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STATEMENT BY SENATE MAJORITY LEADER MARY PANZER

I'm pleased today that we were able to reach an agreement with Governor Doyle that insures and protects funding for critical transportation projects now, and in the future.

This agreement addresses many of the concerns that were raised when the Governor first issued his transportation budget earlier this year. His veto authorized \$1 billion of bonding for the transportation program. The agreement caps the amount of bonding at \$565 million, which is sufficient to fund all of the projects that were planned for this biennium. Authorizing \$435 million more in bonding than is necessary is an invitation to mischief.

If not for this agreement, Wisconsin might have seen a big increase in what is already one of the highest gas taxes in the nation. I'm happy that's been avoided, as well as a potential lawsuit over how our vital transportation projects are funded.

Wisconsin can now move forward with building our transportation infrastructure that will drive the economic engine of job creation.

In the end, we were able to work with the Governor and his administration to agree to a compromise that protects jobs that are so vital to our economy and keeps our highways safe.