

TGCC

The North/South Appalachian Highway Project

ON THE WEB!

TGCC staff, with the assistance of Garrett County Economic Development, have created a website dedicated to the North/South Appalachian Highway Project. Please visit:

www.roadapp.org

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The Federal Transportation Bill

The US Senate passed its version of a federal transportation bill, Senate Bill 1813, on March 24th.

The US House of Representatives did not pass a transportation bill, however, a “continuing resolution” authorizing the continued federal funding of transportation until September 30th was passed and it included approval of the Keystone pipeline project in the Mid-West. The US Senate has not passed the continuing resolution. The current federal transportation bill expires at midnight on June 30th.

Thus, a conference committee composed of 47 members of Congress has been appointed to resolve this stand off and either agree on a new federal transportation bill or pass another continuing resolution.

The Senate bill includes legislation reversing the prohibition of the 13 Appalachian States on using their respective “toll credits” for their state match for Appalachian Development Highway System (ADHS) projects.

It also aids the 13 Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) states by allowing them to use 95% in federal funds and only 5% in state matching funds to complete the remaining portions of the Appalachian Development Highway System (ADHS) in those 13 states. Non-ADHS projects will still be required to use a 20% state match.

While the Senate bill also includes a provision requiring the 13 ARC states to develop a plan within one year to complete their respective ADHS it does not require them to fund or complete those corridors which were authorized in 1965.

And lastly, in the Senate bill no longer preserves separate, exclusive funding to the 13 ARC states for their respective ADHS projects but merges that funding into a “Transportation Mobility Program” each state can use for ALL its transportation projects.

This separate funding for the ADHS has been in legislation since 1965 and has enabled the 13 ARC states to complete approximately 88% of the total Appalachian Development Highway System of which US 219 in Somerset County, PA, Interstate 68 in Maryland and Corridor H in West Virginia are a portion of the entire 3,090 mile system.

As you can see, there are good portions and items of serious concern in the Senate transportation bill.

Only the conference committee can address those concerns.

A Delegation Travels to Harrisburg, PA

On April 11, 2012, a delegation of the North/South Appalachian Highway Coalition traveled to Harrisburg, PA to meet with representatives of Governor Corbett and his PennDOT Secretary Barry Schoch, along with regional PA Senate legislative staff. The travel team was represented by both PA and MD constituents.

The group met with:

Kathleen Duffy Bruder, *Deputy Chief of Staff*

James D. Ritzman, *PennDOT Deputy Secretary for Planning*

Richard Hudic, *Executive Deputy Secretary, PA Department of Community & Economic Development*

Cheryl L. Hicks, *Executive Director, Senate Transportation Committee—Senator John N. Wozniak, Chairman*

William S. Dando, *Chief of Staff—Senator Richard A. Kasunic*

Representing the N/S Appalachian Highway Coalition:

Mark Wissinger, *Cambria County Commissioner*

John Vatauvuk, *Somerset County Commissioner*

Jim Raley, *Garrett County Commissioner*

Henry Cook, *President/CEO—Somerset Trust Company*

Glenn Miller, *Board Member—Continental One*

Ed Silveti, *Executive Director—Southern Alleghenies Planning & Development Commission*

Linda Thomson, *President—Johnstown Area Region Industries*

Brenda Smith, *Executive Director—The Greater Cumberland Committee*

David Moe, *Coordinator—N/S Appalachian Highway Coalition*

The Coalition presented information from the updated four state feasibility study that was initially conducted in a cooperative effort by the departments of transportation from Pennsylvania, Maryland, West Virginia and Virginia. The study concluded that if a North/South, four-lane, divided highway were constructed from Somerset, PA to Appalachian Corridor H in West Virginia, it would create 10,000 permanent jobs and 20,000 construction and construction related jobs in its four state region.

Additionally, the Coalition represented data showing PennDOT's spending since the "toll credits" prohibition use on other Pennsylvania Appalachian Development Highway System (ADHS) projects, pointing out that lack of cash is not preventing PennDOT from contributing the remaining 10% needed to begin the construction of the 219 project from Somerset to Meyersdale.

The delegation left the meeting satisfied it had provided Governor Corbett's representatives all the relevant information necessary for him to make a funding decision once PennDOT has received all the necessary pre-construction permits. PennDOT is expected to have permits in approximately six months.

Pictured from Left to Right: **Glenn Miller** (*Continental 1 Board*), **Ed Silveti** (*Southern Alleghenies Planning & Development Commission*), **Linda Thomson** (*JARI*), **G. Henry Cook** (*Somerset Trust Company*), **David Moe** (*N/S Appalachian Highway Coalition*), **Commissioner John Vatauvuk** (*Somerset County, PA*), **Commissioner Jim Raley** (*Garrett County, MD*), **Commissioner Mark Wissinger** (*Cambria County, PA*), **Brenda Smith** (*TGCC*)



The Virginia Inland Port

Work group member Mallie Combs of the West Virginia Hardy County Development Authority and Dave Moe, North/South Appalachian Highway Coalition Project Coordinator, have held two meetings with the officials of the Virginia Inland Port (VIP) to discuss issues of mutual concern. These discussions could lead to the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and the West Virginia Department of Transportation (WVDOT) beginning the evaluation process of completing Appalachian Development Highway System (ADHS) Corridor H to the intersection of Interstates 81 & 66.

As a result of those meetings:

- VIP will host a Corridor H/ North-South Appalachian Highway legislative Informational meeting with congressional representatives from VA, WV, MD and PA. Possible meeting dates are August 13th or 20th at the VIP.
- Virginia Port Authority (VPA) will provide customer information within the Corridor H market area to include forecasting data on the economic impact for the Port of VA if the highway should be completed into VA.
- VPA economic development representatives will meet with economic development entities in our region to discuss opportunities for new business development.

In TEA-21, former PA Congressman Bud Shuster, Sr, drafted legislation providing for corridor studies and projects designed to provide regional economic development. This legislation led to the four state cooperative study jointly conducted by the State DOTs of PA, MD, WV and VA that forecasted an increase of 10,000 permanent jobs and 20,000 construction and construction related jobs in our region if the North/South Appalachian Corridor of US 219 from Somerset and US 220 to Corridor H were built.

As details are finalized, they will be provided by staff of The Greater Cumberland Committee.

Pictured from Left to Right:

J. Stanley Crockett
VIP Manager

David Moe
*N/S Appalachian Highway
Coalition Coordinator*

Mallie Combs
*Hardy County Development
Authority*

Jerry A. Bridges
*VA Port Authority Executive
Director*



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