

**BEAVER COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

September 15, 2008 for immediate release

Board of Commissioners
Tony Amadio, Chairman
Joe Spanik
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COMMISSIONERS, ALTMIRE FORM FREEDOM ROAD**UPGRADE COALITION**

Officials from Conway & New Sewickley Pledge to Support Funding Efforts by Altmire

Beaver, PA – In preparation for major federal surface transportation legislation that will be considered in Congress next year, the Beaver County Board of Commissioners has built a coalition of support for a plan by U.S. Congressman Jason Altmire (PA-04) to secure funding in the legislation for the Construction phase of the Freedom Road Upgrade Project. Last year, Congressman Altmire was successful in securing \$750,000 for the project in the final budget passed by Congress (H.R. 2764).

In a joint meeting with Congressman Altmire, the Board of Commissioners, Conway Borough Council Members and New Sewickley Township Supervisors also pledged to work with Congressman Altmire to encourage the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) to expedite the purchase of the necessary property for Right-of-Way acquisition.

"The Freedom Road Upgrade Project is critical for job creation and business growth in Beaver County and across the region," said Congressman Altmire. "The federal highway bill is reauthorized once every 5 years and will come up for consideration next year. The reauthorization will provide us with an opportunity to secure funding for the project to get it moving toward completion. This project continues to be one of my top priorities."

To date, over \$11 million in federal funding has been secured for the Project, paying for Engineering and Design, and includes \$3 million for Right of Way Acquisition. Commissioner Charles Camp, who also serves as Vice Chairman of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission (SPC), which prioritizes transportation projects for federal and state funding, stated that *"Our biggest hurdle is to spend the Right-of-Way money that is sitting there. PennDOT must purchase that property to enable the Project to go forward because it will promote a multimodal distribution center with Conway Yards, which is one of the largest railroad switch yards in North America"*.

Beaver County Commissioners Chairman Tony Anadio stated that *"Companies won't locate in Beaver County if they don't have direct shipping routes. The Project will reduce congestion and provide a safe and direct truck route to the Pennsylvania Turnpike, Interstate 79 and Cranberry"*.

Commissioner Joe Spanik, who also serves as a Member of the Board of the SPC, stated that *"Along with the positive economic impact the Project will have on Beaver County, it will eliminate unsafe and unnecessary detours for emergency responders who know that every second on the road is vital as they travel to provide critical help to residents of our communities"*.

The Project begins at State Route 65 in Conway, across from Conway Yards, and extends through New Sewickley to Route 989.

Along with the Beaver County Board of Commissioners, Congressman Altmire was joined at the meeting by Conway Council President Greg Ritorto; New Sewickley Supervisors Joe Graff, Dale Kryder and Duane Rape and New Sewickley Manager Rob Barto. Congressman Altmire serves on the U.S. House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, which has jurisdiction over the federal surface transportation reauthorization legislation which will be written in 2009. The last federal surface transportation reauthorization bill was enacted into law in August of 2005.