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For Immediate Release:  
November 3, 2008

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## ***Building America's Future to Congress: Next Economic Recovery Package Should Invest in Infrastructure and Call for Accountability***

*Bipartisan coalition calls for common-sense reforms to track spending, job creation*

**Washington, DC** – Today, *Building America's Future* (BAF), led by Mayor Michael Bloomberg, Governor Ed Rendell and Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, called on Congress to stimulate the economy by investing in ready-to-go infrastructure projects that, if funded, could immediately put Americans back to work.

In a letter to Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and House Minority Leader John Boehner, BAF's Co-Chairs also expressed their strong support for reforms in infrastructure spending never before included in a stimulus package. Reforms include asking states and localities to track how they use the funds and how many project-based jobs were created. The text of the letter is as follows:

As Congress begins consideration of a possible economic recovery package, Building America's Future urges you to include ready-to-go infrastructure projects as a main focus of the bill. These projects include investing in highways, transit, rail, ports, airports, clean water, sewer, energy and schools, and they can put tens of thousands of Americans back to work.

Building America's Future (BAF) is a growing bipartisan coalition of elected officials who support increasing our nation's infrastructure investments and reforming national infrastructure policy. As state and local elected officials, we are on the front lines of our nation's current economic crisis, facing growing unemployment, rising mortgage foreclosures, multi-billion dollar budget shortfalls, much higher borrowing costs and aging infrastructure. This crisis has left states and localities unable to finance critically important projects that are otherwise ready-to-go. Providing infrastructure funds will help jump-start these projects, create jobs, and lay the foundation for future economic growth.

Infrastructure investment would target the workers and industries – heavy construction, building materials and durable goods manufacturing – among the hardest hit in the current economic downturn. For every billion dollars invested in infrastructure, as many as 47,500 jobs are created.

BAF's membership can attest to the fact that there are tens of billions of dollars worth of infrastructure projects in cities and states across the U.S., which have gone through the planning and approvals process and only await funding to begin. These projects could help put Americans to work immediately and prevent further layoffs within the construction sector, now suffering a 9.9 percent unemployment rate, and related industries.

This effort to provide funding should also embody some program reforms. BAF recommends that Congress consider three modest but vital requirements for any infrastructure funding included in the economic recovery package:

- **Prioritize Job Creation Per Dollar Invested:** It is important the recovery package targets dollars to projects that are not only ready-to-go, but which also maximize job creation. For example, projects to repair and maintain existing infrastructure, which are labor intensive, generate on average more jobs per dollar than building new facilities, which generally involve higher non-labor costs for materials and land acquisition.
- **Track Results and Promote Accountability:** We recommend that after these economic recovery funds are spent, states and localities report back to Congress on how the funds were allocated and how many jobs were created. Collecting this data will help Congress and the new Administration understand what return on investment we are getting for our infrastructure dollars and how we might better target those funds in the future.
- **Eliminate Red Tape:** Finally, we believe Congress should work with the U.S. Department of Transportation to ensure that ready-to-go projects are not held up by needless bureaucratic hurdles. Targeted, accountable infrastructure investment is one of the most effective ways to stimulate job growth and help those most directly affected by the economic downturn. But infrastructure investment is also the foundation of long-term economic prosperity and global competitiveness. For too long we have been living off the highways, bridges, transit systems, airports, ports, water and energy systems built by previous generations of Americans. It is time for our nation to once again commit to building lasting, productive assets that will provide economic dividends for generations to come.

BAF looks forward to working with Congress in its efforts to restore our nation's economy and ensure our long-term prosperity.

Sincerely,

Michael R. Bloomberg  
Mayor, New York

Edward G. Rendell  
Governor, Pennsylvania

Arnold Schwarzenegger  
Governor, California

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***Building America's Future*** ([www.InvestInInfrastructure.org](http://www.InvestInInfrastructure.org)) is a bipartisan and non-profit organization dedicated to bringing about a new era of U.S. investment in infrastructure that enhances our nation's prosperity and quality of life. Comprised of state and locally elected officials from around the nation, ***Building America's Future*** seeks to advance a new national vision for infrastructure investment that focuses on economic growth and global competitiveness, creation of economic opportunity for all Americans, and environmental sustainability.