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April 18, 2012

WASHINGTON – Congressman Charles F. Bass (NH-02) issued the following statement today after the House of Representatives passed legislation to extend the authorization of surface transportation programs through September 30th to give House and Senate conferees time to negotiate a conference report. The current authorization is set to expire on June 30th.

The legislation also requires the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to issue a permit for the construction of the Keystone XL pipeline within 30 days of receiving an application.

Bass said:

"I voted against this bill today because I have serious concerns about the unrelated provision short-circuiting the presidential permitting process for projects like the Keystone XL pipeline and what expediting that approval process could mean for other projects like Northern Pass.

"It is time to move past political gimmicks and finish the work on a transportation bill that is going to help fix our roads and bridges. Our state and local communities need to have the certainty and stability to plan road construction projects. A long-term plan is extremely important to moving forward with numerous projects in New Hampshire such as the widening of I-93 from Salem to Manchester, which, as most Granite Staters know, is completely inadequate right now to handle the amount of traffic traveling over it every day.

"I hope House and Senate Leadership can come together and work out a bipartisan solution so we do not jeopardize the safety and viability of our roadways."

Last month, Bass joined two other Republicans and three Democrats to send a letter to House Leadership urging them to reconcile any differences and take up the House version of the Senate Highway Bill (S. 1813, the Mobility, Access and Progress for the 21st Century Act, or MAP-21).

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