OBAMA-BIDEN TRANSITION PROJECT

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KEY FACTS ABOUT AMERICA'S ROAD AND BRIDGE CONDITIONS AND FEDERAL FUNDING

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The nation's roads and highways are the backbone of the U.S. transportation system, allowing Americans to travel approximately 3 trillion miles annually. Americans depend on good roads in their communities to commute to work, to carry out everyday errands and to enjoy recreational activities. Businesses rely on a smooth and efficient transportation system to move goods throughout the nation and around the globe.

But there are problems on our nation's roads, highways and bridges. With traffic congestion worsening and road and bridge deterioration continuing, the U.S. Department of Transportation estimates that the current backlog of unfunded but needed road, highway and bridge repairs and improvements is $495 billion.

In 2009, Congress will be required to reauthorize the current long-term federal surface transportation program -- the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act - A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). This legislation will have a significant impact on the future condition and traffic congestion levels of the nation's key roads, bridges and highways.

Federal Funding for Our Nation's Road and Bridge System Generates Jobs; Making Needed Highway Improvements Assures Economic Security

- Our nation's highways, transit systems, railroads, airports, ports and inland waterways drive our economy, enabling all industries to achieve the growth and prosperity that have made America strong and prosperous.

- A U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) study concludes that for each $1 billion of federal spending on highway construction nationwide, 47,500 jobs are generated annually.

- The USDOT study also states that every dollar invested in the nation's highway system yields $5.40 in economic benefits in reduced delays, improved safety and lower vehicle operating costs.

- Seventy-four percent of the $8.4 trillion worth of commodities delivered annually from sites in the U.S. is transported by trucks on the state's highways. One percent is delivered by a combination of trucks, rail, ships or barges, and 12 percent is delivered by parcel, U.S. Postal Service or courier, which use multiple modes, including highways.

- Driving on roads in need of repair costs U.S. motorists $67 billion a year in extra vehicle repairs and operating costs – $333 per motorist.

- Traffic congestion costs American motorists $78.2 billion a year in wasted time and fuel costs. Americans spend 4.2 billion hours a year stuck in traffic.

- Motor vehicle crashes cost the U.S. $230 billion per year, $819 for each resident, in medical costs, lost productivity, travel delays workplace costs, insurance costs and legal costs.

The Federal Highway Trust Fund Guarantees Funding Needed for Our Nation's Roads and Bridges

- The Federal Highway Trust Fund was established by the Federal-Aid Highway and the Highway Revenue Acts of 1956 to provide revenue needed to help build and improve the Interstate System and roads and bridges that are eligible for federal aid.

- The Federal Highway Trust Fund is funded by a federal gasoline tax of 18.4 cents per gallon and a federal

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diesel tax of 24.4 cents per gallon.

- The Highway Trust Fund consists of a highway account, which receives 15.44 cents per gallon of the gasoline tax, a mass transit account, which receives 2.86 cents per gallon, and a Leaking Underground Storage Tank Trust Fund, which receives 0.1 cent per gallon. The highway trust fund is designed to finance road and bridge and mass transit improvements on a pay-as-you-go basis. Its expenditures by law cannot exceed its income.

- The Office of Management and Budget projects that the balance in the Highway Trust Fund will be at *negative* $200 million some time in fiscal year 2009.

- Since 1956, $634 billion has been disbursed from the Highway Trust Fund for road and bridge projects nationwide.

Current Road and Bridge Conditions, Travel Trends and Traffic Congestion

- Thirty-three percent of America's major roads are in poor or mediocre condition.

- Twenty-six percent of America's bridges are structurally deficient or functionally obsolete.

- Thirty-six percent of America's major urban highways are congested.

- Vehicle travel on America's highways increased by 41 percent from 1990 to 2006, while new road mileage increased by only four percent. The nation's population grew by 20 percent from 1990 to 2006.

- Americans rely almost exclusively on motor vehicles for mobility. Travel in private vehicles accounts for 88 percent of all person miles of travel. Air travel accounts for eight percent of all person miles of travel, while transit (including buses and trains) accounts for one percent.

Roadway Improvements Can Save Lives, Reduce Accidents and Relieve Congestion

- Roadway conditions are a significant factor in approximately one-third of traffic fatalities. There were 43,443 traffic fatalities in 2006 in the U.S.

- Where appropriate, highway improvements such as removing or shielding obstacles, adding or improving medians, widening lanes and shoulders, upgrading roads from two lanes to four lanes, and improving road markings and traffic signals can reduce traffic fatalities and accidents and improve traffic flow to help relieve congestion.

- According to a study conducted by the Federal Highway Administration, $100 million spent on highway safety improvements will save 145 lives over a 10-year period.

- A total of 213,733 people died on U.S. highways from 2002 through 2006. Nationwide, 76 percent of all fatal crashes occur on two-lane roads while only 14 percent of fatal crashes occur on roads with four or more lanes. In the U.S., 55 percent of major roads, excluding the Interstate, are two lanes.

Data from the U.S Census, the U.S. Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration, the Bureau of Transportation Statistics, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and the Texas Transportation Institute was compiled and analyzed by TRIP, a nonprofit transportation research group based in Washington, D.C. Information is the latest available.

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