



Metro

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Former Transportation Appropriations Chairman to Run for Governor in Oklahoma

Rep. Ernest Istook (R-OK), who until earlier this year served as chairman of the House Transportation Appropriations Subcommittee, yesterday announced his candidacy for Governor of Oklahoma.

Istook is a very familiar figure to us. He visited Los Angeles last year and toured the Eastside light rail project. Seeing the alignment and getting an up-close view of the community played a role in altering his perception of the project, which he initially viewed as lacking in cost-effectiveness and therefore not worthy of federal support. His subsequent decision to back the project helped clear the way for a Full Funding Grant Agreement that the FTA finalized in June 2004. Despite his original concerns with Eastside, we were fortunate to have developed a very positive and successful relationship with him.

Although several other Republican candidates are already in the race to unseat Democratic Governor Brad Henry, Istook enters the contest as the highest-profile Republican. He will leave Congress next year after having served seven terms in office.

APTA Peer Review Panel Membership Now Complete

Congressman Henry Waxman (D-30) has selected two individuals to serve on the American Public Transportation Association's (APTA) Peer Review panel that will convene later this month to examine the public safety issues related to tunneling along the Wilshire Corridor. APTA had named three members to the panel several weeks ago. The five-member panel will meet in Los Angeles on October 24th and provide a report of their findings shortly thereafter. The two panel members selected by Congressman Waxman are Fred N. Kissell, an expert in dust and methane control for mining and tunneling and John T. Christian, a geotechnical engineering expert.

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