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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

METRO GOLD LINE LAUDS CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION FOR PROVISIONS IN TRANSPORTATION BILL TO EXPEDITE PROJECT DELIVERY, REDUCE COSTS, AND CREATE JOBS

MONROVIA, CA - Metro Gold Line Foothill Extension Construction Authority (Construction Authority) Chair and Glendora Mayor Douglas Tessitor today thanked Congressional Representatives Adam Schiff, Grace Napolitano, Judy Chu and David Dreier for their leadership in including language in the recently enacted surface transportation bill to help expedite transit projects like the Gold Line Foothill Extension. "Our delegation is to be commended for their efforts to deliver critical public transportation to the citizens of our region and our state in a timely way which will help reduce costs and put people to work," Tessitor said.

Since enactment of the last surface transportation bill (SAFETEA-LU), California had participated in a pilot project which allowed the state to handle both state and federal environmental reviews for highway projects, thus eliminating time consuming and costly duplication.

Tessitor said that the Construction Authority had worked hard in Washington over the last year-and-a-half during negotiations on the federal transportation bill to advocate expansion of this so-called NEPA delegation program to include transit projects as well. "Our Congressional delegation worked tirelessly on our behalf in support of extending the benefits of the highly successful NEPA delegation program to transit and rail projects."

Habib F. Balian, CEO of the Construction Authority, added "including mass transit was a logical extension of this environmental streamlining program, especially in California, since traffic congestion and air quality conditions in many areas of our state make mass transit not just nice to have, but an absolute imperative." He also cited cost savings and job creation numbers which can be derived through making the environmental review process more productive. "For a transit project like the Gold Line costing \$500 million or more, every month of delay costs millions," Balian noted. "In addition a project of this size involves about 7,000 jobs (2,600 construction jobs alone), so delays in putting people to work also have an economic cost."

Balian noted that the extension of the language to include transit and rail projects in efforts to expedite environmental reviews can benefit not just the Gold Line, but a number of other projects in the L.A. area as well. He cited as examples the Regional Connector, the subway extension and Crenshaw projects to name a few which could possibly benefit from these changes to federal regulations.

With the delegation of NEPA compliance to our state department of transportation, CALTRANS, the state was able to reduce delays by 14 to 20 months for highway projects. This helped lower project costs and expedite job creation and economic benefits, without in any way short-changing any legal requirements or adversely affecting the environment. "We thought that it made sense to build upon the success of this program for

highway projects by extending it to transit projects," explained Tessitor, "so we asked our Congressional delegation to help make this happen, and they did."

He noted that state and local governments face an increasing quagmire of duplicative and unnecessary reviews, which increases transportation gridlock, delays safety improvements, escalates costs, and thwarts job creation. "And the ironic thing about duplicative environmental reviews," he said, "is that they impede the very clean air benefits that are the point of environmental regulations in the first place. With the help of our delegation in Congress, we were able to make a compelling case for including transit and rail projects, along with highway projects, in efforts to streamline project delivery."

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About the Metro Gold Line Foothill Extension Construction Authority (Construction Authority)

The Construction Authority is an independent transportation planning and construction agency created in 1999 by the California State Legislature. Its purpose is to extend the Metro Gold Line light rail line from Union Station to the Los Angeles County Line, along the foothills of the San Gabriel Valley. The Construction Authority built the initial segment from Union Station to Pasadena and is underway on the Gold Line Foothill Extension. The Foothill Extension is a nearly \$1.6 billion extension that will connect Pasadena to Montclair in two construction segments. The first segment, Pasadena to Azusa, is funded by Los Angeles County's Measure R and currently underway. The 11.5-mile Pasadena to Azusa segment will be completed in 2015 and includes future stations in the cities of Arcadia, Monrovia, Duarte, Irwindale and Azusa. Three design-build contracts, totaling more than \$500 million will be overseen by the Construction Authority to complete the Pasadena to Azusa segment, including the \$18.6 million I-210 Gold Line Bridge, awarded to Skanska USA in June 2010 and a \$486 million contract awarded in July 2011 to Foothill Transit Constructors (FTC). The Azusa to Montclair segment is currently undergoing final environmental review.

For more information, visit: www.foothillextension.org.