

## *Strategic Earmarks?*

*Examples of earmarks that would not have received federal funding, or that bypassed federal or state evaluation or merit processes.*

**AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL FACILITIES EARMARKS:** For 2006, the Federal Aviation Administration considered **9 of 10 earmarked projects** (worth \$31.5 million) in its Tower/Terminal Air Traffic Control Facility Replacement Program to be low priority projects that would not have received funding without the earmarks: “Funding these new low priority projects in FY 2006 added to the already substantial backlog of replacement projects from earmarks in prior fiscal years and caused FAA to delay the planning of its higher priority replacement projects by at least 3 years” (page 5).

**AIRPORT EARMARKS:** **53 out of 125** Federal Aviation Administration’s Airport Improvement Program earmarks would not have received federal funding “if they had not received earmarks.” These projects were not on FAA’s list of candidates for critical airport planning and development projects) (page 4; see also page 9).

**HIGHWAY EARMARKS:** **100%** of the Federal Highway Administration’s National Corridor Infrastructure Improvement Program earmarks, totaling about \$389.6 million, “bypassed the Agency’s review, approval, or merit-based selection processes” (page 8).

**INTERSTATE MAINTENANCE EARMARKS:** **16 of 65 earmarked projects** (totaling more than \$14 million), in the Federal Highway Administration’s Interstate Maintenance Discretionary Program did not meet statutory program criteria and would not have received funding were it not for a section in DOT’s appropriations law that allows funding for earmarks that do not meet the statutory requirements of the program” (page 5).

**TRANSIT RESEARCH EARMARKS:** **46 earmarks** in the Federal Transit Administration’s National Research Program (worth \$40.8 million, or 74% of the program’s funding) “did not have to go through the planning and evaluation process by meeting eligibility criteria; being selected through an open competition; and, finally, being evaluated by peers” (page 9).

**PUBLIC LANDS EARMARKS:** **100%** of the Federal Highway Administration’s Public Lands Highways Discretionary Program earmarks, worth about \$95.2 million “bypassed the Agency’s review, approval, or selection processes” (page 8).

**EARMARKS FOR “PROJECTS OF NATIONAL AND REGIONAL SIGNIFICANCE”:** **4 of 25** earmarked projects (totaling \$28 million) in the Federal Highway Administration’s Projects of National and Regional Significance Program did not meet statutory criteria (pages 12 – 13).

**BUS & BUS FACILITIES EARMARKS:** Regarding **1,097 earmarks** in the Federal Highway Administration’s Bus and Bus Facilities Program, the department reported it doesn’t even have a systematic mechanism to rank and rate \$813.9 million in earmarks (96 percent of the total program budget appropriated in 2006).