



State of Louisiana

Division of Administration
Office of the Commissioner

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Contact: Douglas Baker, 225-226-0694

Commissioner Nichols Announces Availability of Funds for I-49 North and South Projects

BATON ROUGE – Today, Commissioner Kristy Nichols announced the availability of nearly \$113 million in funds which will be used to finance both the I-49 North and I-49 South extensions. These dollars became available yesterday through the sale of tax-exempt bonds supported by the Unclaimed Property Leverage Fund. The all-in total interest cost for this sale was around 4 percent, which is considered a very competitive rate.

“To be able to secure funding for this project is paramount. The importance of the I-49 corridor cannot be understated, and the economic impact of this project will continue to aid growth in this state for a very long time,” said Commissioner Nichols. “I’m thrilled to be able to move forward with these projects.”

The dollars raised by the sale of these bonds will be divided between I-49’s Northern and Southern expansion projects, as was determined by Act 413 of the 2011 session. \$89.5 million will be devoted to the Northern expansion of the interstate, from I-220 in Shreveport to the Louisiana/Arkansas state border. In addition, nearly \$20 million will be dedicated to the Southern expansion which starts at I-10 in Lafayette and continues south to the West Bank Expressway in New Orleans.

“We recognize the importance of the I-49 corridor and look forward to the continued progress of this project,” said Sherri H. LeBas, Secretary of DOTD.

The Unclaimed Property bonds were rated Aa3 by Moody’s and AA- by Standard & Poor’s. Because it is appropriation backed debt, the rating agencies rated the bonds only one notch below the state’s credit rating for General Obligation debt. In addition, the bonds are secured by a cooperative endeavor agreement with the state that provides that the state will take all necessary steps to make bondholders whole should collections fall short.