



For Immediate Release
FEBRUARY 19, 2007

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Governor's Address Ignores Critical Issue

Transportation infrastructure must be a priority

Raleigh, N.C. – Only a few months after the American Society of Civil Engineers gave North Carolina a “D” grade for its transportation system, Governor Easley failed to mention in his State of the State Address transportation – a subject that touches nearly every individual and business in our state. According to transportation advocacy group *NC Go!*, our state’s transportation infrastructure is facing a crisis after years of underinvestment and a growing shortfall in funding.

“We appreciate the Governor’s leadership on many issues, but we had hoped that he would recognize the growing challenge facing our state’s transportation system,” said William “Beau” Mills, chair for *NC Go!*. “We remain hopeful that his Administration will be a strong partner in efforts to make the needed investments in our increasingly overburdened roads. Without new investments in transportation, we put our state’s economy and high quality of life at risk.”

“Governor Easley’s own Department of Transportation has projected that North Carolina faces a \$65 billion shortfall between projected needs and available funding during the next 25 years,” added Mills. “Our highways, transit systems and all forms of multimodal transportation are vital parts in the engine that drives commerce and progress. They have been shortchanged too long.”

Mills indicated that the members of NC Go believe there are growing needs for the state and too little investment in infrastructure. “I think everyone in North Carolina understands that a deteriorating and congested transportation system negatively impacts the economy and every citizen’s quality of life. The time to act is now.”

“It’s time for the Governor to use his leadership skills to help find solutions and consensus,” said Mills. “It is *obvious* something is broken in how our state generates revenue for transportation. We are ready to work with Governor Easley and the legislature to meet needs before we fall too far behind.”

About NC GO!

NC Go! is the state’s only broad-based coalition focused on strengthening North Carolina’s transportation infrastructure. The group represents more than 130 businesses and organizations, including chambers of commerce and transit authorities. According to *NC Go!*, without adequate investment in highways, bridges, transit and other multi-modal forms of transportation, safety and efficiency decrease with overuse, which results in deterioration and congestion.

NC Go! urges elected officials to:

- Authorize a \$1 billion bond to jump-start transportation projects.
- Preserve existing funding for transportation needs and end diversion from the Highway Trust Fund.
- Permit local option solutions to enable local governments to meet special needs.
- Increase the Highway Use Fee to 5 percent, similar to neighboring states.
- Seek fundamental financing reform for transportation funding.

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