

WASHINGTON, DC - Congressman Steny Hoyer (D-MD) was joined today by U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta, Washington, DC Mayor Anthony Williams, Senator Jim Jeffords and Representative Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC) to announce the establishment of a national and regional partnership to restore the South Capitol Street Gateway as a grand entrance to the Nation's Capitol.

"I applaud Mayor Williams and Secretary Mineta for formalizing their already strong commitment to rebuilding the South Capitol Street Bridge and the area surrounding the bridge," said Congressman Hoyer. "Working together, the District of Columbia, the U.S. Department of Transportation, and federal, state and local officials are making another positive step forward in this major project which will improve access to Washington, DC and will increase the safety of residents, commuters and visitors as they travel into the city.

"I have been a long time supporter of the Anacostia Waterfront Initiative and I see the restoration of the South Capitol Gateway as a critical component of this initiative. This new and worthy gateway to the Nation's Capitol will attract thoughtfully-planned private investment and development while showcasing the Capitol in all its grandeur. The residents of the District and the people of the United States deserve no less.

"I will continue to work with Delegate Norton and Senator Jeffords in the months ahead to make sure Congress provides the resources and appropriate level of direction to advance this critical project without delays. Ultimately, I look forward to the day when this waterfront is one of the most highly visited locations in Washington, DC," Congressman Hoyer added.

As a senior member of the powerful House Appropriations Committee, and a member of the subcommittee that funds the U.S. Transportation Department, Congressman Hoyer secured \$500,000 in federal funds to conduct a study of the South Capitol Gateway, and secured \$7 million in fiscal year 2004, and \$20 million with Delegate Norton in the House-passed Highway bill this year, for the rehabilitation of South Capitol Street and the Frederick Douglass Bridge.

At today's event, Mayor Williams and Secretary Mineta signed a Memorandum of Understanding in which the U.S. Department of Transportation will formally recognize that a new South Capitol Street bridge is essential to revitalizing South Capitol Street and the larger Anacostia Waterfront. This marks the first time the executive branch has provided such recognition to the South Capitol Street project.

On display at the signing were architectural concept drawings of possible designs for a new pedestrian- and environmentally-friendly bridge in line with the goals of the Anacostia Waterfront Initiative.

In addition to Congressman Steny Hoyer, Secretary Norman Mineta, and Mayor Anthony Williams, attending the signing were Senator Jim Jeffords, Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton, and Council member Carol Schwartz. Dan Tangherlini, District Director of Transportation, was the MC.

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