

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

April 16, 2009

The Honorable Ray LaHood
Secretary of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood:

On Monday, President Obama announced that more than 2,000 transportation projects in states like Ohio have been funded with federal dollars provided by the *Economic Recovery and Reinvestment Act*. Of serious concern, however, is an *Associated Press* report on the state of Ohio's plan to divert \$57 million in stimulus dollars to transportation studies instead of creating much-needed jobs right now through the "shovel-ready" infrastructure projects clearly intended by the President.

You were questioned on this matter Monday during an interview on FOX News and responded, "If there is an issue with some program in Ohio, I guarantee I will be on the telephone this afternoon making sure that money is being spent correctly." While *Economic Recovery and Reinvestment Act* does give governors flexibility on how they spend their state's federal dollars, it appears that Ohio officials are violating the spirit of the law by diverting money intended for "shovel-ready" projects into a planning slush-fund for proposals that have no funding stream.

According to the *Associated Press*, Ohio "transportation officials passed over some ready-to-go construction projects and steered about 7 percent of their \$774 million share for planning and preliminary studies."

Mr. Secretary, the American people have a right to know that their hard-earned tax dollars are being spent wisely. Like you, we want to see our aging transportation infrastructure repaired and, where necessary, replaced. We want to see jobs created now and we want to see our economy get back on the path to prosperity. The process for allocating stimulus dollars should be open and transparent, and every taxpayer should be able to immediately see where money is being spent and why, which is why we ask you to immediately review Ohio's list as well as ready-to-go projects that were denied funding in order to study other proposals. We thank you in advance for your response to our concerns.

Sincerely,

John Barber

Jim Jordan

Pat Tibbs

Michael Rosen

Steve Curtiss

Rob E. Jones

John Swartz