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STATE GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE
CHAIRMAN

Testimony of
State Representative Daryl Metcalfe
before the
State Transportation Commission
August 25, 2011

Good morning. I would like to thank you for the opportunity to present testimony in support of various transportation construction projects that have a considerable impact on my district, in southern Butler County, which include: improvements to Freedom Road in Cranberry Township, the entire Route 228 corridor, and the SR 228/SR 2005 intersection in Clinton Township.

Freedom Road is important to Cranberry Township and the neighboring communities because it functions as an extension of the east-west Route 228 corridor in Butler County. The project includes reconstruction and widening of the road between Route 19 and the existing bridge over the Pennsylvania Turnpike, as well as the rest of the corridor, and the necessary replacement and widening of the bridge to accommodate the increasing traffic volume. The improvements to Freedom Road are essential to meet the needs of such a rapidly-growing community.

As southern Butler County continues its rapid growth, significant progress has yet to be made to alleviate the increasing traffic levels. More specifically, the Route 228 corridor from US 19 in Cranberry Township to Route 8 in Middlesex Township is consistently problematic.

I have been and will continue to be an advocate for the necessary infrastructure upgrades required to increase safety and reduce traffic congestion throughout the whole Route 228 corridor.

Progress on the Route 228 improvement project must continue steadily, so as to ultimately improve the quality of mobility along the corridor, from US 19 through Route 356.

I fully support all of the following components that PennDOT has divided the improvement project into:

- US 19/SR 3020/Route 228 intersection improvements in Cranberry Township
- Cranberry Interchange in Cranberry Township
- Mars Railroad Bridge West expansion in Adams and Cranberry Townships
- Pittsburgh Street intersection improvements in Adams Township
- Three Degree Road intersection improvements in Adams Township
- Balls Bend safety improvement in Middlesex Township

Additionally, the SR 228/SR 2005 intersection is important to Clinton Township and the surrounding community, as it would improve operation and site distance of the intersection. The improvement project would reconfigure the existing intersection, which would include excavation, subbase, drainage and pavement markings.

I believe that all of these projects are essential to ultimately reduce traffic congestion, increase safety and continue economic development in Butler County.

Furthermore, I believe the hundreds of millions of dollars, currently funneled to subsidize mass transit, need to be effectively utilized to improve our Commonwealth's roads and bridges. I understand the benefits that mass transit aims to provide; reducing congestion and pollution, and slowing the deterioration of our roads and bridges. However, the realized benefit is disproportionately smaller than the large percentage of funding mass transit receives from the total amount of transportation dollars. It is clear that this disproportionate funding scheme is not serving all Pennsylvania citizens, as it is not just for all taxpayers to subsidize the small portion of the population who use public transit. Moreover, taxpayers who do not use public transit, but who are expected to fund their neighbor's bus fare, are of course still paying for their personal vehicle, maintenance and gas.

Before concluding, I want to express my gratitude for the work that is being done on the Seneca Valley missing ramps. I have advocated before the commission in the past for this project, and am excited to see the progress that is being made. The students and parents of the Seneca Valley School District, as well as residents of the surrounding communities, will benefit greatly from this improvement, which will reduce congestion and increase safety.

I appreciate the opportunity to express my support for the essential projects I mentioned here today on behalf of my constituency. I look forward to working with the State Transportation Commission to improve transportation in Pennsylvania and Butler County.