
U.S. Representative

John Spratt

South Carolina ■ 5th District

News Release

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**Spratt Announces \$9.75 Million in
Federal Aid to Rebuild S.C. Highway 5**

WASHINGTON — U.S. Rep. John Spratt (D-SC) had great news today for York and Cherokee Counties: \$9.75 million in federal aid to rebuild S.C. Highway 5 between I-77 and I-85. At Spratt's request, the funds were included in the annual transportation appropriations bill, which the House passed today. Senate approval should come soon, after which the President is expected to sign the bill into law.

“Improvements to Highway 5 can now move forward,” said Spratt. “The road can be relocated, widened, and rebuilt, without compromising the original plans.”

“Of all the projects in the county's road-building program, this is the one that benefits western York County,” said Spratt, “and I wanted to see this project done, and done right.”

Spratt said he often drives Highway 5 between York and Blacksburg. “Anyone who travels the road knows it was not built to handle the heavy traffic it bears today. The road is not safe, and in its current condition, there's no way it can be a connector linking I-77 and I-85.”

B. Bayles Mack, 5th District Highway Commissioner, agreed with Spratt and said, “These additional funds mean that we can complete all the improvements in Cherokee County from the new interchange on I-85 to S.C. Highway 5, and then improve Highway 5 from Blacksburg to York according to the highest safety standards. York County has proposed changes to the Highway 5 plans to save \$2 million, which concerned the Department of Transportation because the changes could have compromised road safety. Fortunately, with this additional money, we will be able to rebuild Highway 5 according to the original plans and the highest safety standards. John Spratt deserves great credit for getting this money. It's a godsend to the Highway 5 project.”

Spratt requested the highway money months ago, mindful of a \$28 million shortfall in the county's road-building program. “The money was not available initially because the Republican budget resolution allocated only a minimal increase for highways. When the Appropriations Committee decided to expand funding for transportation, my request came back into play. I

made my case and won the money,” he said.

“The \$9.75 million in additional funding is truly additional,” said Spratt. “It won’t come out of South Carolina’s annual allotment of federal highway funds — it’s money over and above our allotment. The Appropriations Committee not only funded my request, but specified that these are “new” funds, not just an earmark out of funds we’d get anyway. So, this money won’t come at the expense of any existing or planned work, which is more good news for our counties.”

Spratt also noted that the bill passed today by the House includes \$5 million for development of a light rail corridor southward from Charlotte to the NC/SC state line. “I first obtained \$500,000 to do a corridor study for a light rail commuter line between Charlotte and Rock Hill in 1991 and another \$1 million last year,” said Spratt. “When Charlotte and Mecklenburg County asked for my help on this next step, I gladly teamed up with Reps. Mel Watt (D-NC) and Sue Myrick (R-NC) to get the money appropriated. The first link to be built lies in Mecklenburg County, but if light rail ever comes to York County, this money will have paved the way.”

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