



November 24, 2008

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Rahall Transportation Institute Hosts First Public Demonstrations of New Light-Emitting Ceramic Technologies that Identify and Enhance Old Main Corridor Project, Are Testing for Safety Applications in Cooperation with CSX Transportation; Lighting Technologies May Improve Rail Crossing Safety, Help Revitalize Downtown Areas

HUNTINGTON, W.Va. -- On Monday, November 24, 2008, researchers from the Rahall Transportation Institute (RTI) will host the first public demonstrations of new light-emitting ceramic technologies that are being used to identify and enhance the Old Main Corridor Project and are being tested for safety applications at highway/railroad grade crossings in cooperation with CSX transportation.

The demonstrations takes place at 6:30 p.m. at the Keith Albee Performing Arts Center, 925 4th Ave., and at 7 p.m. at the CSX Locomotive Shop, located between 22/23rd St. and 5th Ave., (behind Steiner's and Marshall Day Care Center). U.S. Congressman Nick J. Rahall, II is joined by Marshall University President Stephen Kopp and representatives from the United States Department of Transportation Research and Innovative Technology Division, Appalachian Regional Commission, CSX Transportation, Rahall Transportation Institute (RTI) and Old Main Corridor Project.

The lighting, which is energy efficient, weatherproof, waterproof, bulletproof and shatter resistant, was created through research conducted at RTI and Marshall University. As part of the Old Main Corridor Project, medallions that feature the lighting will be embedded into sidewalks along 4th Ave. Medallions identify the corridor, improve safety by illuminating the area and contribute to a more aesthetic

-- more --

atmosphere. These improvements were designed with the Old Main Corridor's intentions of revitalizing Huntington's downtown area to attract more consumers to visit entertainment venues and retail stores. Huntington is the first city to use the lighting, which was purchased by a national transportation enhancement grant.

The first full scale, public demonstration of the technology as applied to road, river and rail projects takes place at the CSX Locomotive Shop at 7 p.m. RTI is testing railroad cross bucks that feature the new lighting technology to help improve visibility at highway/railroad crossings and thus reduce incidents between vehicles and trains. To prevent rail-highway collisions, motorists should observe all traffic laws and yield to trains, which cannot stop quickly. This new technology also has reflective and anti-glare properties; safety vests, life jackets and other applications that utilize these features will be demonstrated.

Research funds for the new lighting and railroad technologies were made possible through the efforts of Senator Robert C. Byrd, and U.S. Rep. Nick J. Rahall, II. Rahall is a senior member of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and serves on four panels of the Committee: Highways and Transit, Railroads, Aviation and Water Resources and Environment. He was a key architect in formulating the Transportation Equity Act of the 21st Century, through which he established RTI and helped it win designation as a National Maritime Enhancement Institute. Rahall also played a key role in developing the Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users in 2005, through which West Virginia receives an average of more than \$400 million per year for highway improvements through 2009.

The new lighting technology has also resulted in the creation of ECER Technologies, a Greenbrier County-based small business that manufactures products that feature the lighting, including identification signs, house markers, bedside lamps and industrial applications. As more businesses find uses for the new lighting technology, ECER Technologies has the potential to expand to provide manufacturing jobs to Southern West Virginia.

For more information, contact Errin Jewell, Public Affairs Specialist at 304-687-3353 or jewell4@njrati.org.

“Building Jobs through Transportation”

###