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### **Federal transportation funding restored for 2020**

Barre, Vt. – A critical vote in the nation’s capital has restored funding for Vermont’s transportation infrastructure.

Senator Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.), vice chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, said, “Repealing this rescission is just common sense. Vermont, like every state, is in dire need of real infrastructure investments. Cutting states’ abilities to respond to these infrastructure needs by imposing this rescission would be dangerous. I’m pleased that the continuing resolution I helped negotiate included its repeal.”

The Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act is a five-year, \$305 billion federal bill that provides funding to state transportation agencies from 2015 to 2020. Vermont receives an average of approximately \$220 million annually under this bill. This funding represents the primary way in which Vermont funds state transportation projects, and it generally accounts for half the state’s total transportation budget.

A \$7.5 billion rescission was included in the final year of the bill that would have resulted in Vermont losing \$55.5 million in federal funds. The consequences of this rescission would have been severe, with less money to fund transportation projects and a delay in funding planned projects.

“Our highway system is critical to a strong economy and this funding will help us continue to maintain the roads that Vermonters count on daily, and visitors use to travel and enjoy our beautiful state,” said Governor Phil Scott. “I appreciate our congressional delegation’s support of this important funding.”

Vermont’s Secretary of Transportation also expressed gratitude at the news. “We are grateful for Vermont’s Congressional Delegation working to negotiate a repeal of the rescission,” said Transportation Secretary Joe Flynn. “This funding ensures that we can continue with all of our planned construction projects in 2020 to maintain Vermont’s state and interstate highways for the traveling public.”

The state’s legislative transportation committee chairs also noted the critical need for continued federal funding to support Vermont’s transportation infrastructure.

“Transportation investments sustain Vermont’s economy,” said Sen. Dick Mazza (D-Grand Isle), Chair of the Senate Committee on Transportation. “Given the backlog of paving and bridge projects, we are very grateful Congress repealed such a significant cut to highway programs.”

Rep. Curt McCormack (D-Chittenden), Chair of the House Committee on Transportation, said, "Highway funding supports a wide range of projects, including public transit, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and park and rides. Restoring this funding ensures these critical projects will move forward as planned."

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