



Agenda
Red Rock Corridor Commission
Thursday June 30, 2011
4:00 p.m.

Cottage Grove City Hall, Council Chambers
7516 80th Street South
Cottage Grove, MN

	<u>Action Requested</u>
1. Consent Items*	Approval
a. Minutes of the May 26, 2011 Meeting	
b. Checks and Claims	
2. Station Area Panning Study Draft Report Release* - WCRRA	Approval
3. Hwy 61 Bridge Update / Hastings Transit Service* – Mn/DOT	Information
4. Legislative Update* – WCRRA	Information
a. State	
b. Federal	
5. Other	Information
a. Federal Livability Grant Announcement* - WCRRA	
b. Next Meeting – Thursday, August 25, 2011	

* *Enclosures*



DATE: June 24, 2011
TO: Red Rock Corridor Commission
FROM: Staff
RE: Checks and Claims

Attached is the

Hay Dobbs Invoice #21 - SAP Study (May, 2011)	\$ 25,057.45
TOTAL	\$ 25,057.45

Detailed invoices can be made available upon request.

Action Requested: Approval

INVOICE NO. 09017.000-21

Original To: Project Manager: Andy Gitzlaff
 Washington County Regional Railroad Authority
 Washington County Public Works Department
 11660 Myeron Rd North,
 Stillwater, MN 55082

Estimated Completion: 76.2 %
 (from Column 6 Progress Report)

Copy: Minnesota Department of Transportation
 Consultant Services Section, Mail Stop 680
 395 John Ireland Boulevard,
 St. Paul, Minnesota 55155

Period Ending: 05/31/11
 Invoice Date: 06/02/11

Re: Mn/DOT Contract No. 85937 Contract Expiration Date: July 20, 2011
 SP Number: NA TH Number: NA
 Project Description: Southeast Station Area Master Planning and Environmental Analysis

	Total Contract Amount	Total Billing to Date	Amount Previously Billed	Billed This Invoice
1. Direct Labor Costs: (See Exhibit _ for Breakdown)	\$466,751.00	\$451,443.12	\$433,783.64	\$17,659.48
2. Direct Expense Costs: (See Exhibit _ for Breakdown)	\$60,533.00	\$45,290.40	\$45,035.07	\$255.33
3. Subcontractor Costs:	\$565,170.00	\$354,971.56	\$347,828.92	\$7,142.64
4. Miscellaneous Professional Services	\$57,500.00	\$4,617.61	\$4,617.61	\$0.00
Net Earnings Totals:	\$1,149,954	\$856,322.69	\$831,265.24	\$25,057.45
Total Amount Due This Invoice:				\$25,057.45

Contractor: Complete this table when submitting an Invoice for payment			
Activity Code	Total Billing to Date	Amount Previously Billed	Billed This Invoice
1	\$856,322.69	\$831,265.24	\$25,057.45
Total*	\$856,322.69	\$831,265.24	\$25,057.45

*Must Match Net Earnings Totals Above

For Consultant Services Use Only

I certify that the above statement is correct and payment has not been received.

Signature: _____

Print Name: Gary C. Hay

Title: President/Principal-in-Charge

Billing Address:
 Hay Dobbs P.A.
 220 South Sixth Street, Ste 165
 Minneapolis, MN 55445

Telephone: (612) 338-4590

Approved for Payment: _____

Date: _____



Red Rock Corridor

Southeast Station Area Master Planning and Environmental Analysis

INVOICE COVER SHEET

Invoice No. 09017.000-21

Invoice Date 06/02/2011

CONSULTANT

CONSULTANT INVOICE

INVOICE AMOUNT

HAY DOBBS P.A.

Task 01	_____	\$0.00
Task 02	_____	\$0.00
Task 03	_____	\$0.00
Task 04	_____	\$0.00
Task 05	9017.005-14	\$3,491.09
Task 06	_____	\$0.00
Task 07	9017.007-12	\$238.55
Task 08	9017.008-16	\$1,737.56
Task 09	9017.009-13	\$1,882.24
Task 10	9017.010-11	\$9,016.00
Task 11	9017.011-20	\$1,294.04
Task 12	_____	\$0.00
Direct Expenses	9017.013-24	<u>\$255.33</u>
	HAY DOBBS P.A.	Subtotal \$17,914.81

PARSONS BRINCKERHOFF

Task 01	_____	\$0.00
Task 02	13	\$556.53
Task 03	_____	\$0.00
Task 04	_____	\$0.00
Task 05	_____	\$0.00
Task 06	_____	\$0.00
Task 07	13	\$295.58
Task 08	_____	\$0.00
Task 09	13	\$3,446.35
Task 10	_____	\$0.00
Task 11	_____	\$0.00
Task 12	_____	\$0.00
Direct Expenses	13	<u>\$32.22</u>
	PARSONS BRINCKERHOFF	Subtotal \$4,330.68

BONESTROO

Task 01	_____	\$0.00
Task 02	_____	\$0.00
Task 03	_____	\$0.00
Task 04	_____	\$0.00
Task 05	_____	\$0.00
Task 06	_____	\$0.00
Task 07	_____	\$0.00

Task 08	_____	\$0.00
Task 09	_____	\$0.00
Task 10	_____	\$0.00
Task 11	_____	\$0.00
Task 12	_____	\$0.00
Direct Expenses	_____	<u>\$0.00</u>
	BONESTROO	Subtotal
		\$0.00

TUNHEIM PARTNERS

Task 01	_____	\$0.00
Task 02	17 _____	\$2,739.78
Task 03	_____	\$0.00
Task 04	_____	\$0.00
Task 05	_____	\$0.00
Task 06	_____	\$0.00
Task 07	_____	\$0.00
Task 08	_____	\$0.00
Task 09	_____	\$0.00
Task 10	_____	\$0.00
Task 11	_____	\$0.00
Task 12	_____	\$0.00
Direct Expenses	17 _____	<u>\$72.18</u>
	TUNHEIM PARTNERS	Subtotal
		\$2,811.96

DUAN

Task 01	_____	\$0.00
Task 02	_____	\$0.00
Task 03	_____	\$0.00
Task 04	_____	\$0.00
Task 05	_____	\$0.00
Task 06	_____	\$0.00
Task 07	_____	\$0.00
Task 08	_____	\$0.00
Task 09	_____	\$0.00
Task 10	_____	\$0.00
Task 11	_____	\$0.00
Task 12	_____	\$0.00
Direct Expenses	_____	<u>\$0.00</u>
	DUAN	Subtotal
		\$0.00

PIERCE PINI & ASSOCIATES

Task 01	_____	\$0.00
Task 02	_____	\$0.00
Task 03	_____	\$0.00
Task 04	_____	\$0.00
Task 05	_____	\$0.00
Task 06	_____	\$0.00
Task 07	_____	\$0.00
Task 08	_____	\$0.00
Task 09	_____	\$0.00

Task 10	_____	\$0.00
Task 11	_____	\$0.00
Task 12	_____	\$0.00
Direct Expenses	_____	<u>\$0.00</u>
	PIERCE PINI & ASSOCIATES	Subtotal
		\$0.00

LANDSCAPE RESEARCH

Task 01	_____	\$0.00
Task 02	_____	\$0.00
Task 03	_____	\$0.00
Task 04	_____	\$0.00
Task 05	_____	\$0.00
Task 06	_____	\$0.00
Task 07	_____	\$0.00
Task 08	_____	\$0.00
Task 09	_____	\$0.00
Task 10	_____	\$0.00
Task 11	_____	\$0.00
Task 12	_____	\$0.00
Direct Expenses	_____	<u>\$0.00</u>
	LANDSCAPE RESEARCH	Subtotal
		\$0.00

PIXEL FARM DIGITAL MEDIA

Task 01	_____	\$0.00
Task 02	_____	\$0.00
Task 03	_____	\$0.00
Task 04	_____	\$0.00
Task 05	_____	\$0.00
Task 06	_____	\$0.00
Task 07	_____	\$0.00
Task 08	_____	\$0.00
Task 09	_____	\$0.00
Task 10	_____	\$0.00
Task 11	_____	\$0.00
Task 12	_____	\$0.00
Direct Expenses	_____	<u>\$0.00</u>
	PIXEL FARM DIGITAL MEDIA	Subtotal
		\$0.00

INVOICE TOTAL \$25,057.45



DATE: June 24, 2011
TO: Red Rock Corridor Commission
FROM: Staff
RE: Station Area Planning Study Draft Final Report

On Friday, June 17th a draft of the final Station Area Planning (SAP) report was emailed out to Commission members for their review and comment prior to the next Commission meeting. At the meeting, the consultant, Hay Dobbs will highlight the main components of the plan. The Commission will be asked to approve the release of the Station Area Planning Report for public review, comment and adoption/endorsement by the City and County partners.

Hard Copies of the Report will be distributed at the meeting.

The following schedule is proposed for review and adoption of the Final Report by the Commission.

June 17, 2011	Distribution of draft to Corridor Commission
June 30, 2011 RRCC Meeting	Approve Release of Draft for Public Comment
July/August, 2011	Draft posted on website, reviewed by Corridor Communities
September, 2011 RRCC Meeting	Final Report reviewed and adopted by the Commission

Action Requested:

Approve release of the SAP Final Report for public review and comment and adoption/endorsement by the City and County partners.



DATE: June 24, 2011
TO: Red Rock Corridor Commission
FROM: Staff
RE: Trunk Hwy 61 Bridge Construction Update / Hastings Transit Service

Jon Solberg, from Mn/DOT Metro District will present an update on the Hastings Trunk Hwy 61 bridge reconstruction project and on recent discussions about opportunities to provide transit service from the City of Hastings during the construction period.

Action Requested:

Information



Date: June 24, 2011
To: Red Rock Corridor Commission
From: Staff
Re: Legislative Update

State

BUDGET

The regular legislative session adjourned on May 23, 2011. A special session needs to be called by the Governor to address the budget. If no budget agreement is reached by July 1, 2011 non-critical parts of State government will start to shut down.

Federal

Below is a federal update prepared by Lockridge Grindal Nauen for the Counties Transit Improvement Board (CTIB) for the Week of June 13th, 2011

CONGRESS IN ACTION

Ethanol Subsidies:

Ethanol subsidies could be facing a serious challenge as Congress and the White House scrub the federal budget for ways to cut spending and lower the deficit and debt.

Senator Tom Coburn (R-OK) offered an amendment to an economic development bill (S. 782) that would eliminate the 45-cents-per-gallon tax credit that refiners get for blending ethanol with gasoline and the 54-cents-per-gallon tariff on imported ethanol. While the procedural vote to limit debate on the measure fell 20 votes short earlier this week, 34 Senate Republicans voted to advance the proposal eliminating a \$6 billion ethanol tax break, a move that some say goes against the Taxpayer Protection Pledge, as the proposal did not offset the cost of the increase. The Joint Committee on Taxation estimated that the Coburn amendment would raise \$2.4 billion in tax revenue over the rest of this year.

Ethanol subsidies, along with other targeted business tax breaks are due to expire December 31st. Those tax incentives include items such as the research-and-development tax credit and are routinely renewed by Congress as a single package.

Therefore, several Members have indicated that they may not support the amendment, but may be willing to support a phase-out if it's coupled with a more comprehensive balanced budget reform effort. As it stands ethanol tax credits are not part of the plan the Vice President Joe Biden's working group has been working on, although sources have suggested that the elimination of such targeted tax credits could be used for deficit reduction.

The Senate on Thursday approved, 73-27, Senator Tom Coburn's amendment to an unrelated economic development bill (S 782) that would eliminate the 45-cents-per-gallon tax credit that refiners get for blending ethanol with gasoline and the 54-cents-per-gallon tariff on imported ethanol. The Senate, however, rejected, 41-59, a proposal from Arizona Senator John McCain (R-AZ) that would have barred the use of federal funds for ethanol storage and blender pump construction projects after agreeing to eliminate the subsidy.

The Feinstein-Coburn amendment will now need to find an appropriate House-passed tax measure in order to uphold the Constitution's origination clause regarding revenue legislation. The House bears the constitutional right to originate congressional tax legislation, making any Senate attempt to start action on tax bills futile because the House would send the bill back to the Senate without action.

The House, however, adopted a similar amendment, 283-128, to the fiscal 2012 Agriculture Appropriations bill (HR 2112) that would prohibit the use of funds for the construction of an ethanol blender pump or an ethanol storage facility. Farm-state members, led by House Agriculture Ranking Member Collin Peterson (D-MN) argue that in order to phase out the tax benefits, the government should provide federal funds to increase the availability of ethanol blender pumps at gas stations nationwide and give more consumers the choice of filling their fuel tanks with blends that contain more ethanol.

Meanwhile, in the Senate two farm-state Members introduced a bipartisan bill that would scale back the largest and most controversial tax credit for ethanol but leave several other supports for the corn-based fuel unchanged. The bill, co-written by Senator Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), and John Thune (R-SD), would modify the blenders tax credit, tying it to the price of oil and shrinking it over the course of several years.

Critics of ethanol subsidies contend that they distort the free market and drive up food prices with no discernible environmental benefit. Supporters of ethanol argue that it helps lessen dependence on foreign oil and is an economic boon to farmers. As pressure mounts to repeal ethanol subsidies, the Klobuchar-Thune bill is the latest concession from farm-state senators, following the recent introduction of a similar bill by Charles Grassley (R-IA) and Kent Conrad (D-ND) That bill (S 884) also phases down the blenders credit but does so more slowly. Both measures have the support of the renewable-fuels industry.

Senate Budget:

Sources indicate Chairman of the Budget Committee, Senator Kent Conrad (D-ND) has redrafted a fiscal 2012 Senate budget resolution that would cut the deficit by some \$4 trillion over a decade, largely through reliance on eliminating tax breaks. The draft plan calls for raising revenue by about \$2 trillion primarily through eliminating tax. Another \$2

trillion in deficit reduction would come from a combination of cuts in government programs and the savings from reduced interest payments on the debt as it grows more slowly because of shrinking deficits. The plan cuts both domestic and defense spending and reduces mandatory spending.

Chairman Conrad commented that revenue increases are equal to spending cuts in the latest version of the budget, although that calculation categorizes reduced interest payments on the debt as spending cuts. Senator Conrad indicated the roughly \$2 trillion in spending cuts includes both cuts to government programs and reduced interest payments.

The plan no longer includes a millionaires surtax, which had appeared in an earlier draft and appealed to Senator Bernard Sanders (I-VT), who caucuses with Democrats on the committee.

Chairman Conrad announced last month that he was delaying the introduction of a budget resolution even though by statute it is supposed to be adopted by April 15. He implied he was waiting on the bipartisan group of lawmakers led by Vice President Joe Biden Jr to reach agreement on a deficit reduction plan that could ease the passage of an increase in the \$14.3 trillion debt ceiling. While Conrad has been careful to not get ahead of the Biden group, he has left open the possibility of unveiling his plan before the other group reaches an agreement.

Appropriations:

The House Appropriations Committee released a revised set of subcommittee allocations adopted on Wednesday. The key revision boosts the discretionary spending allocation for Defense by \$118.7 billion to account for the bill's war funding, raising the bill's total allocation to \$648.7 billion so the measure will not trigger a point of order on the House floor for exceeding its spending limit. The revised allocations also make minor modifications to the levels of discretionary outlays for Agriculture, Energy-Water, Homeland Security, and Labor-HHS-Education which represent simple recalculations of the spend-out rates for each of those bills.

Fiscal 2012 Military Construction and VA Spending Bill (HR 2055): On Tuesday, the House completed work on its military construction and veterans' programs (Milcon-VA) appropriations bill (HR 2055), sending its second fiscal 2012 appropriations measure to the Senate. The chamber passed the bill, 411-5. The bill would provide \$72.5 billion in fiscal 2012 discretionary funds, \$1.3 billion less than President Obama's request and about \$615 million, or less than 1 percent, below current levels. As amended, the bill would allow funds to be used to implement President Obama's 2009 executive order allowing agencies to require project labor agreements (PLAs) for certain construction projects. PLAs, as they are known, are collective bargaining agreements that establish terms and conditions for construction projects.

Fiscal 2012 Agriculture Spending Bill (HR 2112): The House approved the Agriculture Funding Bill for Fiscal Year 2012 on Thursday, June 16th. The legislation funds the various programs within the Department of Agriculture and related agencies, and totals \$125.5 billion in both discretionary and mandatory funding, a reduction of more than \$7 billion from the President's request. The bill reduces discretionary spending by \$2.7 billion from last year's level – a cut of more than \$5 billion from the President's request. The bill passed on a vote of 217-203. Congressman John Kline (R-MN02), Erik Paulsen

(R-MN03), and Chip Cravaack (R-MN08) all voted in favor of the measure, while Congressman Tim Walz (D-MN01), Congresswoman Betty McCollum (D-MN04), Congressman Keith Ellison (D-MN05), Congresswoman Michele Bachmann (R-MN06), and Congressman Collin Peterson (D-MN07) voted against the bill.

Fiscal 2012 Energy-Water Spending Bill: On Wednesday, the House Appropriations Committee approved, 26-20, an amended \$30.6 billion fiscal 2012 spending bill for energy and water programs; it is tentatively scheduled for consideration on the House floor the week of July 4. The measure would reduce funding for the Energy Department, the Army Corps of Engineers, the Bureau of Reclamation and several regional water and power authorities by more than \$1 billion, or 3.3 percent, from fiscal 2011. The measure comes in at \$5.9 billion — nearly 19 percent — below the president's request, bringing spending for the programs down to around the fiscal 2005 level. The panel approved an amendment that would direct more than \$1 billion to the Army Corps of Engineers to be used to address destruction caused by storms and flooding throughout the Midwest and southern United States this year. Even though the money is designated as emergency funding, and therefore not subject to the bill's discretionary spending cap, its cost was offset by rescinding unobligated stimulus funding for high speed rail.

Fiscal 2012 Defense Spending : On Tuesday, House appropriators advanced a fiscal 2012 Defense spending bill that would require an independent assessment of the war in Afghanistan and counterinsurgency operations in Pakistan. The spending bill, which the House Appropriations Committee approved by voice vote and is expected on the House floor next week contains an amendment that would provide \$1 million to create a bipartisan commission to make recommendations on Afghanistan and Pakistan. Overall, the legislation would provide \$530 billion for the Defense Department, which is \$8.9 billion below the administration's request.

Fiscal 2012 Financial Services Bill: The House Financial Services Appropriations subcommittee approved its \$19.9 billion draft fiscal 2012 spending bill, which the full committee will mark up next Thursday, June 23rd. The bill cuts funding by 9 percent below current levels, and includes numerous provisions intended to thwart initiatives backed by President Obama. Among those provisions are ones that limit funding for the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau to \$200 million and require that bureau funding be subject to appropriations beginning in 2013 (under the law, the bureau would be directly funded through the Federal Reserve); bar the IRS from using its funds to implement several mandates included in last year's health care overhaul law (including the mandate that individuals purchase health insurance); terminate the administration's Home Affordable Modification Program that was created to help struggling homeowners get their mortgage loans modified; and prohibit the White House from issuing "signing statements" when the president signs a bill into law.

Debt-ceiling negotiations:

Congressional negotiations, being led by Vice President Joseph Biden Jr., continued this week. Negotiators are trying to stitch together a package of deficit-fighting measures to accompany a vote to increase the \$14.3 trillion debt limit some time later this summer.

Earlier this week Vice President Biden confirmed the timeline that negotiators are aiming for to reach a deal, but there are no public signs yet that the wide divide between

the two parties can be overcome. Biden indicated the goal for his working group is to reach an agreement that can be presented to congressional leaders by July Fourth, so there will be time to write the implementing legislation and pass it by August. Negotiators are discussing discretionary spending and possible future savings from that category of spending, and budget triggers aimed at controlling overall government spending or deficit and debt levels.

Differences regarding possible savings from entitlements and revenue continue to present the biggest hurdles to reaching a comprehensive agreement, particularly for one generating enough savings for a debt limit increase that goes beyond next year's elections. House Speaker John Boehner (R-OH), has made it clear that he wants an agreement to take the debt ceiling to the end of next year, which would mean an associated debt reduction package of about \$2.5 trillion. Vice President Biden and others have mentioned they think they can get at least \$1 trillion in savings without much trouble, but savings beyond that appear far more difficult.

Transportation:

House Leadership unveiled their plan for realizing high-speed rail which involves divesting Amtrak of its Northeast Corridor assets and allowing the private sector to bid on its routes. The essence of the plan, presented Transportation and Infrastructure Chairman John Mica (R-FL) and Railroads Subcommittee Chairman Bill Shuster (R-PA) is to inject private capital into Northeast Corridor routes.

The Mica-Shuster idea is predicated on the idea that private involvement will drive down federal subsidies and ramp up the Northeast's development as a high-speed rail corridor. Mica and Shuster's plan proposes achieving this by transferring Amtrak's Northeast Corridor assets including rights of way, stations, track, signaling equipment, bridges, tunnels, rolling stock and more to the Transportation Department.

The Transportation Department would then put Amtrak's Northeast Corridor routes out for bid, including for operating routes and for maintaining equipment and trackage. Amtrak would be able to compete for these routes. The Transportation secretary would then select two or three of the best bids those that meet performance goals of providing passenger service between Washington and New York in less than two hours and that utilize the most private sector capital and the least amount of federal subsidy. Then, the final decision would be made by a five-member "Northeast Corridor Executive Committee" made up of the Transportation secretary, one member representing Northeast Corridor states, two members appointed by Congress and one member who is an expert in public-private partnerships. Beyond the Northeast Corridor, the proposal also would allow private companies to bid on operating Amtrak's long-distance routes, if they can serve the routes for less money.

Chairman Mica contrasted his plan with Amtrak's own high-speed rail plan for the Northeast Corridor, which the rail service estimates will require \$117 billion and take about 30 years to complete. Mica has indicated that his bill will enable high speed rail service in 10 years and "at a fraction" of Amtrak's cost. The measure is scheduled to be introduced officially on June 21st, and marked up by the full committee the following day.

Livability Grants

On Wednesday June 15th, Transportation Secretary LaHood announced the availability of up to \$175 million in 'livability' grants, which will seek to increase and improve transportation options available for urban, suburban and rural communities. Federal transit Administrator Peter Rogoff explained that reliable transit options create more time for people to spend on activities of their choice. These grants will be used to not only help communities evaluate which transit options would serve them best, but also implement these choices. The livability funding will come from the Bus and Bus Facilities Program and the Alternatives Analysis Program. Applications will be accepted starting the week of June 20th. We will keep you apprised of developments as they occur.

SPECIAL NEWS, NOTES, AND EVENTS

Minnesota Transportation Alliance Evening Event- Washington, DC
June 14, 2011

LGN representatives attended and participated in an event sponsored by the Minnesota Transportation Alliance. Former Congressman Jim Oberstar attended and spoke about the state of our nation's transportation infrastructure. The Minnesota Transportation Alliance is a statewide coalition of organizations advocating for a safe and effective transportation system that works for all Minnesotans.

Minnesota Transportation Alliance Congressional Breakfast-Capitol Hill
June 15, 2011

LGN representatives attended and participated in the Minnesota Transportation Alliance Congressional Breakfast. Attendees heard from Congressman Tim Walz (D-MN-01), Congresswoman Betty McCollum (D-MN-04), Congressman Keith Ellison (D-MN-05), and Congressman Collin Peterson (D-MN-07). Congressman Kline's staff also attended and met with those in attendance.

Minnesota Transportation Alliance Evening Event- Capitol Hill
June 15, 2011

LGN representatives attended and participated in the Minnesota Transportation Alliance Congressional Event. Attendees heard from Department of Transportation Assistant Secretary for Transportation Policy Polly Trottenberg, House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Highways and Transit Subcommittee Staff Director Jim Tymon, Senator Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Congressman Chip Cravaack (R-MN08) and staff from the office of Senator Al Franken's (D-MN). Polly Trottenberg informed the group that the funding announcement for TIGER III transportation grant dollars would likely be revealed in the next week.

14th Annual Congressional Renewable Energy & Energy Efficiency EXPO + Policy
Forum- Capitol Hill
June 16, 2011

LGN representatives attended the 14th Annual Congressional Renewable Energy & Energy Efficiency EXPO + Policy Forum in the Cannon House Office Building in Washington, DC. The exposition included nearly sixty businesses, sustainable energy trade associations, government agencies, and energy policy research organizations. Panel speakers highlighted the status and near-term potential of the cross-section of renewable energy (biofuels/biomass, geothermal, solar, water, wind) and energy efficiency technologies. Elected officials, including Sen. Mark Udall (D-CO) and Rep. Peter Welch (D-VT), as well as members of the Executive Branch, gave remarks on their support of renewable and energy efficiency legislation and its implementation.

Congressman Collin Peterson Luncheon- Capitol Hill

June 16, 2011

LGN's Dennis McGrann attended a lunch reception honoring House Agriculture Ranking Member Collin Peterson on Thursday, June 16th, 2011.

Minnesota Salutes Klobuchar

June 22, 2011

LGN's Dennis McGrann is hosting a "Minnesota Salutes Klobuchar" reception honoring Senator Amy Klobuchar on Wednesday, June 22nd at his Capitol Hill home.

Staff Updates:

Chrissi Johnson

Chrissi Johnson joins Senator Franken's (D-MN) team. Chrissi is a University of St. Thomas alumna and serves as the scheduler in Senator Franken's Washington DC office.

Janelle Belland

Janelle Belland has taken over as scheduler in Congressman John Kline's (R-MN02) DC office this year. Janelle joins the Congressman Kline's DC office from Congressman Tim Murphy (R-PA) where she also served as scheduler.

MINNESOTA DELEGATION NOTES

Senator Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) and Senator John Thune (R-SD) introduced the Ethanol Reform and Deficit Reduction Act (S. 1185), a measure aimed to promote the use of renewable energy while decreasing the nation's deficit. The bill would achieve this by decreasing ethanol tax credits and shifting saved funds to renewable fuel infrastructure. To read more, click [here](#).

Senator Al Franken (D-MN) made a speech explaining the importance of subsidies for ethanol production in Minnesota. To read the whole speech, click [here](#).

Congressman Tim Walz (D-MN01), alongside Mankato State University leaders, unveiled a plan to move America towards energy independence. The plan would include

investing in clean energy as well as rebuilding key infrastructure. To read more, click [here](#).

Congressman John Kline (R-MN02) made a statement, explaining his vision for upcoming education reform. The reform would include increasing states' and school districts' control and encouraging charter schools. To read more, click [here](#).

Congressman Erik Paulsen (R- MN03), along with Senator Amy Klobuchar, announced the creation of the Congressional Wellness Caucus. The caucus will promote preventative wellness initiatives across the country. To read more, click [here](#).
Congresswoman Betty McCollum (D-MN04) voiced her support for building a community park and garden area on vacant land surrounding the state Capitol. To read more about the project, click [here](#).

Congressman Keith Ellison (D-MN05) issued a statement on the Homeland Security Committee's hearing of Wednesday voicing support of prison-outreach programs. To read the full statement, click [here](#).

Congresswoman Michele Bachmann (MN-06) has announced she will not be running for re-election to the House of Representatives while she is running for President. To read more, click [here](#).

Congressman Collin Peterson (D-MN07) wrote a letter criticizing the amendments of the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2012 (H.R. 2112), an agriculture spending bill, citing that it would decrease funding to conservation programs. To read the full letter, click [here](#).

Congressman Chip Cravaack (R-MN08) met with Duluth officials to discuss the re-designation of 148th Fighter Wing to an active associate unit. Senator Cravaack announced that he supported this shift because it would allow the Air Force to conserve its resources and expand mission capabilities. To read the whole story, click [here](#).

ADDITIONAL MEDIA

CQ TODAY ONLINE NEWS – ECONOMY

June 16, 2011 – 5:49 p.m.

Economic Development Bill Stalls in Senate

By Lauren Gardner and Niels Lesniewski, CQ Staff

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid on Thursday moved to limit debate on a pending economic development bill, a tacit acknowledgment that it is essentially dead in the water after being subjected to a series of votes on unrelated amendments.

The underlying measure (S 782) would reauthorize the Commerce Department's Economic Development Administration (EDA) at \$500 million for each of fiscal years 2011 through 2015. The Environment and Public Works Committee estimates that the programs created more than 300,000 jobs from 2005 to 2010, with each dollar of funding attracting nearly \$7 in private sector investment.

Reid, D-Nev., lamented the number of non-germane amendments that have been offered to the legislation. "It's filibustered by amendment," he said before filing cloture.

It is increasingly unlikely that the bill will achieve the 60 votes needed to end debate.

Every administration and Congress since Lyndon B. Johnson's presidency has supported this program, and reauthorizations used to pass easily, said the bill's chief Democratic sponsor, California Democrat Barbara Boxer.

"Every Republican and every Democrat I know around here says, 'jobs, jobs, jobs,' but they're killing another jobs bill," she said.

Boxer originally introduced the bill with her GOP counterpart on the Environment and Public Works panel, James M. Inhofe of Oklahoma. But he has retreated from his initial support, calling for a reduction in the authorization level, among other changes.

Inhofe also has filed an extraneous amendment that would block an animal known as the lesser prairie chicken from being listed under the Endangered Species Act (PL 93-205). Opponents of designating the chicken as endangered say that because wind towers can threaten the mating ritual of the species, the Fish and Wildlife Service could actually require the demolition of wind turbines.

DeMint's Targets

In addition to parochial amendments, Republicans have also filed sweeping proposals that would lead to politically-charged votes.

South Carolina Republican Jim DeMint, for example, has a pending amendment that would repeal last year's financial regulatory overhaul law (PL 111-203).

DeMint, with the backing of anti-tax advocate Grover Norquist's Americans for Tax Reform, has also demanded a vote on his amendment to repeal a renewable-fuels mandate in a 2005 energy law (PL 109-190) that critics say guarantees a market for ethanol producers. The proposal would also permanently repeal the estate tax.

The December 2010 compromise law (PL 111-312) that extended 2001 and 2003 tax cuts (PL 107-16, 108-27) for two years provided for the reinstatement of the estate tax through 2012 at the Republican-preferred rate of 35 percent with a \$5 million exemption.

"Sen. Reid has assured me I can still seek a vote on repealing the ethanol mandate, and I will use every tool available to do so," DeMint said. He also thanked Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., "for making it clear he will seek a vote on my amendment prior to final passage of this bill."

An Americans for Tax Reform letter circulated earlier Thursday noted that Republican leadership would whip "no" votes against a cloture motion regarding the EDA bill unless Reid allowed a vote on DeMint's proposal. The group previously indicated to members who had signed its pledge to not raise taxes that, should they vote for Oklahoma Republican Tom Coburn's ethanol amendment and not DeMint's proposal, they would be violating that promise.

Earlier Thursday, the Senate approved, 73-27, Coburn's amendment to eliminate federal ethanol benefits, a proposal co-sponsored by California Democrat Dianne Feinstein.

It was unclear how much influence Norquist's group has on the Republicans who voted for the Coburn amendment. Bob Corker, R-Tenn., a signer of the tax pledge, said after the vote that he was unfamiliar with the DeMint amendment. South Carolina Republican Lindsey Graham, another signer, was enthusiastic about the possibility of repealing other corporate tax breaks to reduce the deficit.

As always, we will continue to keep you updated on any developments as they occur. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or would like additional information. Thank you.

Dennis McGrann
Federal Relations Director
Phone: (202) 544-9840
Fax: (202) 544-9850

Megan Knight
Federal Relations
Phone: (202) 544-9840
Fax: (202) 544-9850

Emily Tranter
Federal Relations
Phone: (202) 544-9840
Fax: (202) 544-9850

Andy Burmeister
Federal Relations
(202) 544-9840
Fax: (202) 544-9850

Johnna White
Federal Relations
Phone: (202) 544-9840
Fax: (202) 544-9850

Will Mitchell
Federal Relations
Phone: (202) 544-9840
Fax (202) 544-9850

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FTA 30-11

Thursday, June 16, 2011

Transportation Secretary LaHood Announces up to \$175 Million in 'Livability' Grants to Increase and Improve Transportation Options for Urban, Suburban and Rural Communities

Announcement Made on Second Anniversary of 'Sustainable Communities' Partnership

U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood today announced the availability of up to \$175 million in livability grants to help urban, suburban and rural communities develop transit options to better connect people to where they live, work and play. Local transit agencies will be able to compete for livability dollars from the pool of up to \$175 million. The competitive grant program will begin accepting applications when announced in the Federal Register during the week of June 20.

The announcement comes on the second anniversary of the creation of the federal Partnership for Sustainable Communities. Livability grants are aimed at assuring that transportation and housing decisions are made jointly and recognize the unique character of each community.

"Coordinated transportation and housing planning can make the best use of scarce federal dollars and can help create jobs, lower transportation costs and reduce our dependence on oil," said Secretary LaHood. "Communities where people have access to affordable housing and different forms of transportation to get to places that are important to them are communities where people want to live."

The Partnership for Sustainable Communities is a collaborative effort among the Departments of Transportation, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and the Environmental Protection Agency to help American families gain better access to affordable housing, better transportation options and lower transportation costs. The three departments created the high-level interagency partnership to better coordinate federal transportation, environmental protection, and housing investments.

"In addition to the need for affordable housing, the Obama Administration recognizes the necessity for safe, convenient and affordable transportation," said Federal Transit Administrator Peter Rogoff. "We're helping to better connect communities and create reliable transit choices so that people can make it home from work in time to sit down to dinner with their families or help their kids with homework. That means a higher quality of life for all Americans and a more efficient and more usable transportation network for moving people and goods."

Up to \$150 million of the livability funding being announced comes from the **Bus and Bus Facilities Program**, which provides money to purchase or replace buses and to build bus-related facilities. The remaining funds come from the **Alternatives Analysis Program**, which provides money to help communities evaluate and select the best transit options to meet their transportation needs. The money can be spent on a broad range of projects within those two categories.

FTA's **Alternatives Analysis** grant program is the first key milestone in obtaining federal investments in new capital transit projects. The alternatives analysis is complete once a locally preferred alternative is selected and adopted as part of the affected region's long-range transportation plan.

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Contact: Paul Griffo • **Tel:** 202-366-4064

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[U.S. Department of Transportation](#) | 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE | Washington, DC 20590 | 202-366-4000