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MUFI HANNEMANN RECOGNIZES FORMER U.S. CONGRESSMAN JIM OBERSTAR AS A RAIL CHAMPION FOR HONOLULU

(HONOLULU, HI) Mufi Hannemann today said he is saddened to learn of the passing of former Minnesota Congressman Jim Oberstar. "Congressman Oberstar served in the U.S. House for 36 years and was Minnesota's longest-serving House member. In 2006, he chaired the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and in that capacity, he was a strong proponent of Honolulu's rail initiative. "If I had to identify a champion for Honolulu's rail project in the House in Washington DC, it would be Congressman Oberstar," said Hannemann, who as mayor of Honolulu, worked very closely with Oberstar to build support in the nation's Capitol, amongst key transportation advocates and stakeholders.

The former mayor helped to host a Hawaii mahalo reception back in January 2011 to recognize Oberstar's staunch support of the Honolulu Rail Transit project. Three years prior, he took a helicopter tour of the rail route (with then Mayor Hannemann) and declared Honolulu's rail to be "the premier transit project in the entire country." Adds Hannemann, "I recall so vividly when he and I went up in that chopper to get a closer look at our traffic gridlock problem, and when we came down, he said to me, *'My goodness, we need to move on this quickly and get you the federal funding to push this project forward.'* He was a man of his word and we miss him dearly."

Hannemann said he is thankful for Oberstar's role in the establishment of the rail project in the islands. "Very few of his peers understood the importance of rebuilding the nation's infrastructure and modernizing our transportation system like he did. We owe him big time," stated Hannemann.

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