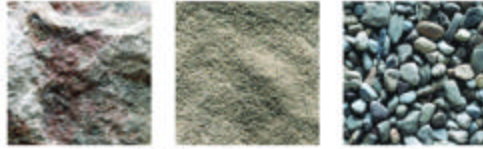


NATIONAL STONE, SAND & GRAVEL ASSOCIATION



Natural building blocks for quality of life

February 4, 2005

Dear Senator:

As Congress organizes itself for the 109th Congress, I urge you to contact Senate leaders and ask for quick consideration of the much-needed highway reauthorization bill. This bill will help improve economic development, maintain global competitiveness, and is fiscally responsible.

The transportation system is a national system that helps fuel economic growth, maintains America's competitiveness, and frees its citizens to move or travel with ease. The transportation system has been the backbone of our economy and keeps American products competitive around the world. Late last year the Texas Transportation Institute conducted its annual Urban Mobility Report and found that traffic congestion steals 42 hours per person annually, costs the economy \$63 billion yearly, and forces us to waste 5.6 billion gallons of fuel sitting in traffic. Since 1999, the number of bottlenecks that steal more than 700,000 hours of delay from drivers has increased from 167 to 233. And tragically, over 12,000 people lost their life over something we can fix – bad roads.

Both the House and Senate transportation bills (H.R. 3550, S. 1072) passed during the last Congress make needed policy changes to help address these problems. Recognizing the tight budget constraints on all federal programs this year (and the simple fact is the highway bill pays for itself through user fees deposited into the Highway Trust Fund), this is the one bill that will promote economic growth and competitiveness, promote safety and help improve the environment, all without adding to the deficit.

NSSGA's member companies produce 90 percent of the crushed stone, and 70 percent of the sand and gravel consumed annually in the United States. Aggregates are the largest component of both asphalt and concrete. Nearly three billion metric tons of aggregates valued at approximately \$14.4 billion are estimated by the U.S. Geological Survey to have been sold in the U.S. in 2003. Without these important commodities the nation's infrastructure could not be built or maintained, and the commerce and quality of life would be severely reduced. With over nearly 10,000 sites nationwide and a workforce of 115,000 men and women, most Congressional Districts are home to multiple operations.

For all these reasons, NSSGA strongly urges you to contact your party leadership and request quick action on a much needed highway bill. Please call if you have any questions or concerns.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Joy Wilson
President & CEO