

THANK YOU, TERRY (Sec. Mulcahy) FOR THE KIND INTRODUCTION. IT'S GREAT TO BE HERE IN EDGAR.

I WANT TO THANK ALL OF YOU FOR COMING HERE TO CELEBRATE THE COMPLETION OF THIS 14-YEAR BUILDING PROJECT TO UPGRADE HIGHWAY 29.

THE FATHER OF OUR COUNTRY, GEORGE WASHINGTON, KNEW A THING OR TWO ABOUT BUILDING THINGS. HE SAID "UNDERTAKE NOT WHAT YOU CANNOT PERFORM, BUT BE CAREFUL TO KEEP YOUR PROMISE."

WELL, WE HAVE KEPT OUR PROMISE TO REPLACE WHAT USED TO BE CALLED "BLOODY 29" -- WITH A SAFE, EFFICIENT, FOUR-LANE HIGHWAY. AND WE HAVE DONE IT ON TIME AND UNDER BUDGET.

I REMEMBER WHEN FORMER TRANSPORTATION SECRETARY RON FIEDLER AND I WERE STANDING ON A PLATFORM LIKE THIS A FEW YEARS AGO, AND RON INDICATED THE ROAD WOULD BE OPEN

IN THE YEAR 2002.

WELL, THAT WASN'T GOOD ENOUGH. I CAME TO THE PODIUM AND PROMISED THE ROAD WOULD BE OPEN IN 2000. I WISH RON COULD HAVE JOINED US TODAY TO SEE US KEEP OUR PROMISE.

A LOT OF PEOPLE DESERVE THANKS FOR HELPING MAKE THIS PROJECT BECOME REALITY, INCLUDING:

- **CONGRESSMAN OBEY, FOR HIS CONTINUED EFFORTS TO HELP US COMPLETE THIS PROJECT;**
- **BILL FUNG OF THE FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION FOR HIS HELP ALONG THE WAY;**
- **SENATORS ZIEN, BRESKE AND DECKER AND REPRESENTATIVES SUDER AND PETROWSKI - FOR THEIR LEGISLATIVE SUPPORT;**
- **MAYOR (LINDA) LAWRENCE OF WAUSAU AND MAYOR (PAUL) JADIN OF GREEN BAY, WHO ARE HERE, AS WELL AS MAYOR (VIRGINIA) SMITH OF**

CHIPPEWA FALLS, WHO COULDN'T BE HERE TODAY;

- **PRESIDENT (DICK) GUENTHER OF EDGAR;**
- **PHIL SCHERER OF THE TRANSPORTATION
DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION;**
- **FORMER TRANSPORTATION SECRETARY CHUCK
THOMPSON, WHO DESERVES THANKS FOR
GUIDING THIS PROJECT TO ITS CONCLUSION;**
- **AND ALL OF YOU HERE THAT REPRESENT
COMMUNITIES FROM ACROSS WISCONSIN.**

**I'D ALSO LIKE TO THANK CORA VANDERPERREN
(VAN-dur-PEAR-en), THE WIFE OF FORMER
REPRESENTATIVE 'CONCRETE' CLETE
VANDERPERREN, FOR COMING TODAY. IT'S GOOD
TO SEE YOU CORA. WE ALL DEEPLY MISS CLETE.
THIS HIGHWAY IS PART OF HIS LEGACY.**

**BEFORE I STARTED THIS JOB 14 YEARS AGO,
WISCONSIN'S HIGHWAYS WERE IGNORED -- AND
OUR ECONOMY, AND THE SAFETY OF OUR
CITIZENS, WERE SUFFERING FOR IT.
IF MAYOR JADIN WANTED TO WATCH THE PACKERS
BEAT THE VIKINGS IN MINNEAPOLIS TEN YEARS
AGO, HE HAD TO RISK HIS LIFE ON A CONGESTED,
TWO-LANE HIGHWAY 29 TO GET THERE. IT WAS THE
SAME IN MANY PARTS OF THE STATE NOT LINKED
BY THE INTERSTATE HIGHWAY SYSTEM.**

**THAT'S WHY WE CREATED CORRIDORS 2020, WITH
THE GOAL OF ATTRACTING BUSINESS AND
COMMERCE, AND IMPROVING HIGHWAY SAFETY.**

**THE 29 COALITION WAS FORMED, AND PHIL
SCHERER AND THE TRANSPORTATION
DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION GOT INVOLVED.**

**PHIL, BOB WAGNER AND RENEE DANIELS WORKED
TO KEEP THE COALITION INFORMED AND TO HELP**

**IT NAVIGATE THE PROCESS OF GETTING THE
PROJECT DESIGNED AND KEEPING IT FUNDED.**

**WE LISTENED TO THE SCORES OF PEOPLE WHO
FOUGHT TO MAKE THE HIGHWAY SAFER.
AND WE MADE A PROMISE TO IMPROVE HIGHWAY
29 FROM GREEN BAY TO CHIPPEWA FALLS BY THE
END OF 2000. WE'RE HERE TODAY TO TELL YOU –
WE KEPT OUR PROMISE.**

**THE HIGHWAY 29 IS HOME TO NEARLY 20 PERCENT
OF THE STATE'S POPULATION AND JOBS.
IT'S ALSO WHERE ABOUT 16 PERCENT OF ALL
TOURISM SPENDING IS MADE.**

**MAYOR LAWRENCE TOLD ME EARLIER THAT
COMPLETION OF THIS NEW HIGHWAY PUTS
WAUSAU AT THE CROSSROADS OF THE STATE.
BECAUSE OF THAT, SHE'S LOOKING FORWARD TO
SEEING A BOOM IN WAUSAU'S ECONOMY.**

MAYOR SMITH ECHOED THOSE COMMENTS, NOTING THAT CHIPPEWA FALLS SERVES AS THE GATEWAY TO NORTHWESTERN WISCONSIN. SHE SEES NOTHING BUT OPPORTUNITY FOR HER COMMUNITY.

MAYOR JADIN STARTED HIS CAREER IN WAUSAU AND TOLD ME THAT HE SPENT MANY WEEKENDS DRIVING BACK AND FORTH TO GREEN BAY ON HIGHWAY 29. HE'S PLEASED TO WITNESS THE COMPLETION OF A MUCH SAFER ROAD.

WE'RE ALREADY SEEING THE ECONOMIC BENEFITS FROM THE IMPROVEMENTS COMPLETED EARLIER:

- **PEOPLE LIKE BOB DINKEL (CENEX) AND LEN LECHLEITNER (LECK'-LIGHT-NER) (SNACK SHACK) AND OTHERS LIKE THEM TOOK THE INITIATIVE TO OPEN NEW BUSINESSES THROUGHOUT THE CORRIDOR.**

- **THE DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM IS ALREADY PROMOTING DESTINATIONS ALONG HIGHWAY 29 TO POTENTIAL VISITORS.**
- **WE'RE SEEING NEW MOTELS AND MANUFACTURING PLANTS GENERATING MILLIONS OF DOLLARS IN INVESTMENTS AND THOUSANDS OF JOBS.**
- **THESE NEW BUSINESSES AND JOBS HAVE LED TO MORE NEW HOMES BEING BUILT IN STANLEY, ABBOTSFORD, COLBY AND WITTENBERG.**
- **THIS INCREASING POPULATION BASE MEANS A GROWING BUILDING TRADES SECTOR ... AND EVEN MORE JOBS IN SHAWANO, GREEN BAY AND CHIPPEWA FALLS.**

THIS TOO, IS A PROMISE KEPT ... THE PROMISE OF JOBS, ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY, AND A GREAT FUTURE, NOT ONLY FOR NORTHERN AND CENTRAL WISCONSIN, BUT ALL OF WISCONSIN.

BUT OUR INVESTMENT WOULD MEAN NOTHING, IF IT MEANT PEOPLE CONTINUED LOSING THEIR LIVES ON A DANGEROUS HIGHWAY. ON OLD 29, PEOPLE WERE DYING IN CRASHES AT A RATE MUCH HIGHER THAN AVERAGE FOR SIMILAR HIGHWAYS.

THANKS TO ADDED LANES, GRADUAL CURVES, FLATTER HILLS, AND IMPROVED VISION AT INTERSECTIONS, WE HAVE MADE IT A MUCH SAFER HIGHWAY.

WE'RE ALSO MAKING IMPROVEMENTS IN TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT. FIVE OF THE 14 NEW STATE TROOPER POSITIONS APPROVED IN THE LAST STATE BUDGET HAVE BEEN ASSIGNED TO PATROL THIS CORRIDOR – ONE FOR EACH OF THE FIVE COUNTIES FROM GREEN BAY TO CHIPPEWA FALLS.

**WE DID OUR BEST TO LIMIT THE PROJECT'S
ARCHEOLOGICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT,
FROM RECOVERING AND PRESERVING ARTIFACTS
TO RELOCATING SNUFF BOX MUSSELS IN THE
WOLF RIVER, BUILDING A NEW CONDOMINIUM FOR
A NESTING PAIR OF BALD EAGLES, AND PLANTING
NATIVE GRASSES AND WILDFLOWERS.**

**WE CONVERTED MORE THAN 400 ACRES OF LAND
AT THE OLD CLARK COUNTY HEALTH CARE CENTER
INTO A DIVERSE BIOLOGICAL SETTING.
THIS PROJECT CREATED MORE THAN 600 ACRES
OF NEW WETLANDS TO REPLACE THE 400 ACRES
THAT WERE FILLED IN.**

**ANOTHER REASON TO TRAVEL THIS CORRIDOR IS
ALSO HERE TODAY. PART OF WHAT MAKES THIS
STATE SO GREAT ARE THE NATIVE AMERICAN
TRIBES, LIKE THE MENOMINEE, THAT HAVE CALLED
IT HOME FOR CENTURIES.**

**AS PART OF TODAY'S CEREMONY, I WOULD LIKE TO
PRESENT AN EXHIBIT ON BEHALF OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION TO THE TRIBE.**

**WOULD CHAIRMAN APESANAHKWAT (AP-ah SAHN-
ah KWAT) OR VICE CHAIRMAN BARBARA
FRECHETTE-KELLY (Frah-SHET-e KEL-lee) PLEASE
COME UP TO THE PODIUM?**

**THIS EXHIBIT IS PRESENTED TO THE MENOMINEE
INDIAN TRIBE OF WISCONSIN AS A TRIBUTE TO
THEIR WISCONSIN HERITAGE.
THE DISPLAY ILLUSTRATES THE TRADITIONAL USE
OF STURGEON IN THE MENOMINEE CULTURE. THE
TRIBE WILL USE THIS TO SHARE ITS CULTURE IN
CLASSROOMS ACROSS THE STATE.**

***(UNVEIL THE PANEL - Shake hands with Chairman
Apesanahkwat for photo-op, then Chairman
Apesanahkwat returns to his seat. He may wish to say
a few words in appreciation of the panel, but his
remarks should be brief.)***

**HIGHWAY 29 HAS ALWAYS BEEN IMPORTANT TO
CENTRAL WISCONSIN. WITH ITS COMPLETION WE
MARK THE BEGINNING OF A SAFE, NEW, CHAPTER
IN THE HISTORY OF THIS STATE.**

**THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO COME OUT
TODAY, AND THANKS TO ALL THE PEOPLE
RESPONSIBLE FOR COMPLETING THIS PROJECT.
CONGRATULATIONS ON A JOB WELL DONE!**

**LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, I PRESENT TO
YOU...HIGHWAY 29! *(Gesture toward the highway)***

***(Remain standing near the podium so Sec. Mulcahy
can present you and Congressman Obey with
plaques. Then, be seated.)***

***A plaque will then be presented by Sec. Mulcahy to
the village of Edgar for placement at the Cenex
station: "Recognizing Governor Tommy G. Thompson
for his commitment to complete the 4-lane, 184-mile***

WIS 29 corridor from Chippewa Falls to Green Bay in 2000. August, 2000."

A ribbon will then be cut including Cong. Obey, legislators, mayors, Chairman Apesanahkwat, village of Edgar president, Sec. Mulcahy, & former 29 Team chief Bill Nicholson.)