

Congress clears omnibus spending bill

\$31.8 billion for highways

\$1 million for the National Center for Asphalt Technology

Nearly five months into the government's fiscal year – and even more months of budget deadlock between Bush and lawmakers – Congress finally approved the mammoth package Feb. 13 with wide bipartisan majorities. The House vote was 338-83, while Senate approval was by 76-20.

Highway Funding

The bill provides the full amount of \$31.8 billion requested by NAPA and the transportation construction industry. This is \$9 billion more than requested by the Administration, and \$4 billion more than requested by the House of Representatives.

Airport Funding

The bill provides \$3.4 billion for the Airport Improvement Program. This is the amount requested by NAPA and authorized by AIR-21. The Airport Improvement Program funds runway, taxiway and apron projects at airports around the country.

Research Funding

The bill includes \$1 million for the National Center for Asphalt Technology Pavement Research at Auburn University. The funding will be used to continue the research related to improvement and evaluation of pavement performance. The funding uses the Center's 1.7 mile oval asphalt test track. This was the level of funding requested by NAPA.

Appreciation

NAPA wishes to express a sincere thanks to all the NAPA members and state asphalt pavement association executive directors for their hard work in reaching this successful outcome. This victorious campaign for \$31.8 billion for highways shows that by everybody working together we can achieve great success. NAPA will continue to play a leadership role within the transportation construction industry to support a \$60 billion highway program as part of TEA-21.

Facts About Asphalt

- About 330,000 people in the U.S. are employed by the asphalt industry.
- 94 percent of the roads in America are paved with asphalt.
- 80 percent of old asphalt pavement removed each year is re-used.
- Asphalt pavement is the most recycled product in America - more than newspaper, aluminum cans or glass.
- The Babylonians were the first to build roads with asphalt in 625 B.C.
- Rubber from old tires, roofing shingles and older asphalt roads can be used again in making asphalt pavement.
- You can find natural deposits of asphalt in lakes.
- Asphalt pavement was first introduced in America in the year 1870.

Source www.beyondRoads.com

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