



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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(February 12, 2013) Reconnecting America President and CEO John Robert Smith issued the following response to President Obama's State of the Union address:

"We appreciate the President's continued recognition that we must invest in our aging transportation infrastructure. The 'Fix It First' program he proposed will create jobs which are important to the success of our American families as well as creating safer rails, roads and bridges that are important to the success of our nation's economy.

"Recent figures show that China spends 9% of its GDP on infrastructure, Europe spends 5%, but the United States spends only 2%. How do we remain competitive in a global economy without devoting the necessary resources to maintain and strengthen our infrastructure? President Obama recognized this tonight and addressed it head on. Reconnecting America stands ready to support him in this effort and is pleased that he is reaching out to the private sector for capital investment in a 'Partnership to Rebuild America.'

"Reconnecting America works on behalf of families and communities, striving to achieve equitable transit-oriented development that benefits all Americans. We believe that giving people choices in how they travel through investing in our transportation infrastructure, including transit, is an important step to help 'free our families...from the painful spikes in gas prices,' as the President urged tonight.

"With the election behind us and the 113th Congress sworn in, it is time for our national leaders to act. No need to wait for the next natural disaster, the next hike in oil prices or the next bridge to collapse. Our rail, transit and roads must be safe and reliable. Restoring our commitment to a national transportation network is a necessity for America to prosper."

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(Photos of John Robert Smith are available [here](#) and [here](#))

About Reconnecting America

Reconnecting America is a national nonprofit that is helping to transform promising ideas into thriving communities - where transportation choices make it easy to get

from place to place, where businesses flourish, and where people from all walks of life can afford to live, work and visit. Reconnecting America is the managing partner of the Center for Transit-Oriented Development, the only national nonprofit effort funded by Congress to promote best practices in transit-oriented development. Reconnecting America is also a founding partner of Transportation for America, a broad coalition of housing, environmental, equal opportunity, public health, urban planning, transportation and other organizations focused on creating a 21st century national transportation program. For more information visit our website, www.reconnectingamerica.org.