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PRESS RELEASE

Active Community Transportation Act Builds Clean, Healthy and Efficient Transportation Networks

Washington, DC (2/23/10) – America Bikes welcomes today’s release of the Active Community Transportation (ACT) Act by Representative Earl Blumenauer (D-OR), as a timely boost in investment in the health of our communities.

“Too often we take for granted the value of being able to bike and walk to work,” said Blumenauer. “It’s unfortunate that many communities don’t have the infrastructure in place to make active and healthy forms of transportation more accessible. The ACT transportation grants will make it easier for people to get out of their vehicles and onto sidewalks or bikes, boosting both heart rates and community vitality.”

This groundbreaking legislation creates a competitive grant program for communities to build bicycling and walking networks. For the first time, communities will be able to compete for multi-year funding to build active transportation systems just as they do for transit and road infrastructure. Qualified communities will have to demonstrate strong plans and support for building active transportation networks, and show how their investment will contribute to shifting more trips to bicycling and walking.

“Forty percent of all trips in the US are two miles or less,” said Randy Neufeld, President of America Bikes. “Giving people the option to bike and walk can alleviate traffic, encourage healthy lifestyles, and create safe and inexpensive travel options. The even better news is cities across the country are showing us that if you give people that option, they really do walk and bike more.”

The bill is introduced by Congressman Blumenauer, who represents Portland, OR. Portland has seen bicycling investment work. Between 1991 and 2008, Portland has invested \$57 million to create a 300-mile bikeway network – the cost of one mile of urban highway. Bicycling has increased significantly as a result – up 190% since 2000 to almost ten percent of all traffic. The city is now enjoying a big increase in the economic impact of bicycle-related industry (up 38 percent since 2006; with a total annual economic impact close to \$90 million. In addition, Portlanders saved \$12 million annually in fuel and \$10 million in healthcare costs thanks to their higher than average bicycling levels.

Supporters of the legislation will be asking Members of Congress to endorse the legislation as a main priority of the National Bike Summit, March 9-11. In addition, more than 300 organizations, mayors, community leaders and academics have signed a letter in

support of the legislation. Leaders of the America Bikes Coalition have expressed their full support for the bill: “This is the way we should have always been building bicycling and walking infrastructure; Not piece by piece, but in complete networks where we can see real results in increased safety, increased ridership, and a higher quality of life,” remarked Marianne Fowler, Executive Vice President of Rails to Trails Conservancy.

“Bicycling and walking have real potential to replace short car trips in communities across the country - and increasing active transportation has got to be good for individuals, communities and the nation. This visionary bill will help us realize that potential, economically, efficiently and effectively and we thank Congressman Blumenauer and his colleagues for their leadership in bringing it forward,” added Andy Clarke, President of the League of American Bicyclists.

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About America Bikes

America Bikes is a coalition of national bicycling organizations advocating for positive outcomes for bicycling in the federal transportation bill. America Bikes Coalition members include: Adventure Cycling Association, Alliance for Biking and Walking, Association of Pedestrian and Bicycling Professionals, Bikes Belong, International Mountain Bicycling Association, League of American Bicyclists, National Center for Bicycling and Walking, and the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy.

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