

TRANSPORTATION, THE ECONOMY, AND RECORD PAC GIVING

There is no greater champion of this nation's transportation infrastructure than U.S. Secretary of Transportation Norman Mineta. While in Congress, he took the lead in transportation programs; now he plays that role for President Bush.



Dan DeYoung (left) with Secretary Mineta and
Dave Raymond (right).

In an exclusive interview with Secretary Mineta in his office in Washington, D.C. (see p. 12), we discussed federal highway funding, the TEA-21 reauthorization drive, and post-Sept. 11 security concerns as they relate to transportation projects. The secretary was candid and engaging, providing an early look at the core principles he has drafted to guide the Department of Transportation through the TEA-21 reauthorization process. He also briefed us on the implementation of airport security upgrades and other aspects of the new Transportation Security Act.

The secretary's views track many aspects of the statement of principles that ACEC's Transportation Committee has

developed (see p. 20) to assist Congress with TEA-21 reauthorization.

Congress already appears receptive to the first principle, which calls for increased transportation funding. The House and the Senate have both approved legislation to restore \$4.4 billion and \$5.7 billion, respectively, in federal highway funding (see "Legislative Action," p. 10).

ACEC members can take considerable credit for this outcome, as your lobbying efforts during Consulting Congress Day had a direct impact. "Legislative Action" also details ACEC's success in killing an anti-outsourcing amendment in the House and progress toward passage of a comprehensive water bill.

Our Annual Convention in Las Vegas (see "News and Notes," p. 9), with nearly 900 attendees, was noteworthy in many ways. ACEC's Political Action Committee raised a record \$60,000, and our board of directors approved a new strategic plan that will guide the Council's activities for years to come.

This issue of *Engineering Inc.* also includes the first of a two-part series examining the state of the economy as it relates to engineering firms (see p. 16), and a look at the benefits—and challenges—of using electronic file sharing as part of the design process (see p. 22). As always, we welcome your feedback and suggestions.

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