Official Statement

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**Civil Engineers Encouraged by**

**New Surface Transportation Bill**

Washington, D.C. – The following is a statement by Robert D. Stevens, PhD, PE, president of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) on the U.S. Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works mark-up of the “Developing a Reliable and Innovative Vision for the Economy (DRIVE)” Act:

“Senators Inhofe, Boxer, Vitter, and Carper’s bill to address America’s surface transportation needs is a positive stride toward fixing the Highway Trust Fund before the July 31 deadline. The DRIVE Act achieves many of the goals that we as civil engineers believe must be addressed in the next surface transportation reauthorization and accomplishes these goals in a bipartisan fashion.

“After so many short-term program extensions, it is encouraging that the DRIVE Act is a six-year bill that increases investment and grows the program. This legislation continues MAP-21’s focus on performance and program outcomes, funds a new freight program, creates a competitive grant program for large projects, explores future user-fee based funding mechanisms through a state-based pilot program, and improves the project delivery process by streamlining regulations. These are all landmarks of the kind of bill that needs to be sent to President Obama’s desk by the end of next month.

“While this legislation would not fully address the long backlog of needs of our aging surface transportation network, it is a clear signal that investment in our deteriorating roads, bridges, and transit systems is a federal priority. To fully modernize our transportation network, it will take continued leadership at all levels of government.

“Congress’ work on this is far from over. The DRIVE Act still faces the challenge of securing sufficient funding. These past few weeks have been highly productive in addressing our surface transportation needs and this activity must accelerate in the coming month. To truly fix the Highway Trust Fund, Congress must raise the gas tax or come up with another long-term, sustainable funding solution. If not, our aging surface transportation will continue to be a drag of the economy.”