

National Association of County Engineers



THE VOICE OF COUNTY ROAD OFFICIALS

President

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June 23, 2010

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The Honorable Victor Mendez
Administrator, Federal Highway Administration
U. S. Department of Transportation
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Washington, DC 20590

Secretary-Treasurer

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Dear Administrator Mendez:

Past President

Chris E. Bauseman, P.E. & P.S.
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I would like take this opportunity to follow up with you from previous meetings with NACE Past President Chris Bauseman and 7 NACE members on March 3, 2010 and the April 12, 2010 meeting with Executive Director Tony Giancola and AASHTO Executive Director John Horsley and staff and provide legislative language proposals which we feel would improve the efficiency of the federal aid program and accelerate the delivery of federal aid projects by local government agencies.

Northeast Region V.P.

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Besides the legislative language proposals included in this letter, we are committed to continue working with the AASTHO Executive Director and Staff to explore and implement improvements in the administration of federal-aid dollars by local agencies in each state.

Southeast Region V.P.

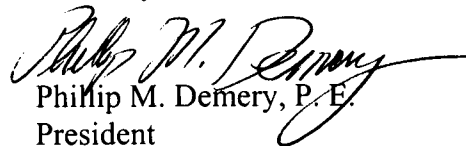
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In summary, we applaud your leadership in addressing improvements and streamlining of the administration of federal-aid by local agencies and request your serious consideration of our recommended legislative language proposals.

North Central Region V.P.

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Sincerely,



Phillip M. Demery, P.E.
President

South Central Region V.P.

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Copy: Jeff Paniati, FHWA Executive Director

Western Region V.P.

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NACo Director

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Proposed National Association of County Engineers

Legislative Language for Next Transportation Authorization

The following legislative language changes/additions to the next Transportation authorization bill to improve the efficiency of implementation of the federal-aid program and access by local government include:

- “Within one year after the enactment of this legislation, each State Transportation Agency shall create an Office of Local Assistance to assist local transportation agencies with the development of federal-aid projects and shall publish a local government assistance manual for federal-aid projects.”
- “FHWA shall provide a Guidance Document to State DOT’s within one year of enactment of this legislation outlining the Federal desire and intent to streamline the processing of Categorical Excluded projects as a means of expediting the delivery and minimizing the costs in implementing these projects which have been deemed to have insignificant impacts to the environment.”
- “Any federal aid highway pavement preservation or rehabilitation, bridge replacement or rehabilitation, safety, sidewalk, bicycle and pedestrian project in the existing right-of-way and not requiring any additional real estate acquisition and under \$1 million dollars in total value only have to comply with State and Local regulations”
- “All federal permitting agencies shall have sixty days to determine if a permit will be required for a federal aid highway, bridge, safety, sidewalk, bicycle and pedestrian project that is designated as a categorical exclusion, is in the existing right-of-way and does not require any additional real estate acquisition. If it is determined by a federal agency that a permit is required, such federal agency shall have an additional sixty days to issue a permit.”
- “Non-NHS projects and low-cost NHS projects.-Any State may request that the Secretary no longer review and approve plans, specifications, and estimates for any project (including any highway project on the National Highway System with an estimated construction cost of less than \$1,000,000 but excluding any other highway project on the National Highway System). After receiving any such notification, the Secretary shall undertake project review only as requested by the State.” **(From ISTEA Section 1016: Program Efficiencies)**