is proud to submit the San Antonio Drive Rehabilitation Project to be considered for inclusion in the Transportation Reauthorization Bill. This project would allow the City to rehabilitate existing and deteriorated asphalt pavement on San Antonio Drive, a highly trafficked street. San Antonio Drive is listed on the Federal-Aid Highway System (FAU arterials, secondary and collectors streets). This street is one of the City's main arterials that connects Norwalk with surrounding communities and serves as a regional public transportation route for public transit agencies. The San Antonio Drive Rehabilitation Project would allow the City to reconstruct a 1.2-mile stretch of road, currently in critical need of rehabilitation. As a result, the City is requesting that this project be included in the Transportation Reauthorization Bill. **The total cost for the project is $1.5M, however, we will be utilizing $300,000 in Prop C local funding, <u>therefore, we are requesting $1.2 M for this project under this Bill.</u>**

As standard procedure, once complete funding for this project is attained, the project would be taken to the City Council for review and approval and the public will be given an opportunity to comment and provide input.

On behalf of the City of Norwalk, I thank you for your time and consideration of this project for inclusion in the upcoming Transportation Reauthorization Bill.

Sincerely,

Cheri Kelley
Mayor

CHERI KELLEY
Mayor
GORDON STEFENHAGEN
Vice Mayor
JESSE M. LUERA
Councilmember
MICHAEL MENDEZ
Councilmember
RICK RAMIREZ
Councilmember
ERNIE V. GARCIA
City Manager

City of NORWALK

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April 21, 2009

James L. Oberstar, M.C.
Chairman
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

John L. Mica, M.C.
Ranking Member
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
2163 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Oberstar and Ranking Member Mica:

The City of Norwalk is proud to submit the Studebaker Road Rehabilitation Project to be considered for inclusion in the Transportation Reauthorization Bill. This project would allow the City to rehabilitate existing and deteriorated asphalt pavement on Studebaker Road, a highly trafficked street. Studebaker Road is listed on the Federal-Aid Highway System (FAU arterials, secondary and collectors streets). This street is one of the City's main arterials that connects Norwalk with surrounding communities and serves as a regional public transportation route for public transit agencies. The Studebaker Road Rehabilitation Project would allow the City to reconstruct a one-mile stretch of road. In addition, this project would incorporate storm drain capabilities, which are critical for flood prevention in this particular area. As a result, the City is requesting that this project be included in the Transportation Reauthorization Bill. **The total cost for the project is $2.7M, however, we will be utilizing $1.14M in Federal Surface Transportation Program–Local funds, and $560,000 in Prop C local funding, <u>therefore, the City is requesting $1.0 M for this project under this Bill.</u>**

As standard procedure, once complete funding for this project is attained, the project would be taken to the City Council for review and approval and the public will be given an opportunity to comment and provide input.

On behalf of the City of Norwalk, I thank you for your time and consideration of this project for inclusion in the upcoming Transportation Reauthorization Bill.

Sincerely,

Cheri Kelley
Mayor

OFFICE
OF THE
MAYOR

ELLIOTT ROTHMAN
Mayor

April 22, 2009

The Honorable Chairman James L. Oberstar, M.C.
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C 20515

SUBJECT: Support for California State Route 71 Freeway Conversion Project

Dear Chairman Oberstar:

At their meeting held on April 20th, 2009, the City Council of the City of Pomona voted unanimously to

SUPPORT: The California State Route 71 Freeway Conversion Project

This project will convert a regional expressway into a full, limited access freeway. Currently, the expressway is a four lane highway, with three "T" intersections and on fully signalized intersection. State Route 71 is regionally significant due to the high volumes of both commuter and goods movement usage connecting the counties of Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and San Diego within the greater Los Angeles region. Completion of the project will provide commuters and the community with congestion relief, increased roadway safety, increased mobility and will close the freeway gap between Los Angeles County and the other counties in our region.

The project will be processed in accordance with State of California Department of Transportation procedures meeting all public noticing and meeting requirements throughout the environmental and design processes. Additional input will be sought from the community and surrounding agencies on elements of the final design to ensure a successful project that meets the needs and expectation of the entire Greater Los Angeles region. Thank you for your consideration on this request.

Sincerely,

Mayor Elliott Rothman

Attachments: Transportation Project Request

City Hall, 505 S. Garey Avenue, Box 660, Pomona, CA 91769 (909) 620-2051 Fax (909) 620-3707

11710 Telegraph Road • CA • 90670-3679 • (562) 868-0511 • Fax (562) 868-7112 • www.santafesprings.org

April 21, 2009

Hon. Grace Napolitano
38th District, California
Attention: Mr. Joe Sheehy
1610 Longworth Building
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Letter of Support for the City of Santa Fe Springs' Request for Federal Transportation Reauthorization Funds for the Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center Phase II Parking Expansion Project

Dear Congresswoman Napolitano:

The Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center is a multi-modal transportation facility that provides park and ride service for Metrolink commuters, a connecting point for Metro's Green Line and regional and local buses, taxi services and shuttle services for local residents and business employees.

As part of an overall strategy to alleviate freeway congestion on Interstate 5 and related air pollution, the Transportation Center has proven to be highly effective in offering transportation alternatives to commuters in the southern California region. Along with the increase in the average daily trips, there has been an increase in the demand for parking at the facility. Currently there are a total of 358 parking spaces available for Metrolink commuters and all are occupied on a daily basis.

Most recently, the City of Santa Fe Springs acquired a 4.94 acre site (Parcel A and Parcel B) adjacent to the Transportation Center to provide additional parking. A combination of federal and local dollars totaling $3.1 million was allocated to the right-of-way acquisition and construction of a parking lot on Parcel A. The development of Parcel A will provide approximately 250 additional parking spaces. However, even with these

Louie González, Mayor • Betty Putnam, Mayor Pro Tem
City Council
Joseph D. Serrano, Sr. • Gustavo R. Velasco • William K. Rounds
City Manager
Frederick W. Latham

additional parking spaces, there will be a need for more spaces in the near future to meet the growing demand from Metrolink patrons as freeway congestion continues to push commuters out of their cars towards alternative transportation modes.

The Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center is an intermodal facility serving a large segment of the Southern California region. Specifically, the Transportation Center serves the Gateway Cities subregion with a population of 2.1 million and 750,500 jobs. Its strategic location and proximity to a large population and employment centers has prompted representatives from the Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) to open discussions regarding the implementation of a FlyAway bus service at the Transportation Center that would serve LAX passengers.

The Cities of Norwalk and Santa Fe Springs were also recently approached by representatives of the California High-Speed Rail Authority to discuss the option of the Transportation Center as a High Speed Train Station along the Anaheim-Los Angeles segment of the state-wide high-speed train project.

I herein express my strong support for the City of Santa Fe Springs' Request for Federal Transportation Reauthorization funds in the amount of $2.125 million for the Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center Phase II Parking Expansion Project.

Thank you for your continued leadership and support to move forward the development of the Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center to its fullest potential and serve the growing number of rail and bus users in the Southern California region.

Sincerely,

Frederick W. Latham
City Manager

cc Santa Fe Springs City Council
Norwalk City Council
Ernie V. Garcia, Norwalk City Manager
Don Jensen, Director of Public Works, Santa Fe Springs
James Parker, Director of Transportation, Norwalk

City of Whittier
13230 Penn Street, Whittier, California 90602-1772
(562) 945-8200 www.cityofwhittier.org

Bob Henderson
Mayor

Greg Nordbak
Mayor Pro Tem

Cathy Warner
Council Member

Owen Newcomer
Council Member

Joe Vinatieri
Council Member

Stephen W. Helvey
City Manager

April 21, 2009

The Honorable Jim Oberstar
Chairman
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

and

The Honorable John Mica
Ranking Member
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
2163 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20151

Dear Chairman Oberstar and Ranking Member Mica:

On behalf of the City of Whittier, California, I am writing to express my strong support for the City of Whittier's Norwalk Boulevard at Whittier Boulevard Realignment and Widening Project submitted for consideration in the upcoming surface transportation reauthorization.

This intersection is an important intersection of two (2) major arterial highways. Whittier Boulevard carries over 49,000 vehicles per day (VPD). Norwalk Boulevard carries 16,000 VPD. Both highways are major commercial truck and public transit routes. It is currently a Los Angeles County Transportation Authority (Metro) Congestion Management Program (CIP) monitoring intersection, which is operating at a Level of Service (LOS) F, the lowest level.

The project will enhance traffic safety; reduce congestion and delay; and increase capacity, which will have the additional benefit of reducing greenhouse gases. The improvements will also provide pedestrian friendly environment, roadway beautification, encourage multi-modal transportation, economic development and rehabilitation.

Many citizens of both Whittier and the surrounding communities utilize the intersection of Whittier Boulevard and Norwalk Boulevard in their daily

commute to school, work, shopping and leisure activities. Due to state and local budget constraints, the need for federal funding is paramount to advancing this project and ensuring public safety.

Public input is a strong component of any civic public improvement project. **Two Environmental Impact Reports (EIR) required public hearings and/or public testimony during the approval process. Both the Uptown Specific Plan's Final EIR (adopted by the Whittier City Council in November 2008) and the Whittier Boulevard Specific Plan Final EIR (adopted by the Whittier City Council in June 2005) studied this key intersection in the City. The intersection was moderately upgraded with protected left turn phasing on Whittier Boulevard by Caltrans in 2007. All this work was publicly notified and the City heard testimony on the issues related to traffic and traffic flow at this intersection.**

The City of Whittier is committed to this project. The total project cost is $656,250 of which $525,000 (80%) is being requested for consideration in the reauthorization legislation. The remaining $131,250 (20%) will be sourced through the City's allocations from local Proposition C, Measure R and state gas revenue.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. If I can provide additional information or if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Bob Henderson
Mayor

SOUTHEAST LOS ANGELES COUNTY

GATEWAY CITIES

April 22, 2009

The Honorable Grace Napolitano, Congress Member
United States House of Representatives
1610 Longworth Building
Washington DC 20515

Dear Congresswoman Napolitano:

High Priority Project Request, Surface Transportation Bill SR-91/I-605/I-405 Freeway Corridors Congestion Relief Projects – Planning and Environmental Phases

Gateway Cities Council of Governments strongly supports this request for HPP funding for the planning, environmental and design phases for the SR-91/I-605/I-405 Congestion Relief Projects. Gateway Cities and the communities along these freeways have funded some initial corridor studies in the last few years to assess the need for transportation improvements. Some congestion relief projects have been identified. However, more analysis is needed, and a feasibility study to evaluate, identify, analyze and prioritize the congestion relief projects in these freeway corridors will be initiated in 2009, using local sources of funding. In addition to the normal freeway congestion in Southern California, many of the freeways of the SR-91/I-605/I-405 are also heavily impacted by the truck traffic to and from the two Southern California ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles. In fact, portions of the SR-91 and I-605 freeways have just as many trucks as the I-710 freeway to the west.

Following the completion of the feasibility study next year, the next step would be to do the subsequent planning and environmental clearance for selected congestion relief projects for the first phase. **This initial work (for the first phase) is estimated to have a total cost of $9,000,000, of which $3,000,000 is included for this request. This request is for $2,400,000, 80 percent of that total.**

Congestion relief projects for the SR-91/I-605/I-405 freeway corridors could include improvements to major interchanges, and some local interchanges, but they could also include transit, ITS and/or arterial highway improvements. This will be determined when the feasibility study is completed in 2010.

16401 Paramount Boulevard • Paramount, California 90723 • phone (562) 663-6850 fax (562) 634-8216
www.gatewaycog.org

The Gateway Cities COG has already set up a citizen input process to work with the local communities on the feasibility study and has already conducted numerous community participation meetings. These will continue to take place during the next few years.

We appreciate your support for congestion relief projects for the SR-91/I-605/I-405 freeway corridors that will reduce congestion and improve mobility and air quality. For our submittals to you, this is the Gateway Cities number three priority.

Sincerely,

Anne M. Bayer, President, Board of Directors
Gateway Cities Council of Governments

SOUTHEAST LOS ANGELES COUNTY

GATEWAY CITIES
COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

April 22, 2009

The Honorable Grace Napolitano, Congress Member
United States House of Representatives
1610 Longworth Building
Washington D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Napolitano:

High Priority Project Request, Surface Transportation Bill
Regional Goods Movement Transportation Coordination

Gateway Cities Council of Governments strongly supports this request for HPP funding for regional goods movement transportation coordination. As you know, Gateway Cities COG is the "epicenter" for goods movement for the entire country. This has resulted in significant congestion on our local freeways from the truck traffic servicing the ports and the need to add numerous railroad grade separation projects because of all the freight rail traffic. This has also had a negative affect from the pollution from goods movement to the residents in the Gateway Cities COG. Gateway Cities COG needs your support with this funding so it can coordinate with the various goods movement analyses that are ongoing and others that can occur in the near future.

The estimated cost for this coordination is $3,000,000 and this request is for 80 percent of that amount, or $2,400,000.

We appreciate your support so the Gateway Cities COG can coordinate with the various goods movement analyses that are needed to solve the transportation and pollution problems created by this industry. For our submittals to you, this is the Gateway Cities number two priority.

Sincerely,

Anne M. Bayer, President, Board of Directors
Gateway Cities Council of Governments

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www.gatewaycog.org

GATEWAY CITIES

April 14, 2009

The Honorable Grace Napolitano, Congress Member
United States House of Representatives
1610 Long Worth Building
Washington DC 20515

Dear Congresswoman Napolitano:

High Priority Project Request-Surface Transportation Bill
Preparation of the I-5 (from I-605 to I-710) Environmental Impact Report/Statement (EIR/EIS)

The Gateway Cities Council of Governments strongly supports the completion of the I-5 EIR/EIS between I-605 and I-710. Caltrans is working to complete this very important effort, and additional funds are necessary. If additional funding can be secured, the EIR/EIS, or Environmental phase, can be completed in the next 12-18 months, and improvements can be identified that are complementary to the I-5 widening efforts on-going south of I-605 into Orange County.

Currently, the I-5 EIR/EIS is being funded with limited federal funds, including a portion of the 2006 SAFETEA-LU bill, previously secured through the appropriations process. The project is utilizing $2 million of the $4.16 million appropriation, with the remainder also obligated and supporting the I-710 Environmental project, with a focus on the I-5/I-710 interchange. **The Environmental process is estimated to cost approximately $20,000,000, of which 80% would be $16,000,000. This request is for $16,000,000.**

Widening I-5 would provide continuity with I-5 to the south, where the highway has been widened in Orange County. Improvements south of I-605 are fully funded at $1.2 billion, and construction is set to begin in the next 18-24 months.

I-5 is an interregional highway of national significance, included on the national defense highway system, and is used for commercial goods movement, passenger/commuter traffic, connecting the U.S. with both Mexico and Canada. This project is regionally supported and is the #1 priority of the Gateway Cities Council of Governments.

16401 Paramount Boulevard • Paramount, California 90723 • phone (562) 663-6850 fax (562) 634-8216
www.gatewaycog.org

As they have throughout the I-5 widening process, the cities of the I-5 JPA will continue to work closely with their citizens and seek community input as they move forward with this critically needed initiative to reduce congestion and improve the quality of life for those living in and traveling through the I-5 corridor. Additionally, several public meetings, sponsored by Caltrans, are planned, as part of the Environmental process, to provide the public with an opportunity to participate and comment on the project.

We appreciate your continued support for this northernmost segment that requires these critically needed improvements to help reduce congestion and idle times and to improve air quality.

Sincerely,

Richard R. Powers, Executive Director
Gateway Cities Council of Governments

The I-5 Consortium Cities Joint Powers Authority

For the preservation of communities while enhancing freeway capacity

April 14, 2009

The Honorable Grace Napolitano
Member of Congress
1610 Longworth Building
Washington DC 20515

Member Cities:

Buena Park
Commerce
Downey
La Mirada
Norwalk
Santa Fe Springs

RE: High Priority Project Request, Surface Transportation Bill
Preparation of the I-5 (from I-605 to I-710) Environmental Impact Report / Statement (EIR/EIS)

Dear Congresswoman Napolitano:

The I-5 Consortium Cities Joint Powers Authority (I-5 JPA) strongly supports the completion of the I-5 EIR/EIS between I-605 and I-710. Caltrans is working to complete this very important effort, and additional funds are necessary. If additional funding can be secured, the EIR/EIS, or Environmental phase, can be completed in the next 12-18 months, and improvements can be identified that are complementary to the I-5 widening efforts on-going south of I-605 into Orange County.

Currently, the I-5 EIR/EIS is being funded with limited federal funds, including a portion of the 2006 SAFETEA-LU bill, previously secured through the appropriations process. The project is utilizing $2 million of the $4.16 million appropriation, with the remainder also obligated and supporting the I-710 Environmental project, with a focus on the I-5/I-710 interchange. **The Environmental process is estimated to cost approximately $20,000,000, of which 80% would be $16,000,000. This request is for $16,000,000.**

Widening I-5 would provide continuity with I-5 to the south, where the highway has been widened in Orange County. Improvements south of I-605 are fully funded at $1.2 billion, and construction is set to begin in the next 18-24 months.

I-5 is an interregional highway of national significance, included on the national defense highway system, and is used for commercial goods movement, passenger/commuter traffic, connecting the U.S. with both Mexico and Canada. This project is regionally supported and is the #1 priority of the Gateway Cities Council of Governments.

As they have throughout the I-5 widening process, the cities of the I-5 JPA will continue to work closely with their citizens and seek community input as they move forward with this critically needed initiative to reduce congestion and improve the quality of life for those living in and traveling through the I-5 corridor. Additionally, several public meetings, sponsored by Caltrans, are planned, as part of the Environmental process, to provide the public with an opportunity to participate and comment on the project.

We appreciate your continued support for this northernmost segment that requires these critically needed improvements to help reduce congestion and idle times and to improve air quality.

Very truly yours,

Michael Mendez
Chairman

12700 Norwalk Boulevard • P.O. Box 1030 • Norwalk, California 90651-1030 • (562) 929-5700 • FAX (562) 929-5780

San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments

3452 East Foothill, Suite 910, Pasadena, California 91107-3142 Phone: (626) 564-9702 FAX: (626) 564-1116 E-Mail SGV@sgvcog.org

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Fourth District, LA County Unincorporated Communities
Fifth District, LA County Unincorporated Communities
SGV Water Districts

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Nicholas T. Conway

April 22, 2009

The Honorable James L. Oberstar, M.C.
Chairman
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John L. Mica, M.C.
Ranking Member
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
2163 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congress Members Oberstar and Mica:

We are writing to express our support for Foothill Transit's Transportation Authorization Bill request for $30 million to continue the conversion of their bus fleet to cleaner burning alternative fuel buses.

Foothill Transit is requesting $30 million in federal funding over the fiscal years included in the federal surface transportation authorization bill for alternative fuel buses. This funding will enable Foothill Transit to continue its aggressive efforts to convert its entire 314-bus fleet from diesel to alternative fuels. The conversion of transit fleets to alternative fuel sources multiplies the benefits that transit service already offers our region in terms of helping reduce congestion, saving energy and contributing to better air quality. In making our communities more livable, this project also meets the authorization goals of the Administration.

This project will provide specific benefits to the Los Angeles County region. By relieving congestion, transit provides an inherent safety benefit by facilitating efficient and timely traffic flow. Public transit, particularly with alternative fuel vehicles, makes communities more livable and attractive to economic investment. The Los Angeles area is plagued with some of the worst traffic congestion in the nation. Deployment of public transit services for area residents helps remove individual occupancy automobiles from freeways and contributes to better traffic flow. In utilizing alternative fuel vehicles, this project will save energy and contribute to cleaner air in the Los Angeles area, both of which meet federal energy and environmental goals.

Foothill Transit wants to be certain this project meets the goals and expectations of the transit community and the citizens of the San Gabriel and Pomona Valley's of Los

Angeles County. Therefore, they will schedule a hearing at the Foothill Transit Administrative Headquarters in West Covina, California by July 31, 2009 with a minimum 30 days notice to the public in order to provide them the opportunity to comment on the project.

Created in 1987 as a public/private partnership, Foothill Transit is a Joint Exercise of Powers Authority comprised of elected officials and appointees representing 21 cities and the County of Los Angeles. Foothill Transit provides public transit services over a 327-square-mile service area in the San Gabriel and Pomona valleys. Congress has designated Foothill Transit as a national public-private model for transit authorities.

We respectfully request your favorable consideration of this request which we believe offers significant traffic relief and air quality benefits for our region.

Sincerely,

David A. Spence

David Spence
President

cc: House Members David Dreier, Gary Miller, Grace Napolitano, and Adam Schiff
Senators Barbara Boxer and Dianne Feinstein

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

ASSOCIATION of GOVERNMENTS

Main Office

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Larry McCallon, Highland

Energy & Environment
Keith Hanks, Azusa

Transportation
Mike Ten, South Pasadena

April 3, 2009

Mr. Rick Richmond
Chief Executive Officer
Alameda Corridor-East Construction Authority
4900 Rivergrade Road, Suite A120
Irwindale, CA 91706-1446

RE: Alameda Corridor-East (ACE) Construction Authority Project

Dear Rick:

Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for six counties in Southern California and is responsible for the development of the multi-county federal transportation improvement program (FTIP). SCAG also develops the Long Range Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) and identifies significant regional projects which are assisting the region in reaching air quality conformity with air pollution standards established by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

This letter is to confirm that the ACE Project has been included in the FTIP and RTP since 1998 when it was designated as a high priority corridor project on the National Highway System in TEA-21. The ACE project was included in SAFETEA-LU in both Section 1304 (project #34--High Priority Corridors on the National Highway System) and Section 1301 (project #9--Project of National and Regional Significance).

SCAG has also collaborated to develop a six-county consensus priority list of goods movement projects with the six southern California counties in the Multi-County Goods Movement Action Plan and the ACE Project is on that list. The above lists can be found on www.scag.ca.gov. Please feel free to contact me at (213) 236-1944 should you have any questions or comments regarding this letter.

Sincerely,

Hasan Ikhrata
Chief Executive Officer
Southern California Association of Governments

The Regional Council is comprised of 83 elected officials representing 168 cities, six counties, five County Transportation Commissions, Imperial Valley Association of Governments and a Tribal Government representative within Southern California.

09.08.03

Southern California Regional Rail Authority
700 South Flower Street, Suite 2600
Los Angeles, California 90017-4101

April 22, 2009

The Honorable Grace Napolitano
House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congresswoman Napolitano,

The Southern California Regional Rail Authority (SCRRA) is submitting Metrolink Positive Train Control (herein known as "the Project") for funding consideration during the reauthorization of federal transportation policies. The Project is located in Southern California and will develop Positive Train Control, an advanced signaling technology that will provide immediate safety benefits on Southern California's passenger and freight rail network.

The SCRRA is a public-joint powers authority responsible for operating Metrolink Commuter Rail Service comprised of the five Southern California Transportation Agencies: the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Authority, the Orange County Transportation Authority, San Bernardino Associated Governments, the Riverside County Transportation Commission, and the Ventura County Transportation Commission. The SCRRA is located at 700 South Flower Street, Los Angeles, California 90017. The individual responsible for the Project is David R. Solow, CEO, and can be contacted at (213) 452-0273.

The SCRRA hereby certifies, to the best of our knowledge, that the Project was submitted in good faith and satisfies all of the following conditions:

- The Project will be a significant benefit to the community and/or the United States of America at large and is not intended for the sole financial benefit of any private individual or entity; and
- None of the funding requested will be used for a new building, program, or project that has been named for a sitting Member of Congress; and
- To SCRRA's knowledge, neither Congresswoman Napolitano nor a member of her immediate family or members of his Congressional staff will personally benefit from the funding or completion of the Project; and
- The request for funding for the Project is based on the need identified by SCRRA and is not the result of any form of pressure by, political support for, contribution to, or private business association with Congresswoman Napolitano or a member of her immediate family or members of his Congressional staff.

The undersigned represents the SCRRA and understands that Congresswoman Napolitano will not request, seek, support, or pursue federal funds or an authorization of federal funds for any project that fails to meet the above criteria. Additionally, the undersigned understands that any information submitted in connection with this request may be made public at any time, and/or placed in the Congressional Record for any reason deemed necessary.

David R. Solow
Chief Executive Officer, SCRRA

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