

House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Reauthorization Field Hearing

**REMARKS**

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Beckley, West Virginia

Good morning. Welcome Chairman Mica, Congressman Rahall and, House Committee members and other representatives here this morning. Thank you for coordinating this important event and for the opportunity to participate and present before you.

West Virginia has the 6<sup>th</sup> largest maintained highway network in the country.

The Division of Highways has statutory responsibility for maintaining more than 36,000 miles - 92 percent of the all the roadways in the state.

Of those 36,000 miles, roughly 27% are federal-aid eligible charging the much-smaller state program with the maintenance of 70% of West Virginia roadways.

In 2008, total revenue was 30% less than it was 10 years ago translating into fewer and fewer dollars becoming applicable to West Virginia's roadway network.

In the process of developing our Long Range Transportation Plan, it was discovered the total estimated cost to maintain West Virginia's existing system at current levels of pavement and operational performance totals \$21.0 billion over a 25-year study period.

We are fortunate that because we enjoy an excellent working relation with our local Federal Highway Administration, our projects are delivered as quickly possible for the motorists of West Virginia, evidenced our collective response to the highway ARRA program.

A testament to that statement, working with the Federal Highway Administration, the Division of Highways has increased its improvement program delivery from 19% in 2005 to 78% last year with relatively the same budget.

My agency is fully supportive of expediting project delivery by any method possible, but particularly by the design/build method of construction that saved West Virginia taxpayers more than \$20 million on the upgrade of US Route 35 alone.

I am grateful what the ARRA program did for West Virginia and am thankful that the TIGER II program will allow us to build a new roadway facility and remove traffic from one of the most dangerous roads in the state - Route 10 in Logan County.

From the ARRA and TIGER programs, my agency has become accustomed to the practices of performance and accountability measurement and we are prepared if these measures should also be a part of new highway reauthorization legislation.

In, 2010, 5.9 million riders rode on West Virginia's 18 public transit systems; one million on the state's rural transit systems.

These systems travel 11.2 million miles and employ 680 full and part time employees.

Public transit service is provided in 33 of the state's 55 counties.

Many West Virginians, particularly in the rural areas, are transit dependent and utilize these services to get to work, the doctor, shopping, and to take care of the necessities of life.

The need for continued transportation investment in West Virginia is greater than even.

A robust multi-year surface transportation authorization is critical as we continue to maintain an aged infrastructure.

Addressing the highway and transit needs here in West Virginia will allow the state to become a bigger player in the global marketplace by creating and sustaining jobs, ensuring the future prosperity of the Mountain State.

Thank you.