



# LINCOLN CHAFEE

## U.S. SENATOR

### RHODE ISLAND

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CONTACT: Stephen Hourahan  
202-224-6167

## HIGHWAY BILL APPROVED BY SENATE

### *Bill Includes Chafee Authored Provision For Warwick Station*

WASHINGTON, DC – Environment and Public Works Committee member, Senator Lincoln Chafee praised the Senate’s approval last night of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible and Efficient Transportation Efficiency Act of 2004 by a vote of 76 to 21. The legislation authorizes federal spending of \$318 billion over the next six years for highway, mass transit, and safety programs.

Under the legislation, Rhode Island would receive \$1.224 billion through 2009 for construction and maintenance of highways and bridges. This is an increase of \$238 million, or 24.1 percent, from the levels received by Rhode Island during the previous six fiscal years, 1998 – 2003.

“It is vitally important to invest in our transportation infrastructure, ensuring that Rhode Islanders have safe and efficient means to move on our highways and transit systems. These critical dollars will create new construction jobs and boost the economic well being of our state,” Chafee said.

“I am particularly pleased that I was able to work with my Committee Chairman to include language in the bill allowing Rhode Island to shift existing unused fund to the Warwick Station Project. This project, when it is completed, will be one of the first truly intermodal facilities in the U.S., combining AMTRAK, the Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority and T.F. Green Airport into a seamless transportation system. Warwick Station will save travelers time, help the environment and most important, be a spur for economic development.” Chafee continued

In addition, Rhode Island would receive more than \$117 million in federal assistance for mass transit programs. This represents an increase of \$52 million, or 80 percent, from funds received by Rhode Island during the previous six fiscal years.

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**The legislation, as approved by the Senate, includes an amendment offered by Senator Chafee to allow Rhode Island to spend federal transportation funds on the Warwick Intermodal Station, including the construction of the proposed people mover between Warwick Station and T.F. Green Airport. Senator Chafee's amendment could provide between \$30 and 40 million, which was previously unavailable for use at Warwick Station.**

The legislation also includes several other amendments sponsored by Senator Chafee:

Stormwater:

This amendment will provide critical new resources to address stormwater runoff associated with our nation's federal highway system. The amendment sets aside \$958 million to aid state and local governments in reducing pollution from stormwater runoff from roads and highways. These resources are vital as states and municipalities struggle to come into compliance with the requirements of the Clean Water Act.

Historic battlefields:

An amendment to clarify that acquisition and preservation of the nation's historic battlefields continue to be an eligible transportation enhancement activity. This amendment protects these national treasures.

Environmental Streamlining:

This amendment clarifies the legal responsibilities of an agency cooperating with the DOT in an environmental review. It makes it clear that the cooperating agency is required to uphold other obligations specified under existing laws. The amendment encourages the cooperation between agencies spelled out in the bill, but also clearly lays out their responsibilities.

Historic Preservation:

This amendment eliminated attempts to exempt projects associated with interstate highways from the process designed to protect sites of historic significance (called 4(f)). Section 4(f) has helped preserve many historic and natural resources across the nation and this amendment ensures that tradition will be continued.