

April 18, 2012

WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Congressman Jason Altmire (PA-04), a member of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, today voted in favor of a bill to extend the country's surface transportation programs through September 30, 2012. Included in the extension is language to transfer the authority to approve the Keystone XL pipeline project from the Department of State to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC).

"Inaction by Congress to produce a long-term reauthorization of our surface transportation programs is not an option," said Congressman Altmire. "Western Pennsylvania's economy depends on solid infrastructure, yet our roads and bridges are crumbling. An extension of these programs immediately creates jobs and helps strengthen our infrastructure to meet our growing economic needs, but a long-term reauthorization is our goal. I will continue to work with my colleagues on the Transportation Committee to develop a bipartisan, long-term reauthorization."

Under the provisions of the extension, FERC would be required to issue a permit for the Keystone XL pipeline within 30 days of receiving an application. If no action is taken, the application would be deemed approved after the 30 day period.

"The Keystone pipeline will create thousands of jobs, and is one of the most important economic investments we can make," Altmire continued. "Western Pennsylvania is doing its part to reduce our dependence on foreign energy sources, but we cannot do it alone. The construction of the Keystone pipeline will lower the cost of fuel for millions of American families. This is a vital project and we must work to get construction underway."

The *Surface Transportation Extension Act of 2012, Part II*, passed the House of Representatives by a vote of 293 to 127.