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**SKINNER ANNOUNCES MASS TRANSIT
OUTREACH TO BUSINESS COMMUNITY**

Secretary of Transportation Samuel Skinner today announced a new Business Community Outreach Program designed to encourage the private sector to take a more active role in combating traffic congestion and mobility problems in America's cities.

The program was developed by the Urban Mass Transportation Administration (UMTA).

"Experience teaches us that, although the federal government can help communities provide alternatives to single-occupant automobiles, it cannot compel people to use those alternatives," Skinner said. "In recent years, we've seen that private sector employers, property managers and developers can have enormous influence on the way people travel within their communities.

"We want to enlist the business community in the effort to solve the growing problem of traffic congestion in our nation's cities and suburbs," Skinner said.

Under the initiative, UMTA will sponsor local seminars and provide technical assistance to business groups interested in assuming a more active role in transportation planning and management.

"America's congestion and mobility problems are as much a concern to business as to government," Skinner said. "In many cities and suburbs, traffic congestion is impeding economic development and costing jobs for workers and customers for businesses."

The seminars will also be available for presentation at the national conferences of business groups. The number offered will depend on the level of interest shown.

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Secretary Skinner said UMTA will also convene a Business Transportation Council composed of private sector leaders to provide a channel of communication between UMTA and the business community.

UMTA will carry out the Business Community Outreach program in cooperation with major national business associations such as the International Downtown Association and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

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