



Representatives, state officials praise Crosstown progress

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 30, 2011

PR# 12-023

Officials hosted U.S. Rep. Bill Shuster, who visited the old I-40 Crosstown in Oklahoma City on Monday, April 30. Shuster was joined by Gov. Mary Fallin, U.S. Rep. James Lankford, U.S. Rep. John Sullivan and Transportation Secretary/ODOT Director Gary Ridley to view progress on deconstruction efforts as crews begin to remove bridge beams that will be made available for use on hundreds of county bridge projects.

A Republican congressman from Pennsylvania, Shuster is the chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines and Hazardous Materials, which oversees railroad safety, Amtrak, hazardous material transportation and the nation's system of oil and gas pipelines.

Shuster visited the same project where his father, then House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman, Bud Shuster, spoke at a news conference in 1997, which began the process to secure federal funding for the new I-40 Crosstown, which became the largest sum put toward a project at the time at \$103 million.

Since the completion of the new I-40 Crosstown lanes in January, crews have been deconstructing the old bridge to make way for reconnection of the downtown area to the new interstate. As part of the \$10 million deconstruction effort, ODOT is working with contractors on a large-scale recycling project to inspect and reuse bridge beams from the old highway, saving taxpayers approximately 6 to 8 million dollars. As many as 1,800 of the nearly 1,900 50-foot steel beams will be inspected by a consultant for re-use. If the beams are deemed safe, they will be made available to counties at no cost. Repurposing of these beams will help build more than 300 county bridges statewide. The first recycled bridge beams will be delivered to counties this week.

"Inspection and re-use of these bridge beams represents the largest direct recycling project in the history of the state - probably the nation - and one that will save the state and counties millions of dollars," Ridley said. "I appreciate Congressman Shuster coming to Oklahoma City to see this phase of the project."

Gov. Fallin and the legislative leadership have brought forth the Bridge Improvement and Turnpike Modernization Plan, which calls for major repairs or replacement of hundreds of structurally deficient bridges on the state's highway system, along with increased resources for counties to address their aging bridges. Major legislative proposals to increase funding for the Rebuilding Oklahoma Access and Driver Safety fund and County Improvement for Road and Bridges program have received preliminary approval in the state House and Senate. Officials believe the deconstruction of the I-40 Crosstown will be a major success, not only for counties that will receive bridge beams, but also for the state's transportation system.

"Re-using the beams from the old I-40 Crosstown bridge is a safe and effective way to save millions in taxpayer dollars while promoting infrastructure development across the state," Fallin said. "The I-40 Crosstown project has been a great example of how improving our roads and bridges can enhance safety while creating jobs in the process. Our work is not done, however. Moving forward, I will continue to push for the full implementation of the Bridge Improvement and Turnpike Modernization Plan which will repair all of Oklahoma's structurally deficient highway bridges, continue to provide assistance to county-level bridge construction and make key upgrades in both the Creek and Kilpatrick turnpikes."

Deconstruction of the old I-40 Crosstown continues through early 2013. Construction and complete reconnection of the downtown area to the new interstate are scheduled for completion in 2014. The total cost for the I-40 Crosstown project is approximately \$680 million.

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INFORMATION RELEASE

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Oklahoma officials look on as U.S. Rep. Bill Shuster speaks about the innovative use of the old I-40 Crosstown bridge beams, which will be inspected as the bridge is deconstructed and made available to counties for local bridge projects statewide. The Pennsylvania congressman is the chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines and Hazardous Materials. Pictured from left to right are U.S. Rep. John Sullivan, Oklahoma Transportation Commission Chairman Greg Love, U.S. Rep. James Lankford, Gov. Mary Fallin, Oklahoma Transportation Secretary/ODOT Director Gary Ridley and U.S. Rep. Bill Shuster.



U.S. Rep. Bill Shuster speaks next to a photograph of his father, former chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, Bud Shuster, who spoke at the I-40 Crosstown in Oklahoma City in 1997, which began the process of securing \$103 million in federal funding for the replacement of the highway. The Pennsylvania congressman is the chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines and Hazardous Materials.