

ARTBA American Road & Transportation Builders Association



July 15, 2008

The Honorable James Oberstar
Chairman
House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
2165 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Oberstar:

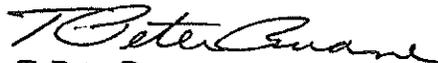
The American Road and Transportation Builders Association (ARTBA) strongly supports the National Highway Bridge Reconstruction and Inspection Act, H.R. 3999. Your proposal would generate federal leadership in response to a national need, setting priorities and establishing the accountability Americans demand and deserve.

The collapse of the I-35 W Bridge August 1, 2007, is a stark reminder the U.S. transportation system is not keeping pace with the demands being placed on it and that tragic consequences can occur when warning signs are not acted upon. According to the Federal Highway Administration, more than one-quarter of all bridges on the NHS are considered either functionally obsolete or structurally deficient. The U.S. Department of Transportation also estimates at least \$65 billion could be invested immediately in a cost-beneficial fashion to address existing bridge deficiencies.

The nation has vast unmet bridge needs that are well documented and irrefutable. The U.S., however, is not just suffering from a bridge crisis; it is suffering from a transportation infrastructure crisis. We need to dramatically upgrade the nation's bridges, roadways and public transportation facilities and increased investment is a critical part of the solution. The U.S. transportation network is a holistic system and we must begin the process of addressing all of these needs in a meaningful way as soon as possible. H.R. 3999 is a logical first step toward a restructuring of the core federal highway and public transportation programs to address unmet national needs in the 2009 reauthorization of the federal highway and transit programs.

ARTBA commends your leadership on this critical national issue and pledges to work with you to ensure all U.S. transportation infrastructure needs are met.

Sincerely,


T. Peter Ruane
President and CEO

