

News from U.S. Rep. John Spratt (D-SC)

Assistant to the Democratic Leader

Ranking Member, Committee on the Budget

US House of Representatives – Washington, DC

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Spratt Secures \$1.4 million for Interchange

WASHINGTON – U.S. Rep. John Spratt (D-SC) announced that the House today passed his request for \$1.4 million to upgrade the interchange at Interstate 95 and SC-327 north of Florence. The money was included in the Omnibus Appropriations Act.

Spratt said the money would be used to expand the interchange to handle a larger volume of traffic, with new ramps and more lanes.

“The current interchange is undersized,” said Spratt. “The on-ramps are so tight that a number of trucks have overturned. Cars are forced to cross several lanes of traffic to enter the highway. And there have been delays that last for hours during peak tourist season. These upgrades will make a big difference.”

The I-95/SC 327 interchange is one of the major access points to South Carolina’s Grand Strand. Over 42,000 vehicles travel the stretch of I-95 daily, and close to 12 million visit the Myrtle Beach area each year.

“This project,” said Spratt, “will ensure that tourists can reach the beach safely and easily, and it will spur economic development along the way.”

Spratt pointed out that the interchange is adjacent to a newly established 700-acre industrial park being developed by Pee Dee Electric Cooperative. “This park is ripe for development, and these upgrades will help get it in the take-off stage,” Spratt said.

The interchange will serve districts represented by Rep. Spratt and Rep. Jim Clyburn (D-SC), who sits on the Appropriations Committee. Spratt credited Clyburn for “his key role and enormous help” in securing this money.

Although it has passed the House, the Omnibus Appropriations Act might not be considered by the Senate until mid-January. “Until the omnibus bill passes the Senate, and the President signs it, provisions of this kind are still in play,” said Spratt. “But Senator Hollings has been a great help in the Senate, and with his help, we are optimistic that it will pass.”

Spratt acknowledged that this appropriation is only a down-payment on what all of the interchange improvements will cost. He pledged his continuing efforts to obtain additional funding in the future, but stressed that the South Carolina Department of Transportation will have to bear a sizable share of the cost for this project to be fully completed.

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