

## National Safe Routes to School Task Force to the Secretary of Transportation

### Summary of Meeting

January 11, 2007

The first meeting of the National Safe Routes to School Task Force was held on January 11, 2007 at the Holiday Inn Capitol at 550 C Street SW in Washington, D.C., 20024. The meeting was called to order at 8:30 am by Tim Arnade, the Safe Routes to School Program Manager from the Federal Highway Administration Office of Safety.

In accordance with the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92-463), the meeting was open to the public.

#### **Task Force Members Present:**

Phyllis Agran, MD, MPH

University of California, Irvine, CA

(Representing American Academy of Pediatrics)

Ms. Barbara Alberson

Chief, State and Local Injury Control Section, CA Department of Health  
Sacramento, CA

(Representing State and Territorial Injury Prevention Directors Association)

Mr. Thomas Brahms

Executive Director, Institute of Transportation Engineers  
Washington, DC

Ms. Sabrina Cruz

Principal, Brichta Elementary School  
Tucson, AZ

(Representing Pima County - Tucson Safe Routes to School Program)

Mr. Richard Deal, PE, TE, PTOE

City Traffic Engineer, Monterey, CA

(Representing American Public Works Association)

The Honorable Sue Frank

Mayor, Raytown, MO

(Representing National Association of Regional Councils)

Ms. Deborah Hubsmith

Coordinator, Safe Routes to School National Partnership  
Fairfax, CA

Mr. Michael King

Nelson and Nygaard Consulting Associates  
New York, NY

(Representing Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals)

Ms. Lauren Marchetti

Director, National Center for Safe Routes to School  
UNC Highway Safety Research Center  
Chapel Hill, NC

Ms. Refilwe Moeti  
Public Health Advisor, Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevent, Department of Health and Human Services  
Atlanta, GA

Scott Osberg, PhD  
Director of Research, AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety  
Washington, DC

Mr. Robert Ping  
SRTS Program Director, Oregon Bicycle Transportation Alliance and Willamette  
Pedestrian Coalition  
Portland, OR

Ms. Sharon Roerty  
Director of Community Programs, National Center for Bicycling and Walking  
Maplewood, NJ

Ms. Donna Smallwood, Chair of Task Force  
Operations Manager, MassRIDES  
Boston, MA

Ms. Leslie Thompson  
Planner, Nashville Area MPO  
Nashville, TN  
(Representing Tennessee's Safer Routes to School Advisory Council)

Mr. Roger Wentz  
Executive Director, American Traffic Safety Services Association  
Fredericksburg, VA

Ms. Dale Ann Wright  
Officer, West Valley City Police Department  
West Valley City, UT

**Designated Federal Official:**

Tim Arnade  
Safe Routes to School Program Manager  
Office of Safety  
Federal Highway Administration

**Support Staff:**

Chris DeWitt, Meeting Facilitator, Vanasse Hangen Bruslin, Inc. (VHB)  
Jennifer Toole, Toole Design Group  
Jennifer Hefferan, Toole Design Group

**Others present for all or a portion of the meeting were:**

Beth Alicandri, Office of Safety, FHWA  
Paula Bawer, NHTSA  
Richard Capka, Administrator, FHWA  
Linda Davey, Information Display Company- Speed Check  
Christopher Douwes, US DOT/FHWA  
John Fegan, US DOT/FHWA

Glen Harrison, Washington Area Bicyclist Association  
Suhail Khan, US DOT/FHWA  
Jeff Lindley, Associate Administrator for Safety, FHWA  
Maureen MacDonald, US DOT/NHTSA  
Pam Moore, LRP Publications  
Congressman Oberstar, Chairman, House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee  
Leah Preiss, NHTSA  
Gabe Rousseau, FHWA  
Jackie Schmitz, House Transportation Committee  
Charlotte Stichter, pedestriannews.com  
Tim Torma, EPA  
Christine Wells, RBA Group  
John Z. Wetmore, Perils For Pedestrians, TV  
Catherine Zorc, American Academy of Pediatrics

## **INTRODUCTIONS, WELCOME**

Tim Arnade welcomed the group and asked the members of the task force to introduce themselves. Mr. Arnade announced that Donna Smallwood has graciously accepted the role of Chair of the task force. After each task force member introduced themselves, Tim Arnade introduced the members of the support team and several other federal agency staff who were present.

Welcoming statements were then made by the following officials:

- Jeff Lindley, Associate Administrator for Safety, Federal Highway Administration
- Richard Capka, Administrator, Federal Highway Administration
- Congressman Oberstar, Chairman, House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee

## **LEGISLATIVE MANDATE/ TASK FORCE SCOPE/ MEETING PURPOSE**

Tim Arnade provided an overview of the legislative mandate for the task force, the task force scope, and the purpose of the meeting. Section 1404 of the *Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users Act* (SAFETEA-LU) mandates the establishment of a task force comprised of leaders in health, transportation, and education, including representatives of appropriate federal agencies. The purpose of the task force is to develop a strategy for advancing Safe Routes to School programs nationwide. A report based on the findings of the task force is to be submitted to the Secretary who will submit the report to Congress.

The legislative language stipulated that the report was to be submitted by March 31, 2006. FHWA has already submitted a letter report, to meet the requirements of the law, which provided a status of the program.

Some federal advisory committees are ongoing and open ended. However this particular task force has a specific charge and will sunset when their report is submitted to Secretary of Transportation. Mr. Arnade expressed his desire that this task force reach consensus in its decisions. If the task force is unable to achieve consensus, the task force charter provides for a vote in which the majority prevails.

Mr. Arnade explained that the more general purpose of task forces such as this one is to bring together a group of citizens with the purpose of providing advice to the Federal government. The task force neither directs the Federal SRTS program nor has program authority. Meetings notices are published in the Federal Register. If a member of the task force cannot make a meeting, an alternate is permitted to attend on their behalf. The alternate should represent the same organization. Task force members should contact Tim Arnade or Jennifer Hefferan if they will be sending an alternate to any task force meeting.

The Federal Highway Administration Office of Safety is the sponsor of this task force. Tim Arnade is the designated federal official. He has authority to call and terminate meetings. He is not a voting member of the task force but he does work with the task force chair to approve meeting agendas and minutes.

## **MEETING FORMAT AND GROUND RULES**

Donna Smallwood then provided an overview of the format for the meeting and ground rules for the group discussion. The group agreed upon the following ground rules:

- Focus on issues, not position
- Stay on topic
- Ask for clarification
- Listen
- Show respect
- Seek consensus

## **OVERVIEW OF SAFETEA-LU/FEDERAL SRTS PROGRAM**

Tim Arnade presented a brief overview of the Federal Safe Routes to School Program. Below is a summary of his presentation.

Safe Routes to School began in Denmark in the 1970s as an effort to reduce child pedestrian fatalities (The program reduced casualties by 80%). Programs in the UK and Canada began in the early 1990s and the U.S. program began in the late 1990s.

Fewer children are walking and bicycling. In 1969, about half of children walked or biked to school. In 2001, less than 15% walked or biked. The built environment near schools may not lend itself to walking and biking. This has health consequences. Most children are not getting the exercise they need. It is estimated that 20% of U.S. children will be obese by 2010. Today's children may be the first generation to have a shorter life expectancy than their parents have.

The U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services and Agriculture recommend that children participate in at least 60 minutes of physical activity on most, preferably all, days of the week.

The Federal Safe Routes to School Program offers \$612 million in funding to 50 States plus the District of Columbia. The legislation requires the implementation of a SRTS program nationwide, the creation of a Clearinghouse, and the establishment of a task force. State DOT's are responsible for implementing the program. A full-time SRTS Coordinator is required in each State.

The purpose of the program is to enable and encourage children to walk/bike to school, to make biking/walking safer and more appealing, and to facilitate projects and activities in the vicinity of schools that will improve safety, reduce traffic, reduce air pollution, and reduce fuel consumption.

The amount of funding that is available to each State is based on elementary and middle school enrollment. Each State, however, receives a minimum of at least \$1 million per year. The program consists of 100% federal funds, no matching funds are required. Funds can not be transferred to another program and are available until expended (they do not lapse).

The law establishes infrastructure related projects such as sidewalk improvements and non-infrastructure related projects such as public awareness campaigns. Language from the Conference Report encourages a competitive application process. Projects are eligible for schools with K-8<sup>th</sup> grades. Infrastructure projects must be within 2 miles of school. Non-infrastructure projects are not restricted by location except for traffic education and enforcement.

Mr. Arnade explained that the legislation was somewhat prescriptive but the Federal guidance is flexible. State DOTs vary in where the SRTS programs are placed. Examples of program placement include Statewide Planning, Safety Office, Bike/Ped Program, and Enhancement Programs. Additionally, program implementation varies by state. Many States have advisory committees. Some States are splitting infrastructure and non-infrastructure projects. Some are creating a planning phase, and some are setting aside funds for statewide projects.

Currently there are forty five full-time SRTS coordinators. There are five Interim coordinators and one coordinator that has yet to be hired. The first meeting of the SRTS coordinators was held in August 2006 in Washington, D.C.

Within the first fourteen months of the Federal SRTS program, three years of funding have been provided to state DOTs, for a total of \$279 million to date. In effect, the SRTS program is a four year pilot with 5 years of funding.

The National Center for SRTS has been established to meet the mandate for a Federally-funded SRTS Clearinghouse. The website is located at <http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/> .

## **OVERVIEW OF SRTS ACTIVITIES IN THE UNITED STATES TODAY**

### *The National Center for SRTS*

Lauren Marchetti provided an overview of the National Center for Safe Routes to School (NCSRTS). The NCSRTS was established in May 2006 and serves three main functions: (1) building capacity, (2) building demand and (3) tracking programs and providing evaluation support.

In an effort to build capacity, the NCSRTS provides support for SRTS coordinators in the form of a coordinator listserv, annual meetings, State liaisons, and a menu of support options. The NCSRTS also builds capacity by providing technical assistance to the general public. The website <http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/> the online library, and the online guide all provide support.

The NCSRTS attempts to build demand in SRTS by continuing to grow Walk to School day. This year there was participation in all States with a record number of registered events in the U.S. The NCSRTS also provides marketing support to state SRTS coordinators, and is planning a national SRTS awareness campaign.

The NCSRTS also tracks SRTS programs and provides evaluation support. The NCSRTS provides tools for data collection and evaluation, such as a student travel tally sheet and a parent survey. The NSRTS also maintains a program tracking database including information on State and local programs. Evaluation assistance is provided by the NCSRTS for State and local programs.

Ms. Marchetti submitted a packet of information which included the following: 1) "A Swift Response to a Growing Demand for Safe Routes to School: Accomplishments of the National Center for Safe Routes to School;" 2) "Highlights from State Safe Routes to School Coordinators;" 3) "December 2006 SRTS Program Tracking Brief;" 4) "November 2006 SRTS Program Tracking Brief;" 5) "Safe Routes to School Training Update;" 6) "Safe Routes to School Student Arrival and Departure Tally Sheet;" 7) "Survey about Walking and Biking to School : For Parents;" and 8) "National Center for Safe Routes to School Resource Card." Links to these handouts can be found at the following website: [http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/task\\_force/](http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/task_force/) .

### *SRTS National Partnership*

Deborah Hubsmith presented on the activities of the SRTS National Partnership (The Partnership). The Partnership is a national coalition that was created to advance the SRTS national movement and to help establish federal SRTS legislation. The Partnership created a consensus statement in 2003 and 2004 to define the movement in the U.S. The statement defined 5 E's (Encouragement, Education, Engineering, Enforcement, and Evaluation). In 2004, the Partnership created a memorandum of understanding. In the spring of 2005, the Partnership asked people and organizations from around the country to sign on to the consensus statement and memorandum of understanding. Over 240 organizations have joined the Partnership which is governed by a Steering Committee with representatives from national, State, and local organizations and SRTS programs.

The Partnership produces a lot of information including an e-newsletter, and hosts a listserv for practitioners. The Partnership has an annual meeting, organizes national SRTS conference calls on various topics, provided input on the Federal SRTS guidance and launched a website through Bikes Belong. The Partnership has also developed and adopted a four year strategic plan.

The Partnership sees the Federal SRTS program as one piece of the national SRTS movement. The Partnership has received grants from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to work in ten States that have obesity and economic disparity problems. The project will bring together the fields of Health, Smart Growth, Transportation, Education, Youth, and others to advance SRTS from a grassroots perspective.

Ms. Hubsmith submitted the following handouts: 1) “Safe Routes to School – Federal Goals Adopted by the SRTS National Partnership;” 2) “Safe Routes to School National Partnership: Changing the habits of an entire generation;” 3) “Safe Routes to School National Partnership Consensus Statement;” 4) “Memorandum of Understanding to Establish a National Safe Routes to School Partnership;” 5) “Safe Routes to School National Partnership Partner Affiliates (more than 240 organizations);” 6) Safe Routes to School National Partnership Steering Committee; 7) “Safe Routes to School E-News (November 2006);” 8) “Safe Routes to School National Partnership Strategic Plan 2007-2010;” 8) “Potential Elements for the Task Force Report” and 9) “Potential National Strategies for Safe Routes to School.” A link to these handouts can be found at the following website: [http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/task\\_force/](http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/task_force/) .

### *Local SRTS Programs*

Jennifer Toole presented a brief summary of the types of activities that occur within local SRTS programs. Although there are many different types of SRTS programs, a “typical” SRTS program is located at an elementary school where some children already walk, where there is a tight school enrollment zone, where parents are involved and active, and where the school principal is supportive. Often a successful Walk to School Day event will serve as a catalyst for a broader SRTS program. When parents walk with their children as a result of a Walk to School Day event, they begin to see areas where improvements are needed. Parental concern can then initiate a SRTS program.

A SRTS program often begins with the development of a SRTS Plan. Ms. Toole submitted an example of a SRTS Plan, “Recommendations and Implementation Status – Rolling Terrace Elementary” (A link to this handout can be found at the following website: [http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/task\\_force/](http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/task_force/). First, stakeholders are gathered to form a SRTS committee. Committees typically include a broad range of interested individuals such as parents, school administrators, teachers, law enforcement officials, and local engineers. The committee develops a list of projects and programs to improve walking and bicycling. This prioritized list becomes the core of the SRTS plan. Logical funding sources are identified for the projects and programs and implementation begins.

Ms. Toole concluded by sharing some examples of differing priorities for urban, inner city SRTS programs and rural SRTS programs.

## **FACILITATED DISCUSSION OF STRATEGIES TO ADVANCE SRTS PROGRAMS NATIONWIDE**

Donna Smallwood and Chris DeWitt facilitated discussion among the Task Force members about Strategies to advance SRTS programs nationwide. Discussion covered the topics described below:

- What is a national strategy?
- Brainstorm potential national strategies
- Refine/develop consensus on potential national strategies
- What should go into the Task Force report?
- Next steps and further research

### *What is a national strategy?*

The group discussed what constitutes a national strategy. Consensus developed around the idea that the strategy might take a two-tiered approach. The first tier would focus on working to make the SAFETEA-LU SRTS program successful. The second tier would address other ways to further SRTS, such as locating additional funding sources or addressing related issues such as school siting. This Task Force advises the Federal Highway Administration and there was some discussion about whether the report should be limited to only those factors over which FHWA has control. It was noted that there may be a need to develop separate strategies for infrastructure versus non-infrastructure projects.

### *Potential National Strategies*

Several potential national strategies were discussed by members of the Task Force. This discussion is summarized below. The summary is grouped by topic/strategy.

#### Ensure that States are spending their federal SRTS funds.

One potential national strategy is to ensure that each State spends their SRTS funds. Tim Arnade provided a brief explanation of obligation limitation per a request from a task force member.

Each year appropriations legislation sets a limit on the obligation of Federal-aid highway funds. This limitation does not reduce the amount of funding distributed, but rather limits the amount of the distributed funds that may be obligated. The SRTS Program is subject to this obligation limitation. By law, obligation limitation for formula programs, including SRTS, is distributed by lump sum to each State DOT. (The SRTS program does not come with its own obligation authority/limitation.) Within the overall limitation, each State has the flexibility to choose how to distribute these funds among competing programs, as long as the total obligations do not exceed the set limit.

An analogy for obligation limitation is this: a parent gives a child a checking account with \$100 and tells him that he can only spend \$87 of that money. The child is forced to make choices about how to spend the money in the checking account.

Another example is one billion dollars was provided to a State DOT in 2005. The funding, known as contract authority, is provided at the beginning of the fiscal year. The State, however,

may only be authorized to spend \$870 million of it due to the limitation on obligations. As a result of this, the State will have to decide how to use the money among competing priorities. It may decide to fully fund some programs, but not others. For example, a State may decide to fully fund their bridge or interstate maintenance program and only partially fund their SRTS program.

The group discussed the fact that many States have already made funding and programming decisions with their obligation authority. Some members of the task force expressed concern that some States are not funding their SRTS programs to their full potential, due to the issue of obligation limitation.

#### Ensure that there is a permanent SRTS program in every state.

Another potential national strategy might be to institutionalize the SRTS program in each State such that the program will continue even if Federal program does not. It was discussed that SRTS programs at the DOT should be linked with the Department of Education, the Department of Health, law enforcement, and with community level programs. Some task force members were concerned that the future of the SRTS program might be tied too exclusively to Congressman Oberstar as a champion. This strategy would seek to nurture new SRTS champions on both the local, State, and national levels including elected officials, school personnel, city/county personnel, parents, and others.

#### Develop National Standards/Guidance for SRTS

National standards and guidance for SRTS might help ensure that funding is used effectively. Standards and guidance could take various forms. One idea that was mentioned was the development of National Best Practices for State Coordinators, for example, should a State Coordinator be required to coordinate with the State's Physical Activity Coordinator? Another idea was to develop standards for infrastructure projects, such as requiring fluorescent yellow green signs for all school zone signing.

#### Document the Demand for SRTS

Successfully documenting the demand for SRTS may help to prolong the life of the program. State SRTS Coordinators are reporting that applications for grants far exceed what they are able to fund. This demand should be carefully documented. The National Center for Safe Routes to School indicated that they would look into requesting this information from DOTs to provide this documentation.

#### Develop Effective Methods for Evaluating and Tracking SRTS

Members of the task force discussed the need for a consistent method of collecting data about SRTS. Members wish to support strong and unbiased research. It will be necessary to decide what to measure and how to measure it in order to determine the effectiveness of SRTS programs on a local and national level. It may be appropriate to measure the success of the SRTS program relative to the goals from the SRTS portion of the SAFETEA-LU legislation. Evaluation can be expensive and since funding for SRTS is limited, it will be necessary to develop cost-effective solutions. The NCSRTS has developed evaluation tools and has encouraged States to use them. One national strategy would be to ensure consistency in the States' use of these evaluation tools.

### Develop Different Performance Measures for Different Types of SRTS Programs

Evaluation of performance measures is necessary to demonstrate the difference between schools with SRTS programs and those without and also to compare the effectiveness of different approaches to SRTS programs. Due to the variation in types of programs it may be necessary to use different measures for different programs with different goals and benefits. For example, if the majority of students at a school already walk before a SRTS program, it would not be appropriate to expect the school to increase the percentage of walkers as dramatically as at a school where very few children walked. Therefore performance measures can be used such that success is measured in different ways for different types of programs.

### Include Community Participation as a Goal of SRTS Programs

In some communities, the process of bringing the community together to talk about issues may be as important or more important than achieving set goals such as an increase in the number of children walking and bicycling to school. Community participation should be included as a goal of SRTS programs.

### Focus on the Desired Outcomes, Not the Specific SRTS Program

Task force members discussed the need to focus on enabling and encouraging children to walk and bike to school and on making biking and walking safer and more appealing. They felt that it is important to remain open minded to any program that would achieve these goals, even if the program is not called “Safe Routes to School.”

### Consider Safety as a Primary Goal.

Increasing the safety of children walking and biking to school should be the primary goal of any SRTS program. Other benefits such as health benefits are important but secondary. A possible program goal could be, “within the two miles of every school in the U.S. there will be safe walking and bicycling facilities.”

### Require SRTS to be a Component in Strategic Highway Safety Plans

The Task Force could recommend that the next transportation reauthorization legislation require that additional funds for SRTS be a component of Strategic Highway Safety Plans (these are being prepared by each State). A discussion ensued that the Strategic Highway Safety Plans are very data driven, and this might mean that in some states with small percentages of pedestrian and bicycle crashes, it will be more difficult to get SRTS included as a strategy in Strategic Highway Safety Plans.

### Develop a Strategy for Facilitating Small Projects

Many SRTS projects are so small that it can be difficult to find contractors willing to do the work. As a result, there may be a need for grouping projects across jurisdictions. Grouping projects or product orders may help keep costs low. The TOPIC program used a similar approach for small safety and capacity improvement projects, and was considered to be very effective.

### Point Stakeholders to Additional Sources of Funding

Some States are receiving more SRTS grant applications than they can fund. It may be useful to determine what happens to the projects that do not receive SRTS funding. There are many available sources of funding for SRTS projects. Are these unsuccessful applicants locating other funding? One strategy for advancing SRTS would be to ensure that local programs are aware of the myriad of funding sources they can pursue for these projects and programs, and to highlight how other states and local jurisdictions are making additional funding sources available.

#### Develop a Marketing/Outreach Campaign for SRTS

A potential national strategy is to develop a national marketing/outreach campaign for SRTS in order to increase the number of participants in SRTS programs. This campaign could include branding the SRTS concept. The public health community would be a valuable partner for social marketing.

#### Address the Issue of School Siting

The physical location of schools has a tremendous impact on whether children can walk and bicycle safely. The national strategy should address the issue of school siting.

#### Research Programs in Other Countries

There have been many gains for childhood school mobility and safety through Safe Routes to School and related programs in other countries including the Netherlands, Denmark, the United Kingdom, Canada, and Australia. A strategy is to research these programs and make the information available. Much of the success from other countries has come through ongoing multi-year programs.

#### *What should go into the Task Force report?*

The task force came to consensus regarding the chapters that the report should contain:

1. Executive Summary
2. The Assignment (Context)
3. Assessing Data (Include different types of data including developmental, health, air quality and make sure it covers goals taken from the legislative language.)
4. Program Successes (Geographically diverse case studies, best practices)
5. Program Impediments
6. Improving the Program
7. Future Vision
8. National Strategy

Task force members agreed that this report should be timed so that it can influence the reauthorization of SAFETEA-LU. The report should focus on selling the program to Congress, including both compelling anecdotes and persuasive graphics. Some task force members felt that the report should be kept as short as possible. In depth information can be included in the appendix.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS TAKEN AT THE MEETING**

Public Comments were taken at 3:00 pm. Two attendees gave statements, the first of which was made by John Wetmore. He produces a television show called “Perils for Pedestrians,” which

can be found at the website [www.pedestrians.org](http://www.pedestrians.org). The show covers pedestrian issues including SRTS. The show's archives will be available to the public on "Google Video". He will be looking for people to interview about the SRTS program.

Mr. Wetmore also commented that there are some existing tools for measuring how walkable a school is. These tools include pedestrian level of service and walkability checklists. He thinks that it may be possible to use these tools objectively to measure walkability at schools. He also notes that the subjective viewpoints of parents may be more important than objective measures since they choose whether or not to allow their children to walk.

The second comment was made by Linda Davey from Information Display Company. Her company manufactures SpeedCheck Radar Speed signs for school zones. Her company works to promote SRTS to schools and communities around the country. The products manufactured by her company are intended to provide lower cost and effective solutions for SRTS.

## **SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS AND NEXT STEPS**

The project team will coordinate with the task force members to choose dates for the next meetings. Minutes from this meeting will be distributed. A draft report outline will also be developed and distributed prior to the next meeting. The next meeting will provide an opportunity to comment on the outline and continue the discussion that was initiated during the first meeting.

## **QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

During the course of the meeting, members of the task force asked various specific questions. The following is an account of those questions and their responses.

*Question:* Is there any tracking mechanism to determine whether projects receiving SRTS funding are diverted from other federal programs through which they would otherwise have received funding?

*Answer:* A program is in place to track SRTS project spending. Any project that is eligible to use SRTS funding was already eligible for funding under other federal programs (e.g., Transportation Enhancements, and NHTSA's 402 program). No specific mechanism is in place to determine whether funded SRTS projects would have otherwise been funded through other programs.

*Question:* Regarding SRTS funding, are States precluded from requiring a match?

*Answer:* Per Section 1404 of SAFETEA-LU, States cannot require a match.

*Question:* South Dakota submitted written comments through the DOT docket (Docket No. FHWA-2006-24957) acknowledging the SRTS program has merit but believes there are many strings attached which discourages a small State with limited funding from participating. For example, South Dakota recommends eliminating the full time coordinator requirement, the \$1 million program requirement, and the setting of percentages that must be expended on infrastructure and non-infrastructure projects. It also noted that since SRTS does not come with

its own obligation authority, it must compete with other programs and projects which are already in the State Transportation Improvement Program. South Dakota is the only State not yet participating in the Federal Program. Is there any reprisal for States that do not participate in the program?

*Answer:* No. Congress did not provide any provisions for penalties if a State chooses not to participate in the program. One of the best recourses for action may come from public pressure.

*Question:* Is it possible to get list of the State SRTS Coordinators?

*Answer:* A listing of the coordinators is available on the website: [www.saferoutesinfo.org](http://www.saferoutesinfo.org)

*Question:* Since this program is a reimbursement program, are there delays in getting the money to those who receive grants?

*Answer:* There may be some delays. However when the States request payments from the FHWA, the funding transfers almost immediately.

*Question:* Regarding the National Center for SRTS, how does a state know who their State liaison is?

*Answer:* The liaisons work directly with the State SRTS coordinators.

*Question:* Is environmental analysis holding up SRTS projects?

*Answer:* SRTS projects typically qualify as categorical exclusions and do not have to go through the whole National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) environmental process.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 4:45 pm.

I hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge, the foregoing minutes are accurate and complete.

//SIGNED// February 26, 2007

Donna Smallwood

Chair, National Safe Routes to School Task Force

//SIGNED// February 26, 2007

Tim Arnade

Designated Federal Official for National Safe Routes to School Task Force

Office of Safety, Federal Highway Administration

These minutes will be formally adopted by the task force at its next meeting. The original signatures of this document are on file with the U.S. DOT Federal Highway Administration.