

JOE DONNELLY  
2ND DISTRICT, INDIANA  
  
COMMITTEES:  
FINANCIAL SERVICES  
VETERANS' AFFAIRS

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

1530 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515  
(202) 225-3915  
FAX: (202) 225-6798  
  
DISTRICT OFFICES:  
207 WEST COLFAX  
SOUTH BEND, IN 46601  
(574) 288-2780  
FAX: (574) 288-2826  
  
LAPORTE COUNTY COMPLEX  
813 SOUTH MICHIGAN, SUITE 100  
LAPORTE, IN 46350  
(219) 326-6808 EXT. 414  
FAX: (574) 289-2825  
  
300 EAST BROADWAY, SUITE #102  
LOGANSPORT, IN 46947  
(574) 753-2871  
FAX: (574) 753-7615

May 12, 2009

Secretary Ray LaHood  
Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE  
Washington D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood,

In today's economic climate, *The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act* is providing important investments in America's infrastructure and in our local economy. Over the last few months, I have worked closely with communities in my district to identify their transportation priorities and to assist local leaders in securing this critical funding to help stimulate our local economy and put Hoosiers back to work.

As you may recall from your visit to Elkhart, Indiana with President Obama on February 9, 2009, two important local transportation priorities for our region are the Prairie Street Overpass and the Hively Avenue Grade Separation. In fact, President Obama recognized the importance of transportation projects to the City of Elkhart in his remarks, noting that the Prairie Street Overpass would provide an important investment in the City while also creating much-needed jobs. Furthermore, these investments will help reduce the impact of train traffic on local economic activity, provide unobstructed emergency vehicle response routes, and mitigate air pollution caused by emissions from vehicles idling at crossings.

Unfortunately, the City of Elkhart is at the center of the current economic crisis. Heavily dependent on the manufacturing of Recreational Vehicles (RVs) and manufactured homes, Elkhart's economy has been hit hard by the mortgage crisis, credit crunch, and high gas prices. As a result, the local economy has stalled and unemployment has soared to nearly 20 percent—one of the largest annual job loss increases in the country. In an effort to spark the economy and invest in the local community, I have encouraged the City of Elkhart to actively pursue the \$70 million necessary to complete the above mentioned transportation projects through *The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act*.

It is my understanding that Title XII provides you with \$1.5 billion in discretionary funds to be awarded to State and local governments for projects that will have a significant impact on the region or a metropolitan area. I believe these projects align themselves perfectly with the goals and objectives of *The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act*, and I respectfully request that you give all due consideration to the City's future request.

Sincerely,  
  
Joe Donnelly  
Member of Congress