

February 11, 2009

Dear House & Senate Conferees:

Building America's Future applauds the House and Senate for approving legislation that recognizes the critical role infrastructure plays in our economy. An economic recovery package that includes robust funding for infrastructure will do much to jump start our economy and put more Americans to work. At the same time, new accountability measures will ensure a transparent process that will inform the public.

The bills include funding that will help states and localities invest in jobs, promote energy independence and enhance the quality of life for our communities. However, there are real differences between the two bills. We urge the conferees to support the House funding levels of \$30 billion for highways and bridges, \$12 billion for transit, and \$3.5 billion for aviation. These funds are critical for "fix-it-first" projects that will address the large backlog of maintenance projects. We urge the conferees to support the Senate's funding levels of \$3.1 billion for rail, and \$15 billion for environmental infrastructure. We also support the \$5.5 billion in surface transportation supplemental grants and encourage the conferees to include it in the final package.

It is imperative that the school construction provision from the House bill be retained at \$20 billion. In this economic crisis states and localities are struggling to meet operating costs, which can leave capital projects like school construction desperately short of funds. Creating a modern education infrastructure is critical to giving our children the skills they need to succeed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century economy.

Additionally, we support the accountability and transparency provisions and the creation of a Recovery Act Accountability and Transparency Board that are included in both bills and the \$12 million in funding included in the House bill. These measures will provide assurances to the American people that their tax dollars will be used effectively.

As you know, Building America's Future is a growing, bi-partisan coalition of state and local elected officials who support increased investment in our nation's infrastructure that enhances our nation's prosperity and quality of life. We look forward to working with our fellow governors and mayors in ensuring that these investments are used wisely.

Sincerely,



Polly Trottenberg  
Executive Director