For Immediate Release
December 16, 2005

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Rep. Waxman Introduces Legislation to Allow Subway Tunneling Along Wilshire

Today, Rep. Henry A. Waxman introduced legislation (H.R. 4653) that would allow subway tunneling along Wilshire Boulevard. The tunneling prohibition was enacted after the 1985 methane gas explosion at the Ross Dress for Less store.

A five-member safety review panel selected by Congressman Waxman and the American Public Transportation Association studied the safety of tunneling in methane gas risk zones in October. The review panel has made a unanimous determination that tunneling can be done safely if proper procedures and appropriate technologies are used. It has further determined that "in 1985 the decision to hold further tunneling in abeyance was prudent, given the circumstances and extent of information and technology available at that time. Much has changed since then to significantly improve tunneling and operation safety."

"I am very pleased with the panel's unanimous finding that tunneling can now be done safely," Congressman Waxman said, "and I will make lifting the prohibition a priority."