

NATIONAL STONE, SAND & GRAVEL ASSOCIATION



Natural building blocks for quality of life

February 11, 2009

The Honorable David Obey
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Obey:

The National Stone, Sand & Gravel Association (NSSGA) supports the Conference Committee on the American Recovery & Reinvestment bill including surface transportation infrastructure investment at the highest funding level possible as you tackle the difficult reconciling of two different pieces of legislation. The states can put ready to go highway project dollars to work very quickly. This obligation and contracting of funds will jump start the economy through the creation of millions of well-paying jobs while building long-term assets for the country.

Transportation is the backbone of our nation's economy. Businesses and farms rely on smooth and efficient transportation systems to move goods throughout the nation and around the globe essential to the nation's continued competitiveness. All Americans depend on good roads and bridges – whether public or private transportation -- to commute to work and school, to carry out everyday commerce, and in emergencies to get to the nearest hospital. One third of America's major roads are in poor or mediocre condition and one fourth of America's bridges are structurally deficient or functionally obsolete. Unsafe roadway conditions are a significant contributing factor in approximately one-third of all traffic fatalities.

As the national voice of aggregate businesses, NSSGA represents a vital part of our nation's economy and infrastructure. Our member companies produce more than 90 percent of the crushed stone and 70 percent of the sand and gravel consumed annually in the United States. Aggregate businesses normally directly hire 118,000 Americans and indirectly support double that number of jobs across America. Every \$1 million in aggregates sales creates 19.5 jobs, and every dollar of industry output returns \$1.58 to the economy. Construction aggregates are used primarily in asphalt (94% of asphalt is aggregates) and concrete (80% of concrete is aggregate). Every mile of interstate contains 38,000 tons of aggregates. The recession has hit our industry hard in all market sectors – residential, commercial and public works construction as well as highways/bridges. Our businesses can rehire and provide materials with plenty of capacity just as soon as the stimulus funds are available.

Be assured, the aggregates industry stands ready to help at this critical time in our nation's history.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer Joy Wilson". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Jennifer Joy Wilson
President & CEO

cc: The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
The Honorable Steny Hoyer