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Senators Debbie Stabenow and Carl Levin Dedicate New Bus Transit Terminal Built by DeMaria Building Company

Detroit, Michigan

“On time and under budget...a success!” declared **Senator Debbie Stabenow** as she joined **Senator Carl Levin** and other area officials on October 27, 2006, to officially celebrate the opening of the new Straffon-Benedict Bus Transit Terminal Building for the Blue Water Area Transportation Commission in Port Huron, Michigan.

Named after Raymond Straffon and Miles Benedict, the founders of the Blue Water Area Transportation Commission, the new Terminal, built by DeMaria Building Company, Detroit, MI, took years of diligent planning, but less than one year to design and build. Four times larger than the original building, the Straffon-Benedict Terminal will accommodate a larger fleet of **CNG powered buses** and will also serve other agencies in the Port Huron area including the Community Mental Health Agency, YMCA, A.R.C. and Group Homes throughout St. Clair County.

“...the new Straffon-Benedict is herby officially dedicated...” stated in a letter from **Governor Jennifer Granholm** read aloud by representatives from the Michigan Department of Transportation amid applause by the crowd of over 100 in attendance for the ceremony.

The new Terminal was also a Brownfield Redevelopment project within an industrial area of Port Huron reflecting a commitment to reinvigorate that area of town.

The Blue Water Area Transportation Commission also uses the alternative fuel, compressed natural gas (CNG) to power their buses and has one of the largest fleets in Michigan. CNG is cleaner and cheaper than diesel fuel. The new Straffon-Benedict Terminal features CNG fueling stations and a separate manufacturing building for the production of CNG.

“Blue Water’s commitment to use CNG is a commitment to our local environment and to the use of alternative energy in Michigan...” stated Senator Carl Levin.

Joining Senators Debbie Stabenow and Carl Levin was Port Huron Mayor Alan Cutcher, State Senator Judson Gilbert, and Representatives Daniel Acciavatti and John Espinoza. Steven English from URS Corporation (design firm) and Darren Murray from DeMaria Building Company (construction firm) were also in attendance.

“This was truly a remarkable success for a design/build project on a brownfield redevelopment site,” stated Darren Murray, vice president of DeMaria Building Company. “URS and DeMaria began our efforts in December 2005 and successfully designed and built the new 120,000 sf facility in less than 10 months. It was a true collaboration. It was also a zero accident, zero incident project too, reflecting the high standards of safety DeMaria strives to achieve on all jobs.”

James Wilson, general manager for the Blue Water Area Transportation Commission commented on the funding required to bring the \$14,000,000 facility into being. “Senator Stabenow helped to secure the funding in Congress for the new Straffon-Benedict Terminal.”

Added Senator Debbie Stabenow, “...thirteen million dollars in funding for approximately thirteen million people’s lives the new Terminal will affect. That’s significant...”

Indeed it is significant. In the end the new Straffon-Benedict Bus Transit Terminal was built on time in less than 10 months without any compromise to safety. It came in under budget and will help the Transportation Commission shuttle millions of seniors, physically challenged, and other citizens to many destinations around the Blue Water area near Port Huron, Michigan.

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