

WASHINGTON, DC - Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (D-MD) announced today that final House-Senate legislation funding the Departments of Transportation and Housing and Urban Development includes \$8.3 million to upgrade major Maryland transportation routes and transit projects and \$1.4 million to address community development needs in Maryland's Fifth Congressional District. The funds, which were allocated in the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development Appropriations Conference Report, were included at the request of Congressman Hoyer.

Overall, the legislation makes needed investments to keep America's transportation system safe and strong, to ensure that every American has adequate shelter, and to foster economic and community development. The bill also rejects \$17.7 million in Bush Administration proposed cuts to Maryland's share of Community Development Block Grants, which provide flexible funding to states and communities for economic development, job creation, and affordable housing. Despite the broad bipartisan support for the bill, President Bush has threatened to veto it.

"I am pleased that the final bill includes funding I requested for critical projects to meet Maryland's transportation, housing and community development needs," stated Rep. Steny Hoyer. "The \$8.3 million in transportation funding included in this bill will go a long way towards addressing the impact of growth and development on Southern Maryland's transportation network. This funding will help ease congestion along major Maryland thoroughfares, improve the safety of our roadways and intersections, and help the region absorb the ongoing increase of traffic due to the region's continued growth."

"I am also pleased this bill addresses some of the Fifth District's housing and community development needs, including the growing demand for affordable housing," stated Rep. Hoyer. "This year's investments include worthy initiatives to expand affordable housing opportunities, foster economic development, and enhance community services throughout Southern Maryland."

"Finally, I am pleased to announce the House bill includes \$400,000 to enable the completion of the reconstruction of the Brick Chapel in St. Mary's City," Rep. Hoyer said. "I am proud to support the reconstruction of this landmark, which will better enable us to understand and celebrate the significance of Historic St. Mary's City to the State of Maryland and, indeed, the United States."

The following transportation funding was included for projects in Maryland's 5th Congressional District at the request of Congressman Hoyer:

Suitland Parkway and MD Route 4 - \$2,500,000 for the design and construction of MD 4 and Suitland Parkway Interchange and for upgrades to Suitland Parkway. The Suitland Parkway Interchange project would expand a major corridor from Calvert County in Southern Maryland to Washington, D.C. and improve access to the military bases in Southern Maryland. Funds would be used to acquire right-of-way for the construction of a roundabout diamond interchange and associated ramps connecting MD 4 and Suitland Parkway. Congressman Hoyer has secured \$9.75 million for this important project since 2004.

Southern Maryland Commuter Bus Initiative - \$1,300,000 to construct Park-and-Ride lots at commuter bus service stations in Southern Maryland. Commuter bus service has grown rapidly in Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's Counties over the past sixteen years. This ridership is expected to increase dramatically as the region continues to experience economic expansion and BRAC-related growth. These important funds will be used to help accommodate the growing need for Commuter Bus service between Southern Maryland and our Nation's Capital. Since 2004 Congressman Hoyer has secured \$11.5 million for the Southern Maryland Commuter Bus Initiative.

Suitland Road Gateway - \$1,000,000 to redevelop the 1.4 mile stretch of roadway between Allentown Road and Suitland Parkway. Prince George's County will use these funds to cover the road right-of-way acquisition cost, enabling the County to commence work on the heart of the project: widening and resurfacing the road to increase capacity and implementing safety and aesthetic streetscape improvements.

MD 237 - Pegg Road to MD 235 - \$1,000,000 to upgrade and widen MD 237 - Pegg Road to MD 235, to a multi-lane highway near Patuxent River Naval Air Station in St. Mary's County. The current two-lane roadway is very narrow with periods of congestion. Chancellor's Run Road must be expanded to accommodate the local residential and commercial growth.

U.S. 301 - \$1,000,000 to help address the transportation needs along U.S. 301 in Prince George's and Charles Counties. This highway is a major commuter thoroughfare from Southern Maryland to Washington, DC. Due to the economic growth in this region, U.S. 301 is often very congested and is in desperate need of upgrades. These critical funds will be used to help ease the delays along this vital transportation corridor.

MD 246 - MD 235 to Saratoga Drive - \$500,000 for streetscape construction of MD 246 - Great Mills Road from MD 235 to Saratoga Drive. Great Mills Road serves as a main artery through the community of Lexington Park in Saint Mary's County. The project will resurface the roadway, provide continuous sidewalk, improve drainage problems, consolidate and/or relocate the utilities, add medians from Coral Drive to FDR Boulevard (about 1250 ft), and enhance the landscaping of the town center.

MD Route 5 Pedestrian Overpass and River Center at St. Mary's College - \$500,000 for two separate but related projects: (1) the final round of funding for the Route 5 pedestrian overpass to improve the safety of students crossing Route 5 – a major thoroughfare - from one side of campus to the other; and (2) the construction of a river boardwalk along the St. Mary's River and storm water runoff systems as part of the St. Mary's College River Center.

South Capitol Street Corridor: Design of Suitland Parkway/ MLK Ave. Interchange and Suitland Parkway/ I-295 Interchange - \$500,000 for improvements to the South Capitol Street Corridor that will streamline traffic flow on one of Southern Maryland's key gateways into the Nation's Capital. This funding will be used specifically to redesign traffic movement at the interchanges at Suitland Parkway and Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue and Suitland Parkway and I-295 to improve traffic flow in all directions. Redesigning these interchanges has become more urgent due to the increased traffic expected in the coming years from the U.S. Coast Guard's relocation to St. Elizabeth's, the District's new baseball stadium, and development along the Anacostia in Southeast, DC. Over the past six years, Congressman Hoyer has secured over \$13.75 million through the Appropriations process towards improving transportation along the South Capitol Street Corridor.

The following community development funding was included for projects in Maryland's 5th Congressional District:

Brick Chapel Reconstruction in Historic St. Mary's City - \$400,000 for reconstruction of the 1667 chapel in Historic St. Mary's City as a memorial to Maryland's pioneering experiment in religious freedom and the separation of church and state. This funding will be used to complete the final phase of the reconstruction.

Bel Alton Community Development Center - \$400,000 to aid in restoring the former Bel Alton

High School for use as a Community Development Center serving low-income populations in Charles County. When developed, the Center will house small businesses and community programs, including a day care center, Head Start Program, adult education, information technology training, youth mentoring, and a cafeteria. The project will give significant stimulus to an underserved target population in need of programs that promote jobs, self-help and self-sufficiency. The Community Development Center is expected to create 60 jobs, 51 of which will be for low-income individuals. These funds will be used to begin Phase II of reconstruction and renovation.

College Park Redevelopment Project - \$300,000 to foster economic development in College Park. The City of College Park has entered into a public-private partnership to construct a new parking garage with first floor retail, relocate and build a new city hall, and establish a mixed-use development.

Housing Partnership Network - \$300,000 for a statewide initiative to develop rental and homeownership opportunities for low and moderate-income families throughout Maryland.

The Transportation, Housing and Urban Development Appropriations Conference Report must now be voted on by the Senate before it is sent to the President's desk.