Contact: John Grubb
Bay Area Council
Office: 415-981-6600
Cell: 415-847-6320
jgrubb@bayareacouncil.org

BAY AREA COUNCIL

Bay Area Council Applauds Renewed Commitment to Transportation by State and Federal Governments

Approximately $456 Million for Region from Washington and Sacramento Announced This Week

Business Group Lobbied Hard for Release of Funds

SAN FRANCISCO, July 18, 2005 – Today, the Bay Area Council expressed its appreciation for the state and federal governments' renewed emphasis on transportation funding, an emphasis that will bring needed congestions relief to the nine-county Bay Area. Congress reached an agreement on a new federal highway bill that should bring about $300 million to the Bay Area. Also today, California Business Transportation and Housing Secretary, Sunne Wright McPeak – former CEO of the Bay Area Council – announced that the region would receive $156 million from California's Proposition 42 funds. Secretary McPeak's announcement reflects only a 40% segment of the total Prop 42. funds, and millions more should still come to the region from the state.

Several recent studies have made clear the seriousness of the Bay Area's transportation crisis. In seven of the past eight years, Bay Area residents have cited transportation as the top problem facing the region in Bay Area Council polls. A recent national study by the Texas Transportation Institute found that the Bay Area has the second worst traffic in the country, behind only Los Angeles. Additionally, the Road Information Program, a nonprofit research organization based in Washington D.C., recently found that condition of roads in the Bay Area are among the worst in the nation and cost Bay Area residents nearly $700 a year in additional car repairs.

"I am pleased that at a time when it seems nothing else is moving through either Sacramento or Washington, at least transportation funds are starting to flow," said Jim Wunderman, President and CEO of the Bay Area Council. "Our member employers and the residents of the Bay Area wish conditions hadn't had to get this bad for lawmakers to understand the urgency. But at least now we can begin to literally move forward."

Under Wunderman, the Bay Area Council has placed a heavy focus on transportation in its lobbying and advocacy efforts. In the past 12 months, the Council co-chaired a 3-county electoral campaign to raise almost $1 billion for BART's seismic safety improvements. The election overcame previous opposition with a 2/3 majority of the popular vote. The Council also drove support for five countywide transportation sales tax measures, four of which passed by the necessary 2/3 margin. This win guaranteed $5 billion for future transportation projects in the region.

In Spring 2005, the Council was responsible for a campaign that helped convinced Sacramento to take gas tax transportation revenues dedicated by 2001's Proposition 42, but diverted to the general fund, and transfer them back to transportation uses. This campaign, also executed by the California Alliance for Jobs, freed up $1.3 billion of Prop 42 money statewide. Of this,

approximately $260 million will eventually be reallocated to the Bay Area, and today's announcement by Secretary McPeak is a portion of those funds.

The Council also successfully campaigned to insure that, prior to the next BART contract, the agency would erase its 4-year, $100 million deficit, without raising fares or cutting service. This left BART in a much better position to plan for the South Bay/San Jose expansion advocated by the Council since the 1950s.

# # #

Bay Area Council
Founded in 1945, the Bay Area Council (www.bayareacouncil.org) develops and drives regional public policy initiatives and critical infrastructure issues. Led by CEOs, the Bay Area Council presents a strong, united voice for more than 275 of the largest employers throughout the Bay Area region in promoting economic prosperity and quality of life. Jim Wunderman has served as president and CEO of the Bay Area Council since April of 2004.