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Committees:
Finance
Natural Resources
Roads & Transportation

May 12, 2009

The Honorable Nick J. Rahall, II
Chairman, Committee on Natural Resources
2307 Rayburn HOB
Washington, D.C., 20515

Dear Congressman Rahall:

I am writing to express my strong support for the National Gateway Initiative, and to urge you to join in a multi-state effort to secure federal funding for the project in next year's surface transportation authorizing legislation. The National Gateway is a public-private partnership that would create a highly efficient freight transportation link between Mid-Atlantic ports and the Midwest by improving the flow of rail traffic between these two regions. This project is being developed by a coalition of states, local governments, businesses and economic development organizations.

The National Gateway initiative consists of over \$700 million in intermodal terminal and rail infrastructure projects that would be divided between the public and private sectors. This investment delivers \$6.1 billion worth of public benefits nationally within ten years. The private sector would fund 50% of the project and a multi-state effort is being undertaken to secure \$194 million in federal transportation funds in the upcoming reauthorization bill. State governments along the route would provide the remaining \$193 million in matching funds based on their share of the clearance work in their respective states.

The National Gateway would provide environmental, economic development and congestion relief benefits across a six-state area, including substantial benefits that would accrue specifically to West Virginia. While this may not have appear to have a direct impact on our districts, the National Gateway delivers over \$150 million of public benefits to West Virginia by:

- Reducing CO2 emissions by over 200,000 tons
- Enhancing rail transportation infrastructure, including a new intermodal terminal in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania to serve the northern panhandle and the north-central WV region
- Reducing the State's highway congestion by shifting freight from over 2 million trucks from the highway to the railway, saving over \$33 million in highway maintenance costs
- Saving over \$30 million in logistics costs for the State

In this time of economic uncertainty, we must take full advantage of these public-private investments in infrastructure to stimulate our economy and deliver high-paying jobs. Because the National Gateway will help connect West Virginia and the Appalachian Region to the global economy, I respectfully request your assistance in securing the federal transportation funds in the upcoming surface transportation authorization bill.

Thank you for your consideration of this important and beneficial project. I look forward to working with you to ensure the development of West Virginia's transportation infrastructure.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kevin J. Craig".

Kevin J. Craig
Member