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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CEREMONY HELD FOR GOLDEN STATE FREEWAY (I-5)/STATE HIGHWAY 126 INTERCHANGE COMPLETION

Santa Clarita – Officials from the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) were joined by community leaders and others to celebrate completion of the improved Golden State Freeway (I-5)/State Highway 126 Interchange. Also celebrated was the placement of a historical monument commemorating the history and importance of the old Ridge Route, now known as Interstate 5.

The Master of Ceremonies was Raja Mitwasi, California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). Speakers included: Jackie Bick, representing Senator George Runner; Mille Jones, representing Los Angeles County Supervisor Michael Antonovich; Mayor Pro-Tem Marsha McLean, City of Santa Clarita; Metro officials; Gary Cusumano, Chairman, Newhall Land; Connie Wordon-Roberts, representing the Santa Clarita Valley Chamber of Commerce and the Valley Industrial Association – who spoke on behalf of Victor Lindenheim and the I-5 Golden State Gateway Coalition; Harrison Scott, President, Ridge Route Preservation Organization; and Glen Thornhill, E Clampus Vitus.

Also on hand were representatives from Assemblyman Keith Richman's office, the California Highway Patrol and members of the community.

“Improving this very vital interchange is yet another major step toward providing a seamless transportation network and improving the quality of life for Californian's commuters,” said Mitwasi.

The new interchange improvement project is helping to alleviate congestion, improve mobility, decrease travel times and enhance safety. “It will also improve the movement of commerce throughout this major I-5 corridor, which many consider the backbone of the

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California Highway system,” added Mitwasi.

Construction began on the \$24-million I-5/126 improvement project in March, 2003 and cost \$24 million. Highway 126 was widened east of Commerce Center Drive, the bridge structure over I-5 was replaced, new ramps constructed, and other ramps widened and realigned.

The Ridge Route Preservation Organization and E Clampus Vitas were responsible for the new monument at the I-5/126 Interchange. The Ridge Route Preservation Organization is a California non-profit corporation committed to educating the public to the importance of California’s historic 1915 Ridge Route Highway, now known as Interstate 5. And E Clampus Vitas is an organization which places historical plaques and monuments across California.

After the dual-ceremony, a caravan of antique cars led a procession to the new monument.

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