

# LARSON VOTES TO SAVE THE TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENTS PROGRAM

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Program Provides Funding for Local Bike and Pedestrian Paths, Downtown Redevelopment, Greenways and Environmental Protection

WASHINGTON, D.C.- U.S. Congressman John B. Larson (CT-01) today voted in favor of an amendment to strip language from a transportation funding bill designed to eliminate dedicated federal funding for the Transportation Enhancements Program. The program provides funding for environmental and economic redevelopment projects such as creating greenways, bicycle and pedestrian paths, developing walkable downtowns, and protecting scenic vistas and historical sites. The program sets aside approximately two percent of the overall funding of the federal-aid highway program for such projects. The language that would end the program was contained in the Transportation, Treasury, and Independent Agencies Appropriations Act, H.R. 2989. The amendment to preserve the dedicated federal funding passed by a vote of 327-90.

Projects throughout Connecticut and the First Congressional District have benefited from the program since its inception in 1991.

Larson stated: "This important funding has provided the opportunity for many of our cities and towns to develop positive projects such as greenways, bikeways and pedestrian paths. It also funds downtown and urban redevelopment initiatives, allowing towns to make economic and environmental strides forward. It is a critical component in the effort to enhance livable communities efforts throughout the state and region. The Transportation Enhancement Program holds a great deal of importance for many of our communities, which have benefited so much from the its existence in recent years and I am thrilled that the House has voted to preserve the program."

Richard Porth, Executive Director of the Capital Region Council of Governments (CRCOG), which coordinates allocation of enhancement funding to municipalities in the Greater Hartford region, stated, "The Transportation Enhancements Program is tremendously popular among municipal leaders and civic groups. In the past, we have been able to utilize this funding for very visible and very successful projects to strengthen streetscapes and town centers as well as to build greenways in the region."

Currently, CRCOG is working with municipalities and the state to secure funding for transportation enhancement projects in the region, including the Park Street urban design and improvement project in Hartford, the Charter Oak Greenway extension in Manchester and streetscape improvements in Bloomfield Town Center, among others.

In the past 12 years, the program has provided the First Congressional District more than \$11.8 million in funding for a number of projects, including:

- The Manchester I-384 Bikeway (\$1.2 million)
- Windsor Trail System (\$440,000)
- Landscaping on Route 9 in Berlin/Cromwell (\$175,000)
- South Windsor Wapping Center Landscaping Projects (\$320,000)
- I-84 Landscaping in Manchester and East Hartford (\$280,000)
- The Pedestrian Bridge on Columbus Blvd./Constitution Plaza in Hartford (\$4.1 million)
- Windsor Locks Canal Trail (\$840,000)
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Streetscape Improvements on Main Street, Manchester (\$110,000)

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Hartford Road Bike Lanes and Pedestrian Facilities, Manchester (\$915,000)

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Southington Park Rail Trail (\$1.2 million)

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Tourist Destination signs in Hartford (\$200,000)

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Southside Neighborhood Streetscape, Hartford (\$980,000)

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Wilson Gate, Keeney Park Restoration, Hartford (\$296,000)

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South Windsor/East Windsor Secondary Rail Trail (\$430,000)

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Six Town Rail Trail, East Granby (\$378,000)

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For a list of past projects funded through the Transportation Enhancements Program, visit:

<<http://www.enhancements.org/>>

(Click on "Projects," then click the link to "extract basic information on TE projects," then choose "Connecticut" and click on "search.")

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