

Description of Request: The purpose of this appropriation is to provide \$285,000 in funding to widen approximately 5,400 linear feet of U.S. Highway 221 between the Hunter/Fleming-Smith Industrial Site and the City of Laurens. This highway improvement project will allow for increased volume and greater safety for commuter and truck traffic to and from the expanding Hunter/Fleming-Smith Industrial Site and surrounding areas. The Industrial Site plays an important role in the economic development of Laurens County. This request is consistent with the intended purpose of the Federal Highway Administration. In addition to this federal funding, Laurens will be providing approximately \$333,000 for the project. I certify that neither I nor my spouse has any financial interest in this project.

Requesting Member: Congressman J. GRESHAM BARRETT

Bill Number: H.R. 1105

Provision: Division I, Title I Department of Transportation, Account: Transportation, Community, and System Preservation Account

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: Orangeburg County, SC

Address of Requesting Entity: 1437 Amelia Street, Orangeburg, SC 29115

Description of Request: The purpose of this appropriation is to provide \$95,000 in funding for the installation of an interchange at the intersection of US Highway 301 and I-95 in Orangeburg County. Currently, U.S. Highway 301 stops at the intersection of I-95, causing the 301 traffic to enter onto an extremely busy portion of I-95 for just one mile in order to exit off onto Hwy 6. This highway improvement will help traffic flow more smoothly and support the planning for an intermodal transportation facility as well as distribution centers and transportation-related businesses. This interchange is included on the State Transportation Infrastructure Plan (STIP) as part of the Lower Savannah Long-Range Transportation Plan. This request is consistent with the intended purpose of the Federal Highway Administration and is a continuation of funding from fiscal year 2008. The County of Orangeburg has committed \$2 million to the project and the state of South Carolina has committed an additional \$3 million. I certify that neither I nor my spouse has any financial interest in this project.

Requesting Member: Congressman J. GRESHAM BARRETT

Bill Number: H.R. 1105

Provision: Division I, Title I Department of Transportation, Account: Interstate Maintenance, Discretionary

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: Orangeburg County, SC

Address of Requesting Entity: 1437 Amelia Street, Orangeburg, SC 29115

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Savannah Long-Range Transportation Plan. This request is consistent with the intended purpose of the Federal Highway Administration and is a continuation of funding from fiscal year 2008. The County of Orangeburg has committed \$2 million to the project and the state of South Carolina has committed an additional \$3 million. I certify that neither I nor my spouse has any financial interest in this project.

OMNIBUS APPROPRIATIONS ACT,
2009

SPEECH OF

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 25, 2009

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Omnibus Appropriations Act, despite many severe misgivings I have with the legislation.

Last night the President gave us a frank and candid assessment of the dire situation of our economy, and I remain committed to ensuring that appropriations bills reflect an appropriate federal response. This bill will strengthen the social safety net so that individuals and families that have been affected by the recession can meet their daily needs. This bill includes substantial and badly needed increases in funding for food assistance to combat starvation and malnutrition in the elderly and those of modest income.

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services has been inundated by a surge in unemployment claims. Constituents have called my office to tell me that they cannot even get through on the phone to speak to someone about their claim. Facing such an extraordinary increase in demand, I am glad that the states will get some help. The bill increases funding by 10% for state offices to process this surge in unemployment claims.

Cleveland, unfortunately, has been at the epicenter of the subprime mortgage and foreclosure crisis. The number of foreclosures continues to increase; some neighborhoods still average two foreclosures per day. Up to 6,000 voucher holders have yet to find affordable housing in Cuyahoga County—and this does not include the estimated 19,000 people who qualify for vouchers but are forced to endure a years-long waiting list.

The bill increases overall funding for the Department of Housing and Urban Development by 10%. This includes increases in funding for the Public Housing Operating Fund to keep the doors open in our existing public housing, the Public Housing Capital Fund to build new public housing, and tenant- and project-based voucher programs. The bill also increases funding for homeless assistance grants.

The bill provides several other funding increases in areas of particular need for Northeast Ohio. There is \$187 million dedicated to making emergency communication more reliable through interoperability funding. There is a \$385 million increase in funding for NASA, an economic anchor for the region and the state. There is \$273 million for research on more fuel-efficient vehicles, which will help our ailing auto industry and the other industries on which it relies. There is \$40.7 billion in infrastructure funding, a \$484 million increase over

FY08 levels and an integral part of Northeast Ohio's economic recovery.

However, I am deeply saddened and frustrated by sections of the State and Foreign Operations portion of this bill that continue counterproductive policies regarding the Middle East and drug policy. I am hopeful that with the leadership of President Obama a new U.S. policy on the Middle East will emerge. It is time for the U.S. to move beyond the biased policy contained in this portion of the bill.

The surest way for this body to ensure the safety and security of Israel while encouraging peace in the Middle East is to craft a policy that encourages Israel to end the blockade of Gaza and the occupation of Palestinian lands. The U.S. must also call on Israel to implement a freeze on settlement building.

Instead this bill undermines any effort to position the U.S. as an honest broker for peace in the region. The bill gives \$75 million in funding for aid to be shared between Gaza and the West Bank while giving \$2.4 billion in grants for Israel including \$670 million for procurement of military equipment alone. Adding to this extreme imbalance, the bill also places far more restrictions on the humanitarian aid to Gaza than on the arms funding for Israel. If the U.S. was an honest broker of peace, the reverse would be true. The United Nations has declared in no uncertain terms that peace in the Middle East, which is the best way for Israel to achieve security, cannot be achieved militarily. By favoring arms over aid, this bill takes us in the wrong direction during a time when relations between Gaza and Israel are particularly strained.

This bill also includes funding for counter-narcotics initiatives in Afghanistan, Mexico, Colombia, and other regions in Latin America, continuing supply-side interdiction efforts that have done nothing to disturb the flow of illicit drugs into our country. Research clearly demonstrates that money directed to domestic demand-reduction efforts—drug treatment, drug abuse prevention, youth intervention programs, and the like—is more effective at reducing drug consumption and curtailing the flow of illicit drugs into the country. Moreover, such efforts usually increase the price of drugs in circulation, which only leads to increased violence and crime in communities. So long as the demand for a product exists, enterprising drug dealers will find a way to get the drugs to those addicted to them.

I support this bill because the needs of my district come first, and the money in this bill will go far toward alleviating the stress on my constituents and my district caused by the economic downturn. However, I find it reprehensible that I am also forced to support these other provisions, and I look forward to working with leadership and the Administration to support policies that engage all parties and encourage peace rather than aggression.

INTRODUCTION OF THE PATENT
REFORM ACT OF 2009

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 3, 2009

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, today we are pleased to introduce the Patent Reform Act of 2009. The Patent Reform Act of 2009