Capito Comments on Report Concerning WV’s Roads and Bridges

Washington, D.C.
July 8, 2009

Rep. Shelley Moore Capito, R-W.Va., released the following statement Wednesday reacting to a new report by TRIP, a non-profit organization which evaluates highway transportation issues, suggesting that federal stimulus legislation fell short in investing in roads and bridges and that West Virginia may face a $5 billion shortfall in transportation funding over the next ten years:

"Once again we’re reminded that for all the talk of an infrastructure bill, the massive stimulus package was long on rhetoric and short on results when it came to investing in our roads and bridges – and in new jobs."

She also notes that highway infrastructure accounted for less than four percent ($27.5 billion) of the entire $787-billion stimulus package approved earlier this year.

"As a result, we continue to increase spending with little benefit to job creation or real investment in our highway infrastructure," says Capito. "I believe there is a bipartisan desire for a robust highway bill this year, and I’m troubled by the Administration’s willingness to kick the can down the road on this critical piece of legislation."

"As today’s report suggests, there is a real need in our state and it’s clear that the stimulus package simply wasn’t the end-all and be-all of infrastructure that its proponents made it out to be."

This issue has been discussed before, including the comments below.

“This report shows that West Virginia has enormous deficiencies in road and bridge funding,” said Joe Denault, chairman of West Virginians for Better Transportation. “The federal stimulus package will not make as big of an impact as we had hoped…” (TRIP Press Release / June 8, 2009)

“Rep. Jim Oberstar (D-Minn.), chairman of the House Transportation Committee, and Rep. John Mica (R-Fla.), the panel’s ranking member, said that Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood was wrong to call for an 18-month extension of the existing law Wednesday and that any delay in overhauling the nation’s transportation system could lead to more job losses.” (June 18, 2009. The Hill. Oberstar blasts White House, accelerates highway bill.)

"To some extent, I think the administration oversold the transportation aspect of this," said Jim Berard, spokesman for Rep. James Oberstar, D-Minn., chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. "It was sold as the heart and soul of the package, and it really just isn't." (May 11, 2009. Associated Press. Stimulus Watch: Jobs, but not where needed most.)