



STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS

M. JODI RELL  
GOVERNOR

November 19, 2009

The Honorable James L. Oberstar, Chairman  
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Oberstar:

Once again, thank you for the opportunity to provide an update on American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Recovery Act) activities here in Connecticut as they relate to transportation initiatives.

Connecticut is receiving \$302 million in funding to invest in state and local highway and bridge projects through the Recovery Act. The majority of that funding - \$202 million - has been invested by the Connecticut Department of Transportation in statewide strategic transportation priorities and \$9 million in transportation enhancement projects. The remaining \$90 million in funding has been sub-allocated to the state's 15 Metropolitan Planning Organizations.

Collectively, between statewide and local projects, Connecticut is moving forward on more than 80 transportation initiatives funded by the Recovery Act. The majority of these projects are of a complex nature that will improve and upgrade the state's transportation network, enhance the network's overall safety and promote economic development opportunities on a statewide and regional basis. Equally important, most of these projects will span a number of months, in some cases years, thereby providing employment opportunities to workers for an extended period of time.

In addition to addressing priority transportation projects that are of a complex nature and have a longer germination timeframe, Connecticut has benefited from actual project costs coming in lower than estimated costs. As a result, the state has been able to reprogram these "leftover" Recovery Act funds to additional transportation projects. These projects are already underway and have created additional employment opportunities for workers in Connecticut this construction season.

When we last provided an update to your committee in September, Connecticut reported having \$180 million worth of highway and bridge projects under contract and \$176 million in projects underway at the time. At present, more than \$198 million worth of highway and bridge projects are under contract and \$197 million in projects are underway.

While these numbers continue to grow, they only tell part of the story. More than 2,820 people have been put to work as a result of these projects and we expect these employees to receive paychecks for a considerable period of time. In addition, project outlays have grown from \$71,000 in July to \$26.6 million today. In just the last month, more than 1,200 have been added to transportation project payrolls across the state.

The pace for awarding and implementing transportation projects funded by the Recovery Act has certainly increased in Connecticut. While good news, there is more work to be done between now and the spring to ensure all of our local projects are completely designed to federal standards and are ready to commence once warm weather returns to the Northeast. These projects will aid economic development in our communities while employing additional workers.

As was the case in our September correspondence, Connecticut does not have any "Economically Distressed Areas" as defined by Section 301 of the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965, as amended (42 U.S.C. 3161). However, while not technically EDAs, there are a number of areas throughout the state that are distressed and many of these areas are along Connecticut's transportation corridors. In working through a process of identifying projects to fund with Recovery Act dollars, Connecticut officials were mindful of the challenges faced by these areas and selected projects that would benefit the citizens living in these areas.

Beyond transportation corridor improvement projects such as the \$70 million effort along the Merritt Parkway, Connecticut has initiated road projects along I-91 just south of and leading to Hartford, projects on Route 8 through the Housatonic Valley in an area once home to mills and manufacturing, and along Route 5 in Northern Connecticut leading to Massachusetts. In addition to these projects, major transit priorities such as station improvements to the New Haven and Danbury rail lines, construction of a major transportation maintenance hub in New Haven and a bus engine re-powering project in Bridgeport are being funded by the Recovery Act. Plus, almost all of the \$48.5 million Connecticut is receiving in Clean Water funding from the Recovery Act is going toward a number of major infrastructure projects in Hartford.

Ensuring an equitable geographic distribution of the Recovery Act transportation projects was given considerable thought when identifying and selecting projects. A great deal of emphasis was placed on funding projects that were aligned with the state's transportation priorities, balancing statewide projects with those of regional and local importance. This approach has contributed to the successful initiation of projects in Ashford, Branford, Trumbull, Colchester and Westport, to name a few locations. The diverse array of projects together with the geographic distribution has led to bridge joint replacements,

safety markings, sign installations and intersection improvement projects in more than 30 communities throughout the state.

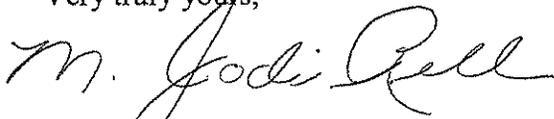
Beyond funding projects in and around Connecticut's largest towns and cities, the state is providing more than \$4 million in Recovery Act funding to efforts in Connecticut's rural communities. This funding has been derived from the state's portion of the highway and bridge funds provided by the Recovery Act. Communities in these rural areas are moving forward a number of local transportation priorities that otherwise might have remained on the drawing board for years to come.

Just as the nature of the projects funded in Connecticut is complex, they are also diverse in terms of the types of work and skills associated with them. Beyond traditional milling and paving, many of the projects selected in Connecticut involve safety aspects, bridge work, realignments, signs and utility components. The comprehensive make-up of these transportation projects will engage a variety of Connecticut businesses involved in transportation-related industries. The by-product of this approach is that more businesses will be able to participate in these projects and benefit from Recovery Act funding.

Collectively, these approaches have allowed Connecticut to address a number of the state's transportation priorities while employing workers for an extended period of time. Every day, more and more projects are getting underway and more workers are added on transportation projects across Connecticut. While we are presently experiencing a very busy construction season, 2010 is shaping up to be one of the busiest transportation construction periods in many years here in Connecticut.

Thank you, once again, for the opportunity to provide an update on Recovery Act activities in Connecticut as they relate to transportation initiatives.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "M. Jodi Rell". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

M. Jodi Rell  
Governor