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## **Working with 5 Former U.S. Transportation Secs., Miller Center Releases Report on How to Sell U.S. Public on Need to Invest in Infrastructure**

Washington, D.C. -- Working with five former U.S. transportation secretaries and dozens of the nation's top transportation thinkers, the University of Virginia's Miller Center has released a new report proposing practical, actionable ways to sell the American public on the need to invest in the nation's transportation infrastructure. With the nation's roads in disrepair, projects for the future sidelined, the Highway Trust Fund needing chronic bail-outs, and Congress unable to agree on a solution, the report aims to raise public awareness about an issue that greatly affects the U.S. economy.

"Are We There Yet? Selling America on Transportation," can be found at <http://millercenter.org/policy/transportation>.

"There is a lack of confidence and trust in the ability of policymakers to make good decisions in transportation policy and planning. And without a mandate from a broader public, most policymakers don't want to risk reforming the current system in a political landscape fraught with many other challenges and competing demands," said former Transportation Secretaries Norman Mineta and Samuel Skinner, who co-chaired the Miller Center's David R. Goode National Transportation Policy Conference on which the report is based.

"This report provides a roadmap for effectively capturing the nation's attention and uniting the American people behind a compelling message about the urgent need for investment, innovation, and improvement in our transportation systems," said Gov. Gerald L. Baliles, director and CEO of the Miller Center. "We hope it captures the attention of the American public and that Congress and the administration are compelled to act."

The report recommends a detailed communications strategy to draw attention to the nation's transportation challenges, including messages that would be compelling to a broad audience. There are four key elements:

- A positive, forward-looking tone that frames the transportation debate around issues of economic growth, jobs, U.S. competitiveness, combined with quality of life.

- A well-defined but flexible campaign plan that is keyed to the rhythms of an election year and to important events in the transportation calendar.
- A focus on building broader engagement through effective, targeted use of traditional media and social media.
- A concerted effort to link local transportation investment opportunities and benefits to national-level policy decisions.

The report is based on a two-day conference the Miller Center hosted in its Washington, D.C. office last November at which more than 60 transportation experts strategized, including five former U.S. transportation secretaries. Besides Mineta and Skinner, other former secretaries taking part included James Burnley, Rodney Slater and Mary Peters. Rep. John Mica, chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, also delivered remarks at the gathering.

The Miller Center released the report at an event in the hearing room of the House Transportation Committee on Capitol Hill. Following opening remarks by Mineta and Skinner, a panel discussed how raising public awareness can lead to much-needed change in transportation policymaking. Participants included:

- Jeff Shane, former under secretary for policy, U.S. Transportation Department; partner, Hogan Lovells
- Marcia Hale, director, Building America's Future Education Fund
- Emil Frankel, director of transportation studies, Bipartisan Policy Center
- James Corless, director, Transportation for America

In 2010, the Miller Center, working with Mineta and Skinner, released a report outlining 10 recommendations to fix the nation's overburdened transportation system. Later that year, Mineta and Skinner briefed President Obama, who praised the report in a White House press conference. That report is available at <http://millercenter.org/policy/transportation>.

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