

**STATE TRANSPORTATION BOARD
OF GEORGIA**

PRESS RELEASE

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**RUDY BOWEN ELECTED CHAIRMAN OF STATE
TRANSPORTATION BOARD**

ATLANTA – The State Transportation Board today unanimously elected Rudy Bowen of Suwanee as its Chairman. Bowen joined the Board in 2007 and was re-elected to a 5-year term this past April by a caucus of state representatives and senators from the 7th Congressional District. Also today, Board Member Johnny Floyd of Cordele was unanimously elected Board Vice Chairman.

Following the meeting, Bowen, who succeeds Bill Kuhlke of Augusta as Chairman, said he appreciated the support of his fellow Board members and looked forward to working with Department staff. “We have much work to accomplish. The budget remains constrained and we have to do more with less. We’ve been doing that, but we have to be more innovative with policies and planning.”



In other business the Board approved the July bid letting which includes a project to convert 15 miles of existing High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes to High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lanes on I-85 from Chamblee Tucker Road, just south of I-285, north to Old Peachtree Road. Assuming acceptable bids are submitted in that letting and a contract awarded, construction on the conversion project is scheduled to begin in mid-August, with the HOT lane opened to traffic in mid-summer 2011.

The I-85 Express Lanes is a demonstration project funded by the U.S. Department of Transportation Congestion Reduction Demonstration (CRD) Program Grant, awarded to Georgia in November, 2008. The CRD allows for the conversion of the existing HOV lanes to HOT lanes. Different from HOV lanes that allow carpoolers to shorten their commute times, HOT lanes offer all motorists, even Single Occupancy Vehicles (SOV), more reliable trip times for the cost of a toll to use the lanes. Tolls will vary based on the number of vehicles using the HOT lanes to keep the lanes free-flowing and provide reliable travel time. Innovative technologies will

be used to assist with HOT lane operations and enforcement. The project also includes \$122 million for construction of new park and ride lots and purchasing new commuter buses to be operated by the Georgia Regional Authority (GRTA).

Once completed, the I-85 Express Lanes project will provide more options for commuters and serve as a key transportation alternative to help relieve congestion on one of metro Atlanta's major corridors.

The State Transportation Board determines policy and exercises general governance of Georgia's Department of Transportation. The Board's 13 members, representing each of the state's congressional districts, serve staggered, five-year terms. Board members are elected by those state senators and representatives whose legislative districts fall within all or part of the relevant congressional district.

The Georgia Department of Transportation is committed to providing a safe, seamless and sustainable transportation system that supports Georgia's economy and is sensitive to both its citizens and its environment. Additional transportation revenues are imperative to grow and sustain Georgia's economic vitality and quality of life through the 21st Century. Georgia is the 3rd fastest-growing state in the nation, yet 49th in per capita spending on transportation. For general information on the Georgia DOT, please visit (www.dot.ga.gov).

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