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THE CHAMBER FOR REGIONAL PROSPERITY

## **BBA EXPRESSES STRONG SUPPORT OF HIGHWAY 280 PLANS, URGES CITIZEN ACTION**

### **IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (March 9, 2010) – The Executive Committee of the Birmingham Business Alliance has issued a strong statement in favor of the plan proposed by Governor Bob Riley to reduce traffic congestion on Highway 280. The BBA leadership recognizes the powerful economic development realities of the Highway 280 project – a “shovel-ready” \$750 million solution to 30 years of traffic tie ups in what has become Alabama’s fastest-growing economic corridor. The committee also believes that the time for state action is now. In an email to BBA investors, the Executive Committee urged citizens in the Birmingham region to express their support to elected officials.

BBA Board Chairman Dowd Ritter, CEO of Regions Financial Corporation, urged businesses and employees to communicate their support of the project to Governor Riley and to the mayors whose cities border the U.S. 280 corridor. “Governor Riley needs to hear from Birmingham that it is time for this plan to move forward,” Ritter said. “I’m asking citizens who support the project to let the Mayors and the Governor know how they feel.”

Executive Committee member Johnny Johns, CEO of Protective Life Insurance, said this is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to improve the Birmingham region’s quality of life. “This self-funded traffic solution is the product of a very long and thorough process. It will not only dramatically help traffic flow, but will do so in a way that will lower noise, promote safety, improve air quality, facilitate mass transit planning, promote economic development and help local retailers up and down the 280 corridor,” Johns said.

The Birmingham Business Alliance is a dynamic advocate, unifying voice and constant catalyst for economic development and business prosperity for the Birmingham region. The BBA was formed in July 2009 through a merger of the Greater Birmingham Regional Chamber of Commerce and the Metropolitan Development Board.

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