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CALAVERAS COUNCIL  
of GOVERNMENTS

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** CCOG

**FROM:** Executive Director

**DATE:** January 31, 2006

**SUBJECT: Equity Bonus Proposal**

### **Background:**

After a two-year delay, the Federal Reauthorization for distribution of the 18-cent federal gas tax was passed by Congress and signed by President Bush. Under the new Act referred to as SAFETEA-LU, California will receive a 34% increase in revenues over TEA 21 the previous federal act. This is estimated to result in approximately \$5 billion more in revenues for California's transportation needs above those received in the 6-years of the previous act.

A coalition was formed over two years ago and dedicated its efforts to maximize the return of revenue to California in spite of differing perspectives and sometimes conflicting priorities. Now work begins on implementing SAFETEA-LU at the State level to ensure the Schwarzenegger Administration and State Legislature adopt an equitable approach for distribution of these revenues. Federal monies directed to the rural or secondary highway system have been frozen at 1991 levels.

### **Discussion:**

This proposal is important for the following reasons:

- The secondary highway system is a critical component to a seamless statewide transportation system.
- The needs or neglect of the local system is well documented from the SR 8 (Burton) Report done in May 1999 and subsequent surveys that show only 3 of California's counties can meet 20-year repaving cycles. In fact, 34 counties are only able to repave every 50 years, while 21 of those are beyond a 100-year repaving cycle.
- The Road Information Program (TRIP) found that rural roads have more than double the fatality rate of Interstates and Freeways and California is ranked in the top 5 states for rural road fatalities.

The Executive Directors from several rural and urban counties have been working at the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) to develop a proposal to put more equity in the sharing of increase in Surface Transportation Program (STP) dollars expected to come to California in the coming years. The initial increase is projected at \$208M per year. Language has been drafted for a bill currently seeking an author. CSAC is working with the Governor's office in identifying sponsorship. If successful, the bill could help reverse the inequity in the RSTP which has directed money to cities and counties frozen at the 1991 levels established in the original ISTEA legislation.