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**Rokita, Donnelly Fight for Fair Treatment for Indiana in Highway Bill**  
*Send bipartisan letter to House members of conference committee to urge fairness in funding provisions*

(Washington, D.C.) – Congressman Todd Rokita (IN-04) and Congressman Joe Donnelly (IN-02) today sent a letter to House members of the House-Senate conference committee negotiating the surface transportation bill, commonly referred to as the “Highway Bill,” to urge fair treatment for Indiana under the final bill’s funding provisions. Every House member of the Indiana delegation – with the exception of Rep. Larry Bucshon, who is one of the conferees – signed on to the letter authored by Donnelly and Rokita.

*“There are key provisions in the Senate version of the bill that would result in unfair treatment for Indiana,” said Rokita. “Indiana has been a ‘donor’ state for decades, meaning that Hoosiers are effectively subsidizing infrastructure work in other states. Additionally, the Senate version of the bill would punish states like Indiana that have innovated and saved money through public-private partnerships. That’s fundamentally unfair, and that’s why we’re urging the conference committee to ensure that Indiana is treated equitably in the final bill.”*

“Indiana should not face a disadvantage relative to other states in receiving transportation resources,” said Donnelly. “These resources can be used to put more people back to work, for example, by repairing roads and bridges. We need to ensure that Indiana maintains our current level of funding and doesn’t face future job losses at the expense of other states.”

In their letter, Rokita and Donnelly highlighted three main issues:

1. Under an amendment offered by Senator Bingaman in the Senate-passed transportation bill, MAP-21, states with public-private partnerships would receive reduced levels of highway formula funding. This provision, which would only apply to three states including Indiana, would decrease Indiana’s transportation funding by \$42 million per year or -4.5%. This money would be redistributed to give funding increases to 47 other states and Washington, D.C. Rokita and Donnelly oppose this provision.
2. The Senate-passed transportation bill also eliminates the existing Equity Bonus Program, which requires that all states receive back no less than 92% of their contributions to the Highway Trust Fund. This change would provide no

protection to donor states like Indiana. Rokita and Donnelly oppose eliminating the Equity Bonus program.

3. The conference committee is currently deciding what the overall funding level for federal highway programs should be. Rokita and Donnelly demand that Indiana be treated fairly relative to other states. If overall funding remains at the current level, Indiana's funding should be maintained at the current level, and if overall funding is cut, Indiana's cut in funds should be no more than a proportional cut.

The full text of Rokita and Donnelly's letter is below. A PDF is also attached.

May 7, 2012

Dear House Conferees:

As the Crossroads of America, Indiana is a national leader in the transportation sector. Amidst tightening budgets, our state has utilized innovative solutions to control costs. For example, the Hoosier State has partnered with the private sector, where appropriate, to maintain and modernize transportation infrastructure.

These challenging economic times are forcing all levels of government – federal, state, and local – to make difficult choices. Transportation is no exception. As members of the Indiana delegation, we are writing to express our concern with the Senate-passed transportation bill, MAP-21, and the detrimental impact it would have on our state.

As you know, the Senate-passed transportation bill contained a provision that was added by amendment shortly before final passage that puts funding of these public-private partnerships in jeopardy. Under an amendment offered by Senator Bingaman, states with public-private partnerships would receive reduced levels of highway formula funding.

According to the Federal Highway Administration, this provision would only apply to three states: Colorado, Illinois, and Indiana. The hit to Indiana – \$42 million per year, or -4.5% – is disproportionately large compared to Colorado and Illinois. The Senate bill would take this money, a total of \$43.5 million per year, and redistribute it to 47 other states, and DC, by giving them .12% funding increases.

We strongly encourage the Conference Committee to eliminate this provision in their final transportation proposal. Not only would this hurt Indiana, it would limit the ability of all states to implement innovative methods for containing costs.

Additionally, we encourage the Conference Committee to work toward funding levels that treat all states fairly. For more than three decades, Indiana has been a donor state, contributing more to the Highway Trust Fund than what is paid back. This means that Indiana motorists have been subsidizing highway construction and maintenance in other states while infrastructure needs at home remain unmet. Current law includes an Equity Bonus Program, which requires that all states receive back no less than 92 percent of their share of contributions to the Highway Trust

Fund. Unfortunately, the Senate-passed transportation bill eliminates the Equity Bonus Program, providing no protection for donor states like Indiana.

Clearly, one of the difficult choices facing the Conference Committee is the overall funding level for federal highway programs. Once that decision is made, Indiana should be treated fairly relative to other states. If overall funding remains at current levels – as both House and Senate leaders have proposed – then Indiana's highway funding should be held harmless at current funding levels. Likewise, if funding is cut, Indiana should take no more than a proportional cut. We object to any funding distribution methodology that asks our constituents to endure cuts while other states enjoy funding increases.

Thank you for your attention to these issues. We look forward to working with you in the coming weeks.

Sincerely,

Todd Rokita  
Member of Congress

Joe Donnelly  
Member of Congress