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NSSGA'S AGENDA CHALLENGES DEMOCRATIC MAJORITY

NSSGA's top legislative priorities, from increased funding for highways and airport improvements in appropriations, to filling the gap in the Highway Trust Fund's anticipated deficit, to setting the stage for a robust reauthorization of SAFETEA LU, which often finds sympathetic leadership and support from the Democratic majority, challenges that same supportive constituency on S-MINER legislation pending full House passage on largely a party-line vote in early January. NSSGA is working with impressive coalitions, which include allied business interests ranging from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce to the Associated General Contractors, the National Association of Homebuilders to ARTBA and Association of Equipment Manufacturers, to assure nonasbestiform rock fragments are differentiated from asbestos in the House companion bill to Senator Patty Murray's bill to ban asbestos, and to assure the S-MINER legislation is not enacted into law.

KICK OFF THE 2008 POLITICAL SEASON WITH NSSGA'S "AGGREGATES IN ACTION" FLY-IN

NSSGA's Government Affairs Division is holding an aggregates industry fly-in Jan. 31. This event is timed to coincide with the start of the new year as the second session of the 110th Congress gets under way. In the months ahead, the aggregates industry will face numerous

challenges from a variety of federal legislative proposals ranging from the regulation of our facilities and our products to the funding of transportation projects that are a prime customer for our industry. This is the time for the aggregates industry to come to Washington to educate members of Congress on the industry and the important role it plays in the way of life Americans enjoy.

The event will begin the evening of Jan. 30 with a reception at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History in Washington. The reception will be held in honor of the donors to an endowment fund established in support of the museum's Rocks Gallery as well as to recognize leaders of Congress vital to transportation issues in America. A breakfast briefing will be held on the morning of Jan. 31, and then participants will meet with their members of Congress or congressional staff to discuss key issues of importance to the aggregates industry, including the S-MINER Act, highway funding and the Clean Water Restoration Act.

BE SURE TO REGISTER NOW! We need to ensure members of Congress hear from us at the beginning of the new year about the issues facing the aggregates industry!

The fly-in will be based at the **Grand Hyatt**, located at 1000 H Street, NW in Washington. Reservations may be made by calling (202) 582-1234. Please be sure to tell them that you are part of the "National Stone Sand & Gravel Association - Government Affairs Fly-In" room block when making your reservations in order to receive the special discounted room rate of \$280 per night (including taxes). Make your reservations now!

PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN GOES INTO HIGH GEAR

As voting finally got underway in the presidential campaign, conventional wisdom and political punditry were turned upside down by the voters. Front-runners became underdogs and the only certainty in either nominating contest is the uncertainty of what will happen next.

After finishing third in the Iowa Caucus, Sen. Hillary Clinton (D-N.Y.) faced an onslaught of columns and articles proclaiming the end of the Clinton ear. Five days later, Mrs. Clinton's surprise victory in the New Hampshire Primary over Iowa winner Sen. Barack Obama (D-Ill.) put those stories to rest. While these first two contests have winnowed the number of Democratic candidates down to Clinton, Obama, former Sen. John Edwards (N.C.) and Rep. Dennis Kucinich (Ohio), little beyond that has been settled. Clinton and Obama now find themselves locked in a battle for the title of front-runner with Edwards as the wild card.

The Republican contest remains just as murky if not more so. Former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney had been expected for months to win both Iowa and New Hampshire, but instead placed second in both contests to former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee and Sen. John McCain (Ariz.) respectively. Although Romney currently leads in the delegate count, media coverage that places an emphasis upon coming in first has led him to bet the future of his campaign upon the upcoming Michigan Primary and Nevada Caucus. Meanwhile, Iowa third-place finisher former Sen. Fred Thompson (Tenn.) is making a similar stand in South Carolina. Poor showings in these states for Romney and/or Thompson could lead to their exit from the race. Waiting in the

wings is former NYC Mayor Rudy Giuliani who has decided to sit out the early contests and focus upon the Jan. 29 Florida Primary and the Feb. 5 Super Tuesday primaries.

For months, we have been told by the media that both parties will have settled on their nominees the day after Super Tuesday. Should the remaining candidates split victories on Feb. 5, however, we may find ourselves in a situation where one or both parties face brokered conventions. While it has been decades since that has occurred, it had been over a century since a presidential candidate lost the popular vote but won the Electoral College until it occurred again in the 2000 election.

DEATH AND RETIREMENTS INCREASE CONGRESSIONAL SPECIAL ELECTIONS

Changes continue to occur in both the House and Senate. So far, there have been six deaths and three resignations since the start of the 110th Congress a year ago. Most recently, two special elections were held on Dec. 11 to fill the vacancies created by the deaths of U.S. Reps. Jo Ann Davis (R-Va.) and Paul Gilmor (R-Ohio). In each instance, the Republican candidates won handily in these Republican districts. State Del. Rob Wittman was elected to fill Mrs. Davis's unexpired term in Virginia while State Rep. Bob Latta won Mr. Gilmor's seat in Ohio, a seat once held by Mr. Latta's father. Democrats made no effort in the Virginia race against Wittman, but did undertake a major push in Ohio against Latta. Wittman and Latta were both sworn in on Dec. 13.

On Dec. 15, U.S. Rep. Julia Carson (D-Ind.) passed away. A March 11 special election has been set to select her successor. Democrats and Republicans will hold their nominating contests the weekend of Jan. 12-13. Two Republicans, Tom Rose, a public policy adviser to former Indianapolis Mayor Stephen Goldsmith, and state Rep. Jon Elrod, are expected to compete for the nomination. On the Democratic side, Carson's grandson, City-County Councilman Andre Carson, will face off against Marion County Treasurer Michael Rodman and attorney Randle Pollard.

Former House Speaker Dennis Hastert (R-Ill.) resigned from Congress on Nov. 26, 2007. This was done so that the party primaries to nominate candidates for the special election would take place on Feb. 5, the same date as the Illinois presidential primary. The special election has been set for March 8. Had the special election date coincided with the presidential primary, what is a safe Republican district could have been competitive given the expected turnout for U.S. Sen. Barack Obama (D-Ill.)

In Mississippi, Gov. Haley Barbour (R) appointed U.S. Rep. Roger Wicker (R) to fill the Senate vacancy left open by the Dec. 19 resignation of U.S. Sen. Trent Lott (R). A special election will be held in the spring for Wicker's open congressional seat, which is a safe Republican district. A legal battle is unfolding, however, as to the special election date for when Wicker must defend his Senate seat with the possibilities either being March, April or November 2008.

On the retirement front, over two dozen members of Congress have indicated they will not stand for reelection in 2008 (although some are running for other offices.) Among the most recent is

U.S. Rep. Tom Lantos (D-Calif.), Chairman of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, who announced that he will not seek re-election to a fifteenth term this November due to a recent diagnosis of cancer of the esophagus. Lantos is a Holocaust survivor was a resistance fighter against the Nazis. The seat is solidly Democratic, and State Senator Jackie Speier (D) appears to be the initial frontrunner to replace Lantos.

On the opposite coast, U.S. Rep. John Peterson (R-Pa.) unexpectedly announced that he will not seek re-election to a seventh term this year on account of “a few chronic, non-threatening health issues.” The district is heavily Republican and not expected to change hands.

SENATE GRIDLOCK PLAGUES FEC

The Senate has refused to clear four new appointees to the Federal Election Commission, leaving the FEC with only two of its required six members. The FEC requires at least three members in order to function, thus meaning the panel that acts as a watchdog on political campaigns cannot function during the 2008 election-year until Senate Democrats refuse to vote on Hans von Spakovsky to hold a seat on the commission. Republicans want von Spakovsky approved as part of a slate of four FEC nominees or they will refuse to consider any of the nominees. Von Spakovsky was recess appointed by President Bush to the FEC, but his term expired at the end of 2007.

VIEW AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE REGARDING ROCKPAC

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