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Rahall: Joint Resolution Provides For Full Funding of WV Highway Projects

By HNN Staff – Huntington News

Washington, DC (HNN) -- U.S. Rep. Nick J. Rahall, D-WV, second-senior Democrat on the Committee of Transportation and Infrastructure, announced Tuesday, Jan. 30, 2007 that the 2007 Joint Funding Resolution will provide for the full funding of highway, transit, and highway safety programs under the 2005 highway bill, ensuring the sustainability of a number of West Virginia projects through fiscal year 2007.

The House is expected to vote on the fiscal year 2007 Joint Funding Resolution Wednesday.

"I am pleased that the Continuing Resolution honored the highway and transit funding levels approved in 2005, as requested by the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee in our January 17th letter to the Appropriations Committee," Rahall said. "The Department of Transportation estimates that 47,500 new jobs are created for every \$1 billion spent on transportation nationally. Clearly, this is a good investment for our State. Sen. Byrd knows this, and he has helped craft a funding proposal that will keep the dirt flying."

Rahall helped pass the final version of the much anticipated transportation bill through the U.S. House of Representatives in August 2005 after months and months of work in committee and conference. The bill, the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (TEA LU), H.R. 3, passed the House by an overwhelming bipartisan vote of 412-8. Rahall helped secure an annual average of \$404 million in the bill specifically for West Virginia's transportation needs over the next five years, and secured more than \$183 million in local projects including \$72.5 million for the I-73/74 Corridor; \$20 million for the Beckley Intermodal Gateway; the \$3.6 million for the New River Parkway; \$11 million for Route 10 in Logan County; \$16.7 million for the Coalfields Expressway; \$4 million for the Beckley Z-Way; \$38 million for the King Coal Highway; and \$1.8 million for the Shawnee Parkway.

The funding in the Joint Resolution reflects a \$4 billion increase in investment over the FY 2006 enacted level.

"There is no question that this announcement is a win for West Virginia," Rahall said. "This funding will keep the wheels turning on the many transportation projects already underway. I again commend Senator Byrd and Chairman Obey of the Appropriations Committee for heeding our call for full funding and look forward to following the progress of these important projects."
