

ATTACHMENT - 1

NEWS FROM CONGRESSMAN SAM FARR**17th Congressional District of California**

March 2, 2005

CONTACT: Jessica Schafer, 202-225-2861, jessica.schafer@mail.house.gov<http://farr.house.gov/>

HIGHWAY BILL INCLUDES \$18 million FOR CENTRAL COAST

Washington, D.C. - Today the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee took an important step in getting a surface transportation bill through Congress this session. The Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (TEA-LU), which is unfinished business from the 108th Congress, would provide communities across the country with needed funds to address their transportation needs through 2009.

Congressman Sam Farr (CA-17) secured \$18 million specifically for Central Coast projects within TEA-LU. The bill was "marked up," or debated and voted on, by the full Transportation and Infrastructure Committee this morning and will now go to the full House for a vote next week.

"TEA-LU is much needed legislation that will help modernize our aging transportation infrastructure. I am optimistic that Congress will be able to pass this critical bill this session," said Farr. "Central Coast commuters, agricultural businesses, and visitors will benefit directly from funds to ease congestion and improve safety on our local roadways. TEA-LU will also boost our local tourism industry by helping to establish a continuous bike and pedestrian trail around the Monterey Bay where visitors and residents can experience nature's best meeting of land and sea."

Congressman Farr included the following projects for the Central Coast in TEA-LU:**Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail: \$6 million**

This funding will be used for the completion of the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail. When completely linked, the 50-mile long route will enable visitors to explore and enjoy the coastline of Santa Cruz and Monterey Counties, while respecting residential, agricultural, and environmentally sensitive surroundings along the way.

Airport Blvd. Interchange, Salinas: \$3.67 million

The Airport Blvd. interchange links U.S. 101 to the truck shipping terminals that the Salinas Valley agriculture industry depends on to export much of their produce to North America and the world. This funding will go to updating the interchange's 40 year old design so that it can efficiently handle the over 2,600 trucks that use the interchange *daily* during the spring to fall agricultural season.

Highway 1 Improvements, Santa Cruz County: \$3.67 million

Highway 1 is the sole corridor linking the cities of Watsonville, Aptos and Santa Cruz in Santa Cruz County. Although the area's population has increased by more than 100 percent in the past 30 years, no additional capacity has been added to this critical road. This funding will be used to add improvements between Soquel and Morrissey Blvd. including merge lanes and the La Fonda overpass.

Improvements to Highway 25, San Benito County: \$3.66 million

In the past three years there have been 20 tragic fatalities along the 12.5 mile segment of Highway 25 closest to Hollister. This funding will go toward much needed safety improvements for this roadway.

S-3

Bus equipment for Monterey-Salinas Transit: \$1 million

Funding to help Monterey-Salinas Transit purchase new buses so they can maintain existing transit services to the community, serve the redeveloped Fort Ord area, and meet mandated improvements in engine emissions.

###

.....

Jessica Schafer
Press Secretary
Rep. Sam Farr (CA-17)
202.225.2861

S-4