

Welch also praises Richmond community for pulling together during a difficult time

RICHMOND, VT - Rep. Peter Welch today hailed the quick implementation of an economic stimulus bill that will direct \$130 million to Vermont for road, bridge and public transit projects. Welch spoke with local government and business leaders at the Richmond Bridge, the first Vermont infrastructure project to be funded by the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

"All around this country and right here in Richmond, hardworking Americans are getting to work rebuilding our economy," Welch said. "The repair of this bridge is just a first step on our long path to economic recovery, but it signals our commitment to investing in our communities and in our future."

The Richmond Bridge, which was built in 1928, will be closed for four months starting next Monday for long-delayed repairs. The project is the first sign of federal recovery efforts aimed at repairing Vermont's crumbling infrastructure while stimulating the economy and creating jobs.

Welch hailed Richmond officials, business-owners and residents for pulling together to overcome the temporary logistical challenges posed by the bridge's temporary closure. He also announced his support for a Rural Business Enterprise Grant application submitted recently by the town to help mitigate the impact of the closure. In a letter to USDA Rural Development's Vermont office, Welch urged support of the grant.

"I am so impressed with Richmond's community spirit and commitment to working together to overcome this challenge," Welch said. "Only by pulling together and helping out one another will we be able to weather this economic storm."

Also speaking at the event were Richmond Selectboard Chairwoman Mary Houle, State Representative Ann O'Brien and Richmond Area Business Association President Thomas Hark.