Transportation Investment Produces Jobs and Much More
The Time to Act is Now: Pass the Surface Transportation Bill

While much of the U.S. economy is well on the road to economic recovery, the transportation construction industry continues to suffer from a variety of challenges including uncertainty about future federal investments and transportation cutbacks by states plagued by their own budget problems. Specifically:

- The construction industry has lost over 2 million jobs since employment in the industry peaked in April 2006.
- The unemployment rate in the construction industry was 15.6 percent in June—extending a five year slump of joblessness.
- Construction put in place is at an eleven year low and has dropped over 37 percent since its peak in March 2006.

Direct Impact of Transportation Investment

A 2008 Bush Administration analysis found every $1 billion of construction work on highways, bridges and other transportation infrastructure supports about 28,000 jobs, consisting of:

- 9,500 on-site construction jobs,
- 4,300 jobs in supplier industries and
- Almost 14,000 jobs throughout the rest of the U.S. economy.

As a result, federal highway (which requires a 20 percent state match) supports 34,779 jobs per $1 billion invested. Most of these are well-paid, middle-class American jobs.

Economy-Wide Impact of Transportation Investment

Even more important are the jobs and economic activity that could not exist without our nation's modern transportation infrastructure. Every manufacturing plant in the U.S., every retail store, every service person, and millions of other jobs depend on highways, airports, and railroads for inputs and to deliver products to customers. Failing to maintain and improve the nation's transportation network will harm American workers across the economy.

Our transportation infrastructure is critical to U.S. competitiveness in the global marketplace. According to Caterpillar CEO Doug Oberhelman, “As a nation we are at risk of falling behind other countries who have made aggressive infrastructure improvements in recent years, putting companies like Caterpillar at a competitive disadvantage.”

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Any objective assessment will recognize the clear linkage between enhancing the effectiveness of the nation’s transportation network and supporting American jobs. Similarly, the strength of the U.S. economy depends on the ability to move products and people.

Industry Reauthorization Objectives

We urge members of Congress to support action in 2011 on a six-year surface transportation reauthorization proposal that:

- At minimum, maintains current levels of highway investment.
- Provides strong federal leadership in directing resources to national priorities and establishes mechanisms to ensure these investments lead to system improvements and increased public safety.
- Protects current assets and expands system capacity. The U.S. surface transportation network requires continual upgrades to existing facilities and must be enhanced to accommodate the increasing demands of a growing population and dynamic economy.
- Retains the user fee principle of financing highway and transit improvements to provide the long-term stability needed to implement multi-year transportation plans and projects.
- Expedites the transportation project review and approval process to improve the stewardship of federal resources and better deliver needed transportation benefits.
- Establishes a mechanism to ensure adequate future funding of the program.

Time to Act is Now!

We urge Congress to seize the opportunity to create jobs and bring economic development to all states by working to advance legislation that improves the nation’s highways, bridges and public transportation facilities.

Pass the Surface Transportation Reauthorization Bill in 2011.

It is Time to Increase—*NOT CUT*—Federal Transportation Investment!