

Good afternoon. Thank you all for being here. Thank you legislators for participating and being here with us. As you all know Governor Edwards has created a transportation task force a few months ago and we have met twice here in Baton Rouge and we've actually concluded 3rd regional transportation meeting today with the first meeting being in the city of New Orleans and the second Shreveport and the third being in Lake Charles and each of those meetings we saw over a hundred and twenty-five citizens in each community representing planning and transportation stakeholders as well as well as the economic development community and so we're excited to see the efforts underway and I think we're standing here today to have an announcement from the governor about a very important project that demonstrates the comprehensive commitment to transportation that you've seen since January whether it was the fast lane application that receives 60 million and then a follow-up of another 40 million whether it's the redistributed funds of 40 million that we've received or if it's the actions during the legislative session to prioritize transportation and double the port priority program and advocate for it balanced transportation system we have yet another major announcement that I think speaks to the needs of every citizen and every freight mover not just in baton rouge but from the coast of California to Florida and I think it's appropriate that we do this in the middle of national truck driver appreciation week that the governor has declared his state authority to celebrate national truck driver appreciation week because there's such a critical partner and our economic development so with no further ado let me introduce the governor of the great state of Louisiana the Honorable John bel Edwards thank all of you thank you Sean appreciate your hard work and your good work at dotd i'm proud to be joined by Sean and these legislators up here with us today to announce a major development in my administration's commitment infrastructure to attach transportation infrastructure that will offer welcome relief to the commuters between ascension and east baton rouge parishes but not just to those parishes because I- 10 obviously carries traffic that emanates from all over the country and certainly all over the state of Louisiana and i am pleased do this during National truck driver appreciation week now for all about thirty percent of the traffic on i-10 is actually engaged in moving commerce cargo but you might be just moving a kid to soccer practice or trying to get to work or get to a ball game or whatever and it's going to be a benefit to you as well so with the support of the joint Transportation Committee the Department of Transportation development is prepared to do begin a design-build solicitation that would widen I 10 from highland road to la 73 from four lanes to six lanes this stretch of road is approximately seven miles and this design bill process will also explore the possibility of elevating certain portions of that interstate the need to

elevate was possibly demonstrated a last month in fact when a lot of traffic had to be routed through Prairieville because it could not move along i-10 in this area so design-build as a project delivery model that the state is used before and it captures the innovation of the private sector and pairs it with the resources of the state the end goal is to deliver a project at great value to the citizens but also in a very timely way and in fact this design build process will shave off three to four months for the work and it will also save the people of Louisiana money and the department transportation and development put together a plan to construct this segment about 10 using Fast Act authority to repurpose certain federal earmarked funds and it should be noted that if we do not use these funds it is very likely that they would be swept away in sent to other states and that's why we want to take advantage of this authority that we have under the federal fast act to make sure that we do not lose these bonds and send them back to Washington or anywhere else we want to put them to use right here in Louisiana for the benefit of our citizens the state will replace the earmark funds dollar-for-dollar with other federal highway funds when those funds are needed and those projects are ready to move forward and we are committed. I as the governor am committed fully to all of those other projects the simple fact of the matter is that opportunities such as this cannot be relied upon as the sole answer to our transportation problems which is why as Sean mentioned a moment ago I created the transportation taskforce to comprehensively study our needs and also our revenue options to pay for those needs whether they be capacity or preservation what we must have as a sound sustainable and thoughtful transportation funding policy to better care for what we've already built and to finance a multi-modal transportation system that supports Louisiana economy and it would be a system that we can all be proud of and so now I'm going to turn it back over to secretary wilson for more details on this project

Thank You governor so this stretch of interstate that we're talking about on i-10 is approximately seven miles and people will ask why did you select this project for this allocation of funds i will tell you it is one of the more congested areas that is ready to be built while we said this at the fast act we met in the fast lane application announcement we'd much rather be building and widening and i-10 from the bridge to the split the reality is that project is not there for this Highland 273 project we own all the right away

we have already begun some of the preliminary planning and it is one of the most efficient projects that can comply with the federal requirements to let this project within the next federal fiscal year and so i will give you just a brief timeline that once we get approval from the joint transportation

task force we will put a notice of intent out in the public sector on September 28 or shortly thereafter and then we will issue the RFQ and the statement

of qualifications will be due to the department before the end of the year

through that process we will evaluate those applications and announced a short

list and issue the final request for proposals in February and then go

through the review process and as we stand here today we will be prepared to

issue a notice to proceed on this project next year this time I'm so

excited that the Department of Transportation development has been able

to become extremely efficient and shave time off this design build process

instead of waiting a 12-month window to procure something that's not consistent

with the federal funds we shaved three to four months off this process without

compromising any of the quality of the process or the needs for the project

will also tell you that I support the governor and will exert to the fullest

extent of my authority our commitment to make every project hole that is being

built and designed in this state we have about a million dollars of remaining

earmarks are in marks are eligible but half of those projects or projects that

are going to be let this year the other half of those projects approximately 40

million dollars will be pulled together to fund this project those projects will

not be let in time to prevent them from being swept as a part of a federal

process and so every project that has been funded with an earmark no matter

how large or how small

if it fit the federal qualifications of being 10 years older less than ten

percent and it's a project that's moving forward the state will continue to

deliver on those projects so with that Governor we appreciate your support and

confidence in the department to do the most important projects in the state of

Louisiana that will get people moving and widening I 10 is definitely one of

those projects. Sean thank you and in order to get this project

moving and as quickly as possible secretary Wilson and I are calling upon

the chairman of both the House and the Senate Transportation Committee is to

convene a joint committee meeting as soon as possible to authorize Sean and

the Department of Transportation development to begin the process that is

outlined along in the process that we just described to you and so I'm pleased

to be joined by both chairman have heard in the House Transportation Committee

and chairman Cortez of the Senate Transportation Committee and I would ask

them to come up in that order in order to address this issue

Thank You governor and Secretary Wilson I want just kind of want to reiterate what

they have said it's a great opportunity for Louisiana today

you know I want to especially thank the secretary and the governor for

thinking outside the box as far as transportation funding sources for

Louisiana to for too long we've up going down the road of a not funding our

projects properly and prioritizing the needs for Louisiana it looks like

today is the first step in the right direction and I will assure you as transportation chair for the house side we will do everything possible for everyone in this state particularly right now it looks like the needs are right here in Baton Rouge and that's where we're going to spend these these funds at this time but i do want to reiterate what Sean said is that no project that has been moved or out of the funding sources and will be done and we're going to stand behind that commitment of the governor and trying to get those projects are moving forward as soon as possible and with that I just again want to say thank you to the governor and anything I can do or our committee can do we will be glad to work with you thank you

Thank you to the governor mr. secretary I too want to commend you to working with for working with the federal partners and utilize in all those federal dollars one of the things that I want to commend you the most with this project is that it is not only needed we have many needed projects is that the public and the citizens of the state of Louisiana are going to see concrete on the ground within a year and that's something you hear it they will see the beginning of concrete being laid on the ground so that the fast lane act allowed for some funding for the acadiana area but I know I stand here with my Capital Region colleagues and and I see many of them who voted along with me a number of years ago and the governor to support a lot of surplus dollars funding i-49 north and and a lot of projects around the state so all of the areas of the state have needs but i can tell you having a business here in perkins road as well as in lafayette there are no to greater needs than acadiana and the capital region and so again I commend you and I will do anything I can to support getting this moving forward in fact it's my intention a note chairman habits intention to call them a joint committee meeting as soon as possible early next week as a thank-you thank-you very much with that we are open for questions should you have any yes

yes and sean has probably greater detail of these were federal funds earmarked for specific projects but those projects have not moved in the time limitation is about to expire and they will not move in time to prevent the forfeiture of those funds and send those back to Washington where they would go to other states and so what we're going to do is we're going to repurpose we designate those earmarks are for this project while remaining fully committed to the underlying projects and we will substitute other dollars when those projects are ready to move forward and you also have some projects that were actually concluded but there were a few additional dollars left over and rather than losing those dollars we want to repurpose those redirect those for this project as well

yes sir well the way this is going to work the design-build we're going to

request folks come back to us with plans and we're going to tell them that obviously what we want to do is widen destruction of interstate from four to six lanes some of which we might need to reconstruct in order to elevate we will show them the part of the interstate that actually had to be closed because it went underwater and then we will allow them to tell us how they think we can best address that situation and that's one of the good things about the design build processes we expect to get back a variety of plans that might have different ideas about how to do that and then we will take a look at it but but one of the goals will be to making sure that that same stretch of interstate that we had to close in August because of the flooding does not have to get close

going forward and of course under the rule of probability with all have to be 2050 years old before - or thousand fifty years old I guess before that would actually happen

yeah I'm not sean has the numbers written down here so the first thing I just to clarify for the market for others when we say elevation we're not talking about putting it on structure we're talking about a foot possibly a foot and a half depending on what the level of flooding was and the impact their so for that purposes i just want to clarify that in terms of the funding we expect to repurpose approximately 40 plus million dollars of a number of earmarks from around the state so here in Baton Rouge for example there were five earmarks that totaled about 15 to 20 million dollars that are going to be used on this project that is within the scope of using it in other areas we've identified projects that we can use these earmarks for that are already funded in this current fiscal year we're going to replace those funds and pool or reallocate those dollars to this project to make up the balance in addition to that we're going to obligate this project within the next year and we will cash manage it in the year after because it's going across a number of fiscal years during construction and so we're able to use some of our own federal funds to prioritize this project and get it done prior to this there was no estimated funding date if you look at our highway priority program this would be on what's called the xx list which means we didn't have the funds to do it but because we were able to leverage these dollars and move forward we're going to make a gentle making amends to our process and incorporate those dollars in the subsequent federal fiscal years of the total we think is going to be estimated to be upwards of 60 million dollars in that process I don't want to give you our exact estimate because the the private sector that's going to come back to us in the form of design-build teams will compete for things like time innovation in terms of dealing with the elevation in the flood there may be some other things that we have not anticipated identified in the plans that we are putting together that they will be able to take advantage of and so we

will make those determinations through the course of the solicitation well again

nope yeah so no projects are being sidelined so for example it could be a program in our overlay program it could be a safety project that was funded this year that's within proximity of a project that was completed so if a project had about a half a million dollars on it we couldn't spend it anywhere else unless we did this reallocation so we're going to take that half a million dollars spend it on that safety project that preservation project or that bridge project that was going to be let the money that we're using their we're now moving to i-10 on this priority as opposed to moving it around so there's several projects around the state and my communications director is not here he's out of out-of-state traveling but we can get you a full list of what those projects are and where the allocation is going to go in proximity to be consistent with the federal law

ok

I don't have an update in fact i checked on it just before left the office i will be in Washington tomorrow to meet face-to-face with the number of members of congress also with some folks in the administration but also to include an entire congressional delegation I remain optimistic that we're going to get a substantial part of the recovery assistance that we need in the continuing resolution and that is a hard nut to crack now but so you know we've got a lot of work to do which is which is why I'm going up there and and while i'm i'm pleased to be joined by the entire congressional delegation is evidence about the letter that they signed by the way our congressional delegation is is entitled to you know me telling them how much I appreciate their work on this federal fast act to this transportation bill because Louisiana probably more than any other state in the nation has won in the first year of the federal government's implementation of the fast act because of the flexibility that affords us to move these earmark dollars instead of losing them but also because of the hundred million dollars that we've already been allocated out of a total of an 800 million dollar grant program for the country we we have done better

you know I didn't go look and see whether there was another state they got more I cannot imagine we were number four

ok

I'm just saying I'm just leave with we were we were number four but but we we would have obviously done really well in terms of of the per capita award but also the the amount of of highways that we have in our state's relative to those other three states so mark you have a question that's a great question as we travel the state and talking talking to communities and you look at what's happening here in baton rouge baton rouge has about five

billion dollars of projects that they'd like to see done that really needs to be done to sustain the economy here at the end of the day if you look at the revenue stream that we have at dotd we are hundred percent funded just with the Transportation Trust Fund which is generated by the gas tax and the average driver pays approximately a hundred and eight dollars a year that's about four times less than what you're going to spend for a beverage an adult beverage it's about five times less than what you're going to spend for season tickets and about four or five times less than what you're going to pay for entertainment and dinner and food out in the community at the end of the day everything you own by cell phone used to build and do your work you use it for transportation so I can't tell you today that we have the resources to invest in those projects but I'm hopeful and I'm confident that the task force will come with meaningful sustainable recommendations to join the other 25 states that have adjusted their revenue package of their revenue stream to fund those projects and if we get those dollars things like looking at a new bridge in baton rouge whether it's using tolls whether it's using public-private partnerships you look at the LA for 15 connector if you look at the opportunities for rail to get people off of the vehicles off of the roads and commute and use mobility alternatives that's a phenomenal thing so there's a lot of projects there's also a lot of improvement in terms of technology to help people get completed . be most efficiently with 5 11 in other means of transportation so on this project we will go through the procurement process and next year this time we should have announced a little bidder or announced recipient of the design-build contract and we can issue a notice to proceed the design build process normally takes about 12 months we're going to start beginning next week if the joint transportation committee meets and we will conclude it sometimes in May with an apparent winner and we will proceed to do the contract and he will have 45 to 90 days he she or the company of that partnership will have 45 days to mobilize and get started on the project record time for Louisiana design bill I'm we don't have an estimate of that because that's going to be a part of the competitive advantage because this is the most congested quarter in the state we want to get folks in and out as safely and as quickly as possible in that stands the same for contractors and so we're expecting them to come in and bid days as a part of this to show who can get in and get it built the quickest and we're going to reward those and put it in perspective if they can move it very quickly and there's one last question one last last question Oh sure it's one of the most congested parts of the interstate system in the state of Louisiana and really not just monday through friday rush hour traffic in morning and the evenings i'm surprised at how often on weekends similarly when there's no real reason for it that you have traffic stacking up

in this area and it's it is a critical thoroughfare that we need to do something to move traffic more quickly and there are many others in Louisiana as well but for all the reasons Sean mentioned this is the right project at the right time for the flexibility we've been given in the fast act so that we can move it with these repurposed your mark dollars
thank you very much