

LARSON ANNOUNCES MILLIONS IN FEDERAL FUNDS FOR THE CAPITOL REGION President Signs Transportation Appr

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LARSON ANNOUNCES MILLIONS IN FEDERAL FUNDS FOR THE CAPITOL REGION
President Signs Transportation Appropriations Bill Containing Funding Into Law

WASHINGTON, D.C.—U.S. Congressman John B. Larson (CT-01) announced today that the Capitol Region will receive millions in federal funding after the President signed the Transportation Appropriations bill into law last night. The bill includes funding for the Temple Street reopening project, the Hartford/New Britain Busway, and a state job access program.

Larson stated: "The transformation of Temple Street will be a catalyst for new investment - both private and public - in Downtown Hartford. It offers a new opportunity to further connect the entire downtown from Main St. to the Connecticut River area, and to enhance the development of residential housing and businesses in the city.

"The Hartford/New Britain busway is essential to continued transportation improvements in Connecticut. It will provide for an easier commute to and from work, reduce traffic on our roadways, as well as enhance economic growth and the environment in the state. A rapid transit system within the corridor between the two cities will have a positive impact on congestion in the region and improve the quality of life of those who live and work in the Greater Hartford area.

"The job access program has been immensely successful in providing people on assistance with the ability to move from welfare to work and deserves additional support. The program will extend service locations and hours to increase the number of Connecticut residents who have access to this valuable service and are able to get to work," said Larson.

Hartford Mayor Eddie Perez stated: "Hartford has begun so many exciting projects, all of which enhance our City's livability. We are grateful to Congressman Larson for his commitment to securing these dollars, which move us one step closer to our goal of redefining our City."

Richard Porth, the executive director of the Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) stated: "The mayors and first selectmen of the Capitol Region were very pleased with the contents of the federal transportation bill. Several of the region's high priority projects received funding including the Hartford/New Britain Busway. We are grateful to Congressman Larson and other members of the Connecticut Congressional Delegation for working hard of our behalf."

R. Bartley Halloran, Chairman of the Capital City Economic Development Authority said: "A reopened Temple Street will go a long way towards capitalizing on the pedestrian-friendly, compact nature of downtown Hartford by reconnecting Main Street and Market Street, both of which are enjoying ongoing revitalization. CCEDA is grateful for Congressman Larson's ongoing support for the revitalization of the Hartford region."

Sam Fingold, Marc Levine, and Philip Schonberger, owners of the historic Richardson Building, said: "The reopening of Temple Street will compliment our recent successful conversion of our building into a Residence Inn by Marriott and will 'pave the way' for the transformation of our derelict neighbor, the Sage Allen building, into an exciting residential development. The Temple Street project was specifically recommended by the recent Economic and Urban Design Action Strategy, the Greenberg Plan. We applaud the leadership of Congressman Larson, working in conjunction with our Connecticut Senators and the City of Hartford in obtaining this grant.

- Hartford - \$1 Million - Temple Street Reopening Project: Temple Street, located in Downtown Hartford, has been closed for through traffic since the 1970s. In 1979, a "Mixmaster," a 3-story structure with encircling stairwells, an elevator and escalators, was built linking Sage Allen, a downtown department store, to a mixed-retail building and second anchor store. This Mixmaster straddles Temple Street and blocks pedestrian and vehicular access to it and adjoining streets. Reopening this street would provide for opportunities to develop property in the heart of downtown. It would also

allow access to Market Street and connect Main Street to Constitution Plaza and the Connecticut River. The re-opening of Temple Street will be a model for other Hartford streets and urban communities, stimulating new investment. This model urban street will be comprised of wide sidewalks, street tree plantings, incorporate pedestrian-friendly uses for Temple Street, and room for cars and bicycles.

- Hartford/New Britain - \$9 Million - Hartford/New Britain Busway: The busway is part of a joint Bus Rapid Transit Initiative between the Connecticut Department of Transportation and the Capitol Region Council of Governments. The Connecticut proposal was originally selected as one of ten nationwide demonstration programs. The Bus Rapid Transit Initiative is intended to improve the speed, reliability and convenience of bus service, to improve mobility, and to promote a healthy environment. The busway will be an exclusive roadway through five cities and towns: New Britain, Newington, Farmington, West Hartford and Hartford, and would include approximately ten stations or stops that will service commuters.

- Statewide - \$3.5 Million - Job Access and Reverse Commute Grants: In 1998, Congress created a Job Access and Reverse Commute program to fund the transportation of welfare recipients to and from job-related activities. Many recipients of assistance who were seeking work were prevented from accepting or holding onto employment because they lacked personal transportation or existing public transportation did not operate at all shift times, or did not reach the area in which they were employed. In the New Britain/Hartford area, the Job Access program has enabled thousands of people to move from welfare to work. Currently, 2,800 people use the Job Access service on a daily basis. By using public transit providers such as Connecticut Transit and regional transit districts, it has also increased overall ridership in the region's transit infrastructure.

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