

AASHTO Press Release

Tony Dorsey (202) 624-3690

Tuesday, January 12, 2010

Reaction to AP Analysis on Economic Recovery Spending

This week, the Associated Press released a flawed analysis of the results of the economic stimulus spending on roads and bridges.

Its authors overlooked the 210,000 direct on-project transportation jobs the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee determined were created by stimulus. And it argues that the 6,333 highway recovery projects under construction in America, valued at \$15.2 billion, have had "no effect on local unemployment and only barely helped the beleaguered construction industry."

The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) strongly disagrees. In Texas, for example, American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funding is providing nearly one-fourth of the \$1 billion needed for the critical, 8.4 mile, Dallas-Fort Worth Connector project.

One hundred and fifty direct planning and engineering jobs, including designers, construction engineers, and oversight engineers and technicians, are now employed on the project and approximately 400 additional direct jobs will be added next month, when construction begins. Are these jobs insignificant? Won't they help to reduce the local unemployment rate and support hundreds of other jobs as workers make purchases and pay down mortgages? This is just one of 6,333 examples.

In its report, the AP concluded that money for road construction offers little relief to most contractors because they don't work on transportation projects. U.S. Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood's corrected that in his blog posting this week titled "AP Misses the Transportation Stimulus Jobs Forest for the Trees."

Sec. LaHood states that the highway and road construction industry totals about 258,000 jobs nationwide. "When we drill down to the transportation construction industry, the most appropriate basis for analysis, we find Recovery Act spending making a real difference in people's lives," LaHood said.

The construction sector is beleaguered. However a thorough analysis of stimulus spending on roads and bridges [makes the case](#) for greater infrastructure investment, not less.

States have identified 9,500 'Ready to Go' transportation projects worth almost \$70 billion that, if funded, will put thousands of additional construction workers back on the job. Every single job counts and when you add it up, investing in roads and bridges makes good sense.

http://news.transportation.org/press_release.aspx?Action=ViewNews&NewsID=281