

**Testimony of Greg Mobley,  
Columbus, Indiana Construction Laborer  
Before the U.S. House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure  
Wednesday, September 29, 2010**

My name is Greg Mobley. I am a construction laborer from Columbus, Indiana.

I want to tell the committee today how the stimulus bill helped put me back to work and to also tell the committee how much more work is badly needed.

But first I want to thank Chairman Oberstar, Congressman Mica and the other members of the committee for inviting me. It is my understanding that this committee is one of the most important when it comes to making the kinds of investments that create jobs, put men and women like myself to work and helps build our country. I thank you for that.

In the construction industry, it has been like the Great Depression. At my union, LIUNA Local 741 in Bloomington, the out-of-work list grew and grew last year to the point that one in five were unemployed. Personally I was thrown out of work. My wife and I saw our life savings dwindle. Every day without work was a day of sitting at home, being nervous and unsure and worried about what would happen in the next week, the next month and the year ahead. We circled the wagons and didn't spend a dime that we absolutely didn't have to. We skipped the movie at the local theater. We skipped the drink or dinner with friends. We skipped the treat or gift for nieces or nephews who we care for like our own.

Friends of mine had it worse – one told me that after rounding up enough cash to make his house payment, he was still unable to afford his property taxes. A lot of us suffered in silence, but the effects of being without a job showed. I and millions of workers like me want to get up every day and go to work building roads and bridges and other basics in our country. That is what we are ready, willing and able to do. Without work, you don't just enjoy life a lot less and worry a lot more. You don't just fear losing a car or losing your home. You can lose your purpose.

Investment in projects under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act rescued many of us. I've worked on two such projects this year: Lafayette Road in Indianapolis and US-27 in Union County. My crew and I removed and replaced deteriorated and unsafe concrete, sculpted sidewalks and built curbs. It's good, honest work that put money in our pockets and allowed us to support our families. And it improved local transportation, making life better for people who live in Indiana.

This work did more than give us a paycheck and fix roads. It's impossible to overstate how good it feels to have a job to go to every day, to catch up on your bills after months of falling behind. The work we do also helps the "mom and pop" shops to stay in business because we can enjoy some of the simple things in life like that dinner and a movie at a local restaurant and theater, or a drink with friends after a hard day's work.

I'm proud of the work I've done because of the Recovery Act. I can point to the real things I build and tell my wife, my nieces or my nephews: I built that.

In my opinion, the Recovery Act was the right medicine, but the truth is it was not nearly enough medicine to be a cure. It rescued me for now, but there are 1.5 million men and women in the construction industry today who are still looking for work. Even though there's no shortage of potholes or old bridges and highways that need work, there aren't a lot of projects coming down the pipeline. I can see trouble ahead for me and others like me.

I think it's time invest in America for a change. The investment in roads, bridges and transportation under American Recovery and Reinvestment Act was a great start. Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, I want to thank you for the work you do to invest in the United States. We need to invest more in our country, to again be the country that does what it takes to lead the world with the best highways and most modern transportation systems. I and millions like me are ready to work. We're ready to build America.

Once again, I'd like to thank the Committee for the opportunity to be here today.