

On behalf of the President, and the entire Department of Transportation (DOT) team, I am pleased to present the President's fiscal year 2005 budget plan for America's transportation programs. We all benefit from safe, dependable, and efficient transportation. Whether we are moving shipments of goods across the country, getting our children to school, or making the daily commute to the workplace and back home again, we all rely on America's transportation systems to get us where we need to go. In addition, there is another important benefit to investing Federal dollars in surface transportation - transportation dollars mean jobs and economic benefits for the Nation.



President Bush understands transportation's key role. For 2005, the President is proposing \$58.7 billion in budgetary resources for transportation programs. This major investment will fund programs that move the American economy. We are investing in highways and roadways, airports and airways, railroads, subways, and bus systems in States and communities across the Nation. At the same time, \$14 billion will be spent on transportation safety projects - my top priority.

A top priority of the Administration's 2005 plan is our commitment to pass the "Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act," or "SAFETEA." Last May, the President proposed the largest investment in history for surface transportation programs. The 2005 budget includes \$256 billion in Federal resources over the six-year life of the bill, an overall funding increase of \$8.6 billion over our original request for SAFETEA. Consistent with our priority on safety initiatives, the 2005 budget includes annual increases for both the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration through 2009 to ensure that improvements in safety continue.

The President's 2005 plan continues the Administration's commitment to inter-city passenger rail and our reform proposals outlined in the Passenger Rail Investment Reform Act pending before Congress. The 2005 budget requests \$900 million for Amtrak, with the possibility for an increase to \$1.4 billion in 2006 and beyond - if the Administration's reforms are enacted.

We are investing to avoid gridlock in the skies and improve air safety, while designing the Next Generation Air Transportation System to secure America's place as a global leader in aviation's second century. For 2005, the President is requesting \$14 billion to support the work of the Federal Aviation Administration, including \$3.5 billion in grants for airport capacity, safety, and environmental improvements. This is consistent with the funding provided in 2004.

At DOT, we are constantly considering new and improved ways of making sure transportation supports the Nation's growing economy. For example, work is currently underway on a freight action plan that will improve intermodal connections and consider alternative ways of moving commercial freight throughout America. By using our ports and waterways more efficiently, we can tackle highway congestion while ensuring that businesses have reliable and affordable options for moving commercial goods. Our Maritime Administration and Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation are key partners in this endeavor.

As we begin this new budget cycle, we do so committed to building a strong economy through a strong transportation system. We look forward to continuing to work with our public- and private-sector partners and with the Congress to provide the quality transportation system so essential to the prosperity and quality of life that Americans enjoy. Thank you.

Norman Y. Mineta
Secretary