

MEMO

TO: Members of the Transportation Committee

FROM: John Rossi, District Office Chief of Staff, US Congressman John B. Larson

DATE: 8/19/09

RE: State of Connecticut Transportation Committee, Informational Hearing

- Acknowledgements
  - Lee Reynolds
  - John Jacobs
  - Lou Mangini
  - Chief Elected Officials - Walker
  - Regional Planning Agencies
  - Union officials
- Update on Congressman Larson
- Brief Background on the Congressman and the District Office
- Hearing Remarks:
  - opportunity to speak

I have been asked by the Committee to provide some brief remarks with regards to the role of Congress on the disbursement of Recovery Act funding.

TEXT FROM CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERVICE (CRS):

President Barack Obama signed H.R. 1, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009, into law on February 17, 2009, as P.L. 111-5 (123 Stat. 115-521). The act is seen as one of the most significant legislative responses made thus far to the current economic turmoil.

ARRA is a relatively lengthy and complex act, amounting to just over 400 pages and melding together hundreds of billions of dollars in discretionary spending, mandatory spending, and revenue provisions encompassing the jurisdiction of several House and Senate committees. The act consists of two major divisions. Division A (Appropriations Provisions) includes supplemental appropriations for FY2009 (and later fiscal years) covering by separate titles all 12 of the regular appropriations acts, as well as four additional titles dealing with health information technology, a state fiscal stabilization fund, accountability and transparency, and general provisions.

Division B (Tax, Unemployment, Health, State Fiscal Relief, and Other Provisions) consists of seven separate titles.

Division A includes the discretionary spending provisions, but some significant substantive provisions as well; Division B includes the mandatory spending and revenue provisions, with some exceptions.

The ARRA provides \$61.80 billion for programs within the Department of Transportation (DOT) and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).<sup>56</sup>

This is a 57% supplement to the \$109.06 billion provided in the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2009 (Division I, P.L. 111-8).

DOT receives a total of \$48.12 billion from ARRA, primarily to make capital assistance grants. This additional funding represents a 72% supplement to DOT's regular FY2009 funding (\$67.22 billion).

The ARRA funding is allocated among ten grant programs, focusing on different modes of transportation. The largest allocation, \$27.50 billion, goes to states and localities for highway projects, though passenger and freight rail and port infrastructure projects also are eligible for this funding in certain circumstances. The next largest allocation, \$9.30 billion, is for states and Amtrak for intercity passenger rail projects, including high-speed rail. Transit projects receive \$8.40 billion; aviation projects receive \$1.30 billion; and small shipyards receive \$100.0 million. The law also provides \$1.50 billion for competitive grants for surface transportation projects of national and regional significance, whether highways, bridges, transit, rail, or port infrastructure. For most of these programs, the grants provided with funding from ARRA will not require any local match. States will be required to certify that they are using these grants to supplement their planned transportation spending, rather than substituting the additional funding for their planned spending. Further, the DOT Inspector General's Office is given \$20.0 million to help audit these expenditures.

#### **Transportation:**

- Over **\$300 million** is allocated to repair Connecticut's highways and bridges.
  - The funding will be dispersed using federal formulas enacted as part of the SAFETEA-LU Authorization.
- **\$143 million** for Amtrak Non Security and Life Safety Projects.
  - Windsor Locks: \$27,000.00
  - Windsor: \$27,000.00
  - Hartford: \$100,000.00
- **\$8 million** for Security and Life Safety Projects.
- Nearly **\$48 million** will be used to modernize Connecticut water systems.
- **\$9 million** for transportation enhancement projects.
  - East Hartford/Manchester I-84/I-384 Trail: \$2,000,000.00
  - Torrington - Sue Grossman Stillwater Greenway: \$900,000.00
  - Southington - Linear Park: Plantsville to Cheshire: \$3,342,400.00
- **\$8 million** for Bradley International Runway Rehabilitation Project

In total, the state of Connecticut will receive \$487,480,166 to repair and modernize its roads, bridges, transit and water systems.

***For Connecticut, this legislation will:***

- Create approximately 41,000 jobs – 8,100 in the First District;
- Address critical funding shortfalls at the state level and buttress education funding for municipalities;

The Recovery Act specifically designated Governors, Chief Elected Officials and Regional Officials as the agents by which the ARRA funding would be distributed. Past the formula designations of the Recovery Act Congress has had no role in deciding how discretionary funding sent to the states, towns and regional planning agencies here in Connecticut should be used.

In terms of getting projects started and people employed with Recovery Act funding I am here on behalf of the Congressman and the delegation to take back in issues that state, municipal or regional authorities are having with federal departments they are working with to try and help resolve those issues to get the funding released and put to work here in Connecticut.

I am here to answers any questions and bring back comments and concerns to the Congressman.