

CAPITOL HILL UPDATE

REP. JIM GERLACH (PA-06)

August 5, 2005

www.gerlach.house.gov

6th District Gets \$38M in Transportation Bill

Washington -- More than \$38 million was set aside for 6th Congressional District projects in the \$286.5 billion transportation reauthorization legislation supported by Rep. Jim Gerlach that passed the House of Representatives on July 28.

"I'm proud to join an overwhelming bipartisan majority in supporting the adoption of this important transportation funding bill," said Rep. Gerlach. "It's been a long time coming, but finally, many of these important projects in my District and throughout the country will get the funding needed to move forward. Our actions today will improve the conditions of our roads and fund the busses and trains people rely on every day. This money will also help fuel the job market, as it's estimated that 47,000 new jobs are created for every \$1 billion in transportation funding we set aside."

The Conference Report for *HR 3, the Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy For Users*, passed the House right before the August recess by 412 to 8 margin. The funding bill provides \$286.5 billion in federal highway, transit and road safety funding through 2009.

See the accompanying chart for a list of all the 6th District projects in the legislation.

HR 3 also authorizes the Schuylkill Valley Metro project for final design and construction funding for fiscal years through 2009. This means that proponents of the proposed Metro can continue to work toward restoring passenger rail

6th District Transportation Projects

Berks County

- * \$1.28 million for the replacement of the Blair Creek Bridge in Longswamp Township.
- * \$2.4 million for the restoration of a three-mile stretch of I-176 in Cumru and Robeson Townships
- * \$ 2.28 million for the restoration of Route 222 in Maxatawny and Richmond townships.
- * \$1.944 million for improvements to the intersection of Route 422 and Route 662.
- * \$1.2 million for the extension of River Road in Reading to provide access to area industrial and brownsfields sites.
- * \$2.6 million for the widening and expansion of Route 10 in New Morgan Township.
- * \$800,000 for the restoration of Route 422 between the West Shore Bypass to West Wyomissing in West Lawn, Wyomissing, Wyomissing Hill and Spring Townships.

Chester County

- * \$5 million for the construction of the French Creek Parkway in Phoenixville.
- * \$1, 319,200 for the realignment of the intersection of King of Prussia and Upper Gulph Mills roads in Tredyffrin Township.
- * \$4 million to build two through lanes on Route 100 between Blackhorse road and Horeshoe Trail Road.
- * \$484,000 for the renovation and modernization of the intersection of Routes 322 and 10 in Honey Brook.
- * \$4 million for the reconstruction of Route 30 near Route 10 outside of Coatesville.

Montgomery County

- * \$9.62 million for the extension of Lafayette Street in Norristown and connection with the Pennsylvania Turnpike.
- * \$800,000 for improvements to Plank, Otts, Meyers and Seitz roads.

service along the Route 422 corridor.

"Construction of the Schuylkill Valley Metro has and will continue to be one of my top priorities in Congress," Rep. Gerlach said. "This is a project that will help ease traffic congestion on our overburdened roads and spur revitalization efforts in our older towns and boroughs."

House Passes Dominican Republic-Central America Free Trade Agreement

The trade pact will boost U.S. agricultural, manufacturing and confectionary exports by billions of dollars each year while also creating thousands of new jobs.

Washington -- Congressman Jim Gerlach joined his colleagues in the House in voting in favor of the Dominican Republic – Central American Free Trade Agreement, a trade pact that will boost U.S. agricultural, manufacturing and confectionary exports by billions of dollars each year while also creating thousands of new jobs.

"Passage of this important trade agreement will not only boost our own local agricultural, confection and technology industries, but it

will help ensure that our neighboring countries, whose democracies depend on stable economic growth, will continue to flourish," Rep. Gerlach said. "While a complicated and complex issue, in the end, I voted for the DR-CAFTA trade pact simply because we will be able to sell more American goods in Latin America at a cheaper price than ever before and that helps our manufacturers and working families.

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Added Rep. Gerlach: "Also, just as importantly through the DR-CAFTA process, we were able to pressure our House leadership into bringing up legislation for consideration that tightens some of the loopholes in our trade agreement with China. The situation with China, in my opinion, is by far one of our most pressing trade concerns. I was glad to join a vast majority of my House colleagues in adopting the legislation this week that fights back against countries like China who are currently exempt from our countervailing duty laws because they are classified as nonmarket economies. This legislation, introduced by Pennsylvania Rep. Phil English, is a major breakthrough in trade policy, and is the strongest step we've taken to strengthen our trade laws since the 1980s"

Pennsylvania businesses and industries stand to benefit tremendously from the implementation of this trade agreement. There are 690 companies in the Commonwealth that currently export

CAFTA countries totaled a staggering \$353 million. All the local and national manufacturing associations supported the trade agreement and estimate that upon full-implementation DR-CAFTA will result in an additional \$1 billion in new manufacturing exports.

Pennsylvania's farmers will benefit as new markets are open for their goods. The Pennsylvania Farm Bureau estimates that Pennsylvania beef exports will increase by \$24 million per year, while poultry exports will increase by more than \$13 million per year and the dairy industry will increase exports by \$3 million per year when DR-CAFTA is fully implemented.

"Pennsylvania's apple, dairy, beef and poultry farmers currently supply Central American countries with agricultural products at the expense of high tariffs, ranging from 15 to 60 percent. Pennsylvania apples exported to Costa Rica are subject to a 15 percent tariff, while Canadian apples are able to enter Costa Rica

goods to the countries in the DR-CAFTA trade pact, and 453 of those companies are small and medium size industries. In 2004, Pennsylvania's exports to the DR-

duty-free. DR-CAFTA will even the playing field," said Carl T. Shaffer, president of the PA Farm Bureau. The Bureau is a voluntary organization with a membership of more than 37,000 farm and rural families, representing farms of every size and commodity throughout Pennsylvania.

Added Shaffer: "Congressman Gerlach's support of DR-CAFTA means a brighter future for Pennsylvania's farm families and the Commonwealth's largest industry. Agriculture will experience immediate and long-term benefits totaling nearly \$43 million per year when the trade agreement is fully implemented. Pennsylvania farmers will reap the fruits of a free market as tariffs on agricultural goods are eliminated and stronger

CAFTA QUICK FACTS:

- * It will make more than 80 percent of US exports to Central America and the Dominican Republic duty free
- * It will benefit small and medium-sized businesses, which are responsible for an estimated 37 percent of U.S. exports to the DR-CAFTA nations.
- * Boost US Agricultural exports by an estimated \$1.5 billion, according to the American Farm Bureau Federation
- * Create jobs by opening up foreign markets

relationships are made with the six Central American countries."

DR-CAFTA also addresses

significant national security issues as well. With stable, growing democratic countries in Central America that are tied directly to the United States economy more of their citizens will invest more time and energy into growing their own economies so that their children will lead better lives. This means lower volume border crossings in the United States, and increased ability to guarantee security.

On August 1, 2002 Congress adopted the Trade Act which extended Presidential trade promotion authority to negotiate trade agreements which Congress must then consider without amendment and under limited debate. That legislation (P.L. 107-210, Sec. 2102) set out enforceable principal negotiation objectives to guide the Administration as it negotiates trade agreements.

"This agreement is good for Pennsylvania and good news for the many technology companies, farmers and confectionary industries in the 6th Congressional District, like the R.M. Palmer Co. and Godiva Chocolates, both outside of Reading" Rep. Gerlach explained.

Other 6th District companies that will benefit directly from the open markets created by the DR-CAFTA trade agreement: the Campbell Soup Co., Lucent Technologies, Pfizer, Spring City Electrical Manufacturing, the Schwan Food Co. and the Unisys Corp.

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