

For Immediate Release  
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## **ALL THREE LANES OF I-95 SOUTH REOPENED ON NEW WILSON BRIDGE** ***Transfer of All Six Lanes to New Bridge Now Complete***

Oxon Hill, Md./Alexandria, Va. – At 12:01 a.m., Sunday, July 16, all three lanes of southbound I-95/Capital Beltway Inner Loop were restored and are now traveling across the new Woodrow Wilson Bridge, replacing the one-lane condition that was implemented at 8:00 p.m., Friday, July 14. The lane reopening occurred 29 hours ahead of the project's schedule, which had a worst-case scenario of reopening at 5:00 a.m., Monday morning. Completion of this second half of the traffic switch completes the transfer of all six lanes to the new bridge.

In addition to the reopening of Beltway lanes, the closed ramp in Virginia from I-95 South/Inner Loop to Route 1 North and South has been reopened to traffic. The ramp in Maryland from I-295 South to I-95 South/Inner Loop, however, will remain closed until later Sunday morning, in order to ensure proper cooling of the new pavement, which ties in the ramp to the new bridge alignment. This ramp required more layers of pavement than the Beltway lanes.

Previously, at 2:28 p.m., Saturday, July 15, a Toyota Camry carrying Paul Chang of Mechanicsville, Virginia was the very last of approximately 73 billion vehicles ever to travel across the old bridge. Immediately following, the single lane of I-95 South/Inner Loop was switched from the old bridge onto the new bridge. Mr. Chang and four other final crossers of the old bridge were presented with coins specially minted to commemorate the opening of the new Wilson Bridge. Construction of the new Woodrow Wilson Bridge began in October 2000.

Despite the anticipation of severe traffic impacts, delays and backups throughout the weekend did not come close to last summer's seven mile backups and three hour delays that resulted from a nearly identical operation. In fact, during this weekend's closures, traffic backups averaged between 1 to 1.5 miles, with delays ranging between 30 to 90 minutes. The project attributes outstanding motorist response to a massive project public information campaign urging motorists to stay away from the project area as a major factor in keeping traffic backups and delays to a minimum during the job.

This weekend's completion of the new bridge traffic switch represents a major milestone for the traveling public and the Wilson Bridge Project, as efforts will now shift to removing the old bridge and completing the second new bridge span, which is scheduled to open in mid-2008.

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