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PENCE OPPOSES HIGHWAY BILL: FISCALLY IRRESPONSIBLE AND UNFAIR TO HOOSIERS

Washington, Apr 2, 2004 - WASHINGTON, DC - U.S. Congressman Mike Pence today voted against the "Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users." Below is his statement on the bill:

"Today I voted against passage of the 'Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users' because this legislation is fiscally irresponsible and unfair to the people of Indiana who will see their share of federal highway funds reduced over the next six years.

"As the Bush Administration has observed, at \$284 billion, this legislation will exceed the amount of income anticipated from the federal gasoline tax and will cause Congress to either raise gasoline taxes or raid the General Fund of the Treasury to make up the difference. I cannot support spending that will force average Hoosiers to pay more at the pump or place an undue burden on future generations of Americans through deficit spending.

"Furthermore, this legislation is unfair to so-called 'donor states,' like Indiana, who have historically contributed more money into the Highway Trust Fund than they have received back in highway dollars. Instead of increasing Indiana's return on every dollar of gasoline taxes paid into the Highway Trust Fund, Hoosiers will see their return on federal gasoline taxes reduced by more than 10 cents on the dollar while many states continue to receive in excess of one dollar for every dollar of gasoline taxes paid.

"I cannot support a highway bill that is fiscally irresponsible and unfair to the people of Indiana. If this legislation is not improved in Conference Committee, I would urge President Bush to veto this highway bill."

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