



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Palin Certifies Transportation Projects for Economic Stimulus Funds

March 12, 2009, Juneau, Alaska – Governor Sarah Palin today signed and submitted the certification required under Section 1201 of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) to the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), Ray LaHood. The ARRA requires states to maintain the same level of state funding for transportation projects that was planned prior to the passage of ARRA.

Governor Palin submitted a FY2009 federal economic stimulus supplemental bill to legislators on February 24 that requests \$461.1 million in authorization for aviation, transit, highway, and bridge projects that will provide jobs and infrastructure improvements in Alaska. The first transportation project - a pier and causeway project in Gustavus using roughly \$7 million in economic stimulus funds to match approximately \$14 million in federal and state funds - has already gone to bid.

"The state Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOT&PF) has worked closely with the federal transportation agencies to understand the requirements of the stimulus package and be able to meet the accelerated timelines for use of the funds," Governor Palin said. "This certification assures the secretary of transportation that Alaska will not supplant state-funded projects with federal economic stimulus funds. Stimulus dollars will generate new private sector jobs in Alaska to work on infrastructure projects."

The governor also signed a delegation of authority required under Section 1511 of the ARRA to Commissioner Von Scheben of the Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities. The delegation ensures that the full review and vetting required by law through the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program is conducted for the infrastructure projects funded by the ARRA and that the investments are appropriate uses of taxpayer dollars.

"The commissioner and his staff have worked diligently through the federal process to meet these requirements and will now be working closely with the legislature to seek funding authorization through the budget process," Governor Palin said.

The governor also signed an agreement with the U.S. Department of Labor that will provide Alaska residents receiving unemployment insurance benefits with a temporary \$25 hike in their weekly benefit as part of the federal economic stimulus package. The \$25 additional benefit continues through the end of 2009 with a phase out for existing claims through July 3, 2010.

The federal website www.recovery.gov contains key information related to the ARRA and provides links to other government websites and related information.

Additional information on the federal economic stimulus package is also available on the Alaska Office of Management & Budget website at <http://gov.state.ak.us/>

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