

## PRESIDENT SIGNS SPENDING BILL THAT INCLUDES HARTFORD/NEW BRITAIN BUSWAY

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PRESIDENT SIGNS SPENDING BILL THAT INCLUDES HARTFORD/NEW BRITAIN BUSWAY WASHINGTON—U.S. Congressman John B. Larson (CT-01) announced that President Clinton today signed the Transportation Appropriations Act, H.R. 4475, which includes \$750,000 for a proposed busway between Hartford and New Britain. The law provides a total of \$58 billion in spending, which is 14 percent more than in FY 2000, and six percent more than the Administration requested. It includes a 10 percent increase in funding for the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), with additional funds for its tire safety investigation.

"I am pleased that the President chose to sign this legislation," said Larson. "The busway that is funded in this law offers a fantastic opportunity for Hartford to cut down on the congestion in the corridor between the two cities, which will improve the lives of the people who live and work in Hartford. The city is on a strong economic path and mass transit will allow us to meet many of the needs that will be associated with greater economic growth."

The busway is part of a joint Bus Rapid Transit Initiative between the Connecticut Department of Transportation, the Capitol Region Council of Governments, and the Central Connecticut Regional Planning Agency. The Connecticut proposal was selected as one of ten nation-wide demonstration programs. Larson submitted a letter requesting this funding to the Appropriations Committee in March and secured funding for the project in the House version of the bill passed in May.

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 funding is to begin preliminary engineering for the New Britain-Hartford busway, proposed to 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.

Larson complimented Rick Porth of the Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG), as well as Manchester Mayor Steve Cassano, who chairs the council, for their hard work. Larson also recognized Senators Dodd and Lieberman for their support on the issue.

In addition, the measure cuts highway funds for states that fail to adopt, by 2004, a 0.08 blood alcohol content standard for determining whether a driver is drunk, allow the NHTSA to establish a roll-over rating system for Sport Utility Vehicles, and prohibit the finalization of proposed revisions to trucking "hours-of-service" rules in FY 2001.

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