

Washington, D.C. — Today Congressman Earl Blumenauer (D-Ore.) together with his Democratic colleagues from the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee introduced a \$50 billion transportation investment package designed to stimulate the economy and create jobs. The latest unemployment figures show Oregon once again with the highest unemployment in the nation, at 8.2 %.

“We need to put Americans, especially those in hard hit Oregon, back to work and promote strong economic and healthy environmental investments,” Blumenauer said. “This legislation will put people to work today fixing crumbling bridges, improving transit, rail and roads, and strengthening our economy.”

The legislation would allocate \$230 million for Oregon, including \$58 million for highway improvements, \$32 million for transit projects, \$19 million for aviation and \$120 million for water infrastructure and safe drinking water projects. These investments will create 10,968 jobs in Oregon and generate \$1.43 billion in economic activity.

Since January 2001, the national unemployment rate has increased from 4.2 percent to 6.1 percent. The number of unemployed Americans during this time has doubled from 5.95 million people to 9 million. Under the proposal unveiled today, 2.3 million jobs would be created nationwide. In addition, the infrastructure investment will increase business productivity by reducing the costs of producing goods in virtually all industrial sectors of the economy. Funding for the package would come from drawing down the multi-billion surplus in the transportation trust funds as well as general fund appropriations.

“This package represents what the federal government should be doing to put America back to work, not approving tax breaks for those who need help the least,” Blumenauer argued. “For every \$1 million in tax cuts, only 2 jobs are created. For every \$1 million spent on transportation, 47 family wage jobs are created. And, a more efficient transportation system means a more efficient and productive economy. At a time when our economy is in a free fall and Oregon is on life support, this transportation funding proposal would be a major boost.”