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Contact: Catherine DeLoughry
Allegheny Conference on
Community Development and
Affiliates
(412) 281-4783, Ext. 3131
cdeloughry@allegHENYconference.org

***Statement from Dennis Yablonsky, CEO, Allegheny Conference on Community Development
on the re-designation of Rt 60 and Rts 22/30 as Interstate 376 (I-376)***

“The re-designation of PA Route 60 and Routes 22/30 as Interstate I-376 today is one more important step in putting southwestern Pennsylvania on the map for more business investment. This re-designation makes clear to everyone that we have an interstate highway system that connects to Pittsburgh International Airport, to the Turnpike and to I-80.

When businesses are looking to expand or move here one of the first considerations is transportation access. Today's announcement will help move the Pittsburgh region onto the lists of site selection consultants and other business investment decisionmakers. Our region already has a great position on that map- within 500 miles of almost half of the US and Canadian population - and the extended I-376 is one more way to reach both that market and that potential workforce.

The re-designation today would not have happened without a lot of hard work and planning. Back in 2002, the Allegheny Conference invited the Urban Land Institute to do a study to identify key barriers our region needed to address to improve our ability to attract more business investment to southwestern Pennsylvania, particularly in the Airport Corridor. The recommendation of that blue ribbon panel was clear - business decision makers want to be along an interstate and we had the potential of that interstate in the re-designation of I-376.

The Tri-County Airport Partnership of the Airport Authority and Allegheny, Beaver and Washington county leadership was formed in 2003 and made the interstate designation a top priority. The Greater Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce, an affiliate of the Allegheny Conference on Community Development, worked with the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission to ensure that the I-376 designation was a top advocacy priority in Harrisburg and Washington, DC for the SAFETEA-LU legislation in 2005.

PennDOT, the PA Turnpike Commission and the Federal Highway Administration subsequently made the re-designation a priority and, as we can see, today, a reality. The recent allocation of federal stimulus funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act accelerated their efforts and made the re-designation possible even sooner.

On behalf of the Allegheny Conference, I extend our congratulations and appreciation to all of the many partners who made this re-designation possible and are working every day to put our region on the map for investment and job creation.”

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