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As Chairman of the ACPA Pennsylvania Chapter, and on behalf of the ACPA, our partners in the concrete industry, PennDOT, and FHWA, I want to welcome you to the Tenth Annual Pennsylvania Concrete Conference.

This year we are extremely privileged to have presentations by the top leadership in the transportation industry. Monday night members of the ACPA met with the State House Transportation Chairman, Joseph Markosek to hear his goals and objectives for transportation. Yesterday afternoon Deputy Secretary Rich Hogg gave the keynote address on Being Successful in Today's Uncertain World. Rob Wonderling, the State Senate Transportation Chairman will be joining us today at lunch to share his vision for transportation in the Commonwealth.

We also have Frank Kempf, Chief Engineer of the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission; he will enlighten us about the PPP efforts of the Mon-Fayette Expressway, which is a critical road network for western Pennsylvania. Ed Sullivan, Chief Economist of the PCA, will let us know how bullish or bearish he is on transportation and specifically on concrete and cement.

Rounding off the top of the leadership is Secretary of Transportation Allan Biehler, who is this year's President of AASHTO. Secretary Biehler will outline his key priorities for AASHTO, which include Reauthorization, Sustainability, and Freight Movement. We applaud these goals which we believe are in alignment with goals of the concrete industry.

We want to take a moment to thank the Department for joining the National Concrete Consortium. I believe there is much to be shared with other states that use concrete, and also much to be learned from those states as well, on mixes, pavement designs, joint layout schemes, innovative testing, contract delivery systems, and more. As we see more and more of our experienced colleagues retire, we need to tap into the experience of others so that we can all continue to improve the quality of concrete pavements in the Commonwealth.

On this theme, we also want to thank the Department for looking for opportunities to learn more about concrete overlays. Our neighbors to the west in Michigan, along with many other northern tier states, have used concrete overlays for many years and are enjoying excellent performance of these types of products. We heard several presentations on this topic yesterday and some of you will spend tomorrow learning more about this at one of our workshops.

Over the past year we have worked closely with the Department to resolve past issues, problems, and misperceptions. We hope our relationship will help our industry meet all of the current and future challenges and improve our products. We appreciate the Department including us in their development of a soon to be released alternate bidding policy. This new policy will give us an opportunity to compete for work and provide the Department, the taxpayer, and the motoring public with the most cost-effective solution for paving projects. We believe the volatility of the economy over the past year clearly demonstrates the need for a two-pavement system. We also believe that any additional design costs will be offset by the cost savings of the competing industries. We look forward to a full and speedy implementation of this policy. We hope to continue working with the Department on other policies affecting our industry such as proposed project warranties.

I encourage you to visit with the vendors and exhibitors; they have much to offer in terms of new products, new testing systems, and more. I want to thank all of the sponsors for supporting the Conference. I further encourage you to listen to our presenters, learn, ask questions. Please enjoy the Conference.

It is now my privilege to introduce our Deputy Secretary of Transportation.