

Washington, D.C. (June 29, 2012) – Today, Rep. Jan Schakowsky released the following statement after House passage of HR 4348, the Surface Transportation Extension Act, a bill to extend funding for federal highway, highway safety, motor carrier safety, flood insurance programs as well as prevents student loan interest rates from rising

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“Today the House passed H.R. 4348, the Surface Transportation Extension Act. This agreement will save or create nearly 2 million jobs – including 70,000 in Illinois – and improve the safety and efficiency of our roads, bridges, and mass transit. Though I am glad that we were able to pass a long-term bill, this action should have taken place months ago.

The Senate passed a similar bill with 74 votes – including 22 Republicans – more than three months ago, and I sponsored the House version of that legislation. We should have sent that bill to the President’s desk last March. Instead, the 9th Congressional District has suffered over the past 100-plus days as worthy transportation projects awaited stable funding and construction workers sought employment.

This legislation also prevents student loan rates from doubling and will extend the National Flood Insurance Program. More than 350,000 Illinois student borrowers now know that their costs for the next school year will not increase by an average of \$1,061. A long-term extension of flood insurance means Illinois families won’t have to worry every few months about their coverage expiring, and will give homebuyers needed certainty as they purchase their homes.

I am concerned about several provisions insisted upon by Republicans that limit public input

and expedite important environmental reviews of transportation projects. I also disapprove of the consolidation of programs and the reduction of funding for programs that fund pedestrian trails, walkways, and bike paths which are important to my district. Nonetheless, this legislation will improve our transportation system, ensure academic and economic opportunity for our students, and protect families and communities from future flood damage.”

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