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February 4, 2009

Dear Senators Reid and McConnell:

### **VOTE 'NO' ON THE BOND-BOXER-INHOFE-BAUCUS AMENDMENT**

The American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) urges the Senate to reject an amendment by Sens. Bond, Boxer, Inhofe, and Baucus, and others and others striking the \$5.5 billion appropriation for discretionary surface transportation grants under the Office of the Secretary of Transportation, transferring that money to highway formula grants, and removing the requirement that highway and transit funds left unobligated after one year be transferred to the discretionary grant program.

ASCE supports retaining the provision in the reported Senate version of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act that provides \$5.5 billion for discretionary surface transportation grants.

Under the plan by Sen. Patty Murray, the \$5.5 billion would be awarded for any surface transportation project—highways, transit, rail or port infrastructure—as long as they have a significant impact on the nation, a region, or a metropolitan area. Priority would be given to projects that can be completed within three years.

ASCE believes that all projects supported by an economic stimulus investment must meet the following fundamental criteria:

- Projects must create and sustain employment increases.
- Investments must provide long term benefits to the public (such as congestion relief).
- Long term maintenance and upkeep needs of all infrastructure projects – existing and new – must be taken into account.
- To ensure accountability and transparency an auditing program must be established to review the program and measure desired outcomes.
- The project should deliver measurable improvements in public health, safety and quality of life.
- The project should provide substantial, broad-based economic benefit.
- The project should be designed and built in a sustainable and cost-effective manner, and proper consideration must be given to life-cycle costs.
- The project should have a significant environmental benefit such as area restoration, improved air quality through reduced congestion and better watershed management through eliminating vulnerabilities in a system.

The competitive grant program as already outlined in the bill follows the intent of ASCE's Principles for Economic Stimulus Investment by funding projects that will provide substantial, broad-based economic benefit and deliver measurable improvements in public health, safety and quality of life.

The Bond-Boxer-Inhofe-Baucus amendment would run counter to these essential principles.

We urge you to vote "no" on the amendment.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian Pallasch", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Brian T. Pallasch  
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