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Governor Steve Beshear's Communications Office

Governors Beshear and Daniels, Mayor Abramson convene first meeting of Bi-State Bridges Authority

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'Historic step' toward construction of new Ohio River bridges

LOUISVILLE, Ky.—Gov. Steve Beshear, Indiana Gov. Mitch Daniels and Louisville Mayor Jerry Abramson today convened the first meeting of the 14-member, Bi-State Bridges Authority.

"We're taking a historic step today," Gov. Beshear said. "The task before this authority is challenging but critically important. The work done here will benefit both of our states for generations to come."

The Bi-State Bridges Authority was created to spearhead the project to construct two bridges over the Ohio River and to rebuild the Kennedy Interchange, where Interstates 64, 65 and 71 come together in downtown Louisville.

The authority's mandate includes devising a financial plan for the project, the cost of which is currently estimated at \$4.1 billion. Kentucky's share would be \$2.9 billion.

"It's time to move, and in a way that creates a model on how two states can act together for the good of all," said Gov. Daniels.

"It has taken many years, and lots of hard work, but we are now ready to move this important project forward," Mayor Abramson said. "This authority will lay the groundwork for a vastly improved transportation system in Louisville and Southern Indiana."

During the meeting Tuesday, the authority took several actions, including:

- Election of officers. Joe Prather of Kentucky is chair; Kerry Stemler of Indiana is co-chair; Charles Buddeke of Kentucky is treasurer and Pat Byrne of Indiana is secretary.
- Appointment of Steve Schultz, of Columbus, Ind. as executive director to serve as the chief administrative officer for the authority. Schultz has been in-house counsel to First Financial Bank in Columbus since September 2009, and had previously served as general counsel to Irwin Union Bank and Trust Company of Columbus. He was general counsel to Gov. Daniels in 2005 and 2006.

Gov. Daniels also has appointed Pete King, an attorney from Columbus, as a new Indiana member of the bi-state commission. He replaces Schultz, who has resigned to accept the appointment of bi-state authority executive director.

Gov. Beshear proposed the creation of special authorities to oversee development and financing of "mega" projects – those costing more than \$500 million – between Kentucky and Indiana. His proposal was enacted by the Kentucky General Assembly as House Bill 3 of the special session of 2009.

The legislation created the statewide Kentucky Public Transportation Infrastructure Authority, which voted on Oct. 22, 2009, to recommend that Gov. Beshear, in cooperation with Gov. Daniels, create a bi-state authority for the Ohio River bridges project.

The Bi-State Bridges Authority has seven members from each state. Gov. Beshear appointed three of the Kentucky members and Mayor Abramson appointed four. Gov. Daniels appointed all of the Indiana representatives.

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