



FEBRUARY 10, 2009 – INTERIM REPORT

This afternoon the full Senate voted to approve the \$838B economic recovery program by a vote of 61 to 37. Only three Republicans voted for the bill – Senators Collins (R-ME), Snowe (R-ME) and Specter (R-PA), despite the inclusion of an amendment to cut over \$100B in program spending that was supposed to encourage bi-partisan support for the bill. The bill includes over \$45B for transportation programs and billions more for other infrastructure programs.

The bill now proceeds to a House-Senate conference where differences in the bills will be reconciled. The goal is to agree on a final bill before the start of the February 16 congressional recess. While the overall size of the two bills is similar there are many programmatic differences that will not be easy to resolve.

The Senate conferees are: Inouye (D-HI-Appropriations Committee), Baucus (D-MT-Finance), Reid (D-NV-Leadership), Cochran (R-MS-Appropriations), and Grassley (R-IA-Finance).

The House Democratic conferees are: Obey (D-WI-Appropriations), Rangel (D-NY-Ways & Means), Waxman (D-CA-Energy & Commerce), G. Miller (D-CA-Education & Labor), Oberstar (D-MN-Transportation & Infrastructure), Gordon (D-TN-Science), Frank (D-MA-Financial Services), Velazquez (D-NY-Small Business), Towns (D-NY-Oversight & Govt Reform), and Spratt (D-SC-Budget). The House Republican conferees have not yet been named.

- While the total funding for transportation in the two bills is quite similar - \$46.1B in the House and \$45.5B in the Senate, there are a number of policy and funding differences that will have to be resolved, including:
- The House bill requires states to obligate 50% of their transportation funds within 90 days. The Senate deadline is 180 days.
- The House bill distributes the highway formula funds using the FY'08 obligation limitation while the Senate bill uses the existing FHWA STP formula.
- The Senate bill includes a new \$5.5B multi-modal, discretionary Surface Transportation Systems program which the House bill does not.
- The Senate bill provides \$1.1B for the Airport Improvement Program (AIP) while the House bill provides \$3B.
- The Senate highway funding level is \$27B while the House number is \$30B.
- The Senate bill includes \$2B for a High Speed Rail program which the House bill does not.
- The Senate bill includes \$8.4B for the transit formula program while the House includes \$7.5B for the formula program, but also funds \$2.5B for the New Start/Small Start program and \$2B for the Rail Mod program, bringing the total for transit in the House bill to \$12B.