



AMERICAN COUNCIL OF ENGINEERING COMPANIES

**NEWS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **ACEC Urges House Passage of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009; Repeal of Unfair 3% Withholding Mandate**

**WASHINGTON**—The American Council of Engineering Companies today urged the House of Representatives to quickly pass the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

ACEC President and CEO David A. Raymond said: “These are critical investments in the nation’s transportation, environmental, structural and energy infrastructure. The engineering industry is poised to assist state and local governments in taking on the additional planning, procurement, construction design and project management to ensure that these investments are injected into the economy rapidly.”

In a letter to Congress (full text below) Raymond also emphasized that state and local governments should be prepared to use these funds to move projects forward quickly to create new jobs, but also accommodate major infrastructure upgrades, not just take care of deferred maintenance.

He added that projects that increase capacity, reduce congestion, improve safety, protect the environment, and address the nation’s energy needs will sustain economic recovery over the long-term and foster the future competitiveness of our nation.

“We are also encouraged that the bill repeals the onerous 3 percent withholding mandate,” Raymond said. “If allowed to take effect, this mandate would have placed unfunded burdens on state and local governments and negatively affected businesses that provide critical services to the public.”

### **Raymond’s letter to Congress:**

Dear Member of Congress:

On behalf of the American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC) – the voice of America’s engineering industry – I encourage you to support the infrastructure investments and business tax components of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

ACEC strongly supports the highest funding levels possible for critical investments in the nation's transportation, environmental, and energy infrastructure, as well as funding to build and upgrade public buildings. Significant investment in the nation's infrastructure will create an immediate boost in job creation and retention, and support a sustainable economic recovery for years to come. Studies show that \$1 billion in infrastructure spending supports over 34,000 jobs. Each dollar invested in highway and transit construction generates \$1.80 of GDP in the near term.

In recent days, there have been questions raised about the timely distribution of infrastructure funding contained in the legislation. We believe these investments can be injected into the economy quickly, and we are confident in the ability of engineering firms in your state to provide the support necessary to enable state and local agencies to put these dollars to work. Obligation deadlines should press state and local governments to move projects forward quickly to create jobs, but should also allow for major infrastructure upgrades – such as projects that increase capacity, reduce congestion, improve safety, protect the environment, and address the nation's energy needs.

ACEC also supports strong language to ensure that states are undertaking worthwhile projects and not simply replacing already-planned state funding with federal recovery funds. To further maximize the economic impact of stimulus funding, I strongly recommend that you ensure that stimulus funds are invested in the private sector, putting the emphasis on growing the economy, not the size of government.

Finally, ACEC strongly supports the language in the bill to repeal the onerous 3 percent withholding mandate which, if allowed to take effect, will place unfunded burdens on state and local governments and negatively impact businesses that provide critical services to the public.

Thank you for your consideration and your commitment to rebuilding the nation's economy.

Sincerely,

David A. Raymond

*The American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC) is the business association of America's engineering industry, representing approximately 5,700 independent engineering companies throughout the United States engaged in the development of America's transportation, environmental, industrial, and other infrastructure. Founded in 1909 and headquartered in Washington, D.C., ACEC is a national federation of 51 state and regional organizations.*