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House of Representatives
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REPRESENTATIVE OF THE 182ND DISTRICT

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January 16, 2009

Alan D. Biehler
Secretary of Transportation
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Commonwealth Keystone Building
400 North Street, 8th Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Secretary Biehler,

I have been following the news about the federal stimulus package that Congress is preparing and that President-Elect Obama wants to sign in early February. I think that the stimulus package is a critical opportunity to stimulate the Commonwealth's economy and benefit the environment. I understand that the Commonwealth's Department of Transportation is preparing a list of Priority Projects for the federal stimulus infrastructure package for roads and highways.

As PennDOT develops this list, I think it is very important to focus on the following:

1. Fix and Repair what is broken: Repair and restore roads and bridges before proposing any expansion.
2. Prioritize the Next Generation of Transit: Investing in hybrid buses, light rail, and new train lines -- as well as fixing our existing roads and bridges -- all create more jobs per dollar spent than just building new roads. And they give us something we desperately need: an affordable and sustainable ride to work.
3. Prioritize Bicycle/Pedestrian Projects: Pennsylvania needs to install more bicycle facilities and repair sidewalks to make it safer for people to bike and walk their short trips. PennDOT should play a lead role in facilitating the installation of more bicycle facilities (lanes), trails, sidewalks and crossings.

I would greatly appreciate it if you could share your list of Priority Projects with me as soon as it is developed. I would like to know in more detail how the Commonwealth is proposing to spend the stimulus money on highway, road, bicycle and pedestrian projects.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Babette Josephs". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Babette Josephs

BJ:jb