Robert. E. Skinner, Jr., Executive Director of the Transportation Research Board, is the featured speaker at the Chairman’s Luncheon and Awards program. Skinner will speak on the role of research in advancing progress in transportation and the challenges ahead. Fredrick G. “Bud” Wright, Executive Director of the American Association of Transportation Officials, will introduce Skinner and will present him with the Frank Turner Medal.

The Frank Turner Medal for Lifetime Achievement in Transportation is a biennial award established in 1998 by a group of friends, colleagues, and admirers of Frances C. (Frank) Turner to honor him and to commemorate his extraordinary accomplishments in the development and construction of the U.S. transportation system. Turner was the initial recipient of the award in January 1999. The award recognizes lifetime achievement in transportation, demonstrated by a distinguished career in the field, professional prominence, and a distinctive, widely recognized
contribution to transportation policy, administration, or research.

Skinner is honored with the 2014 Frank Turner Medal for his influential career as a strong advocate for innovation in transportation and for his support of objective, balanced analysis as a foundation for policy making. Skinner will retire in January 2015 after more than 30 years of service to the National Research Council—21 years of which he served executive director of TRB.

Under Skinner’s direction, TRB significantly strengthened the multimodal and multidisciplinary range of its programs, inaugurated major communications initiatives, fostered international research partnerships and coordination, and worked proactively to enhance the diversity of the Board’s committees, programs, and staff. All of these enhancements provided direct dividends to federal, state, and local transportation agencies and ultimately to the traveling public.

After taking the helm of TRB in 1994, the size and scope of the Board’s activities expanded dramatically—TRB’s annual budget rose from $35 million to $113 million, and Annual Meeting attendance climbed from 7,000 to 12,000. During his tenure, TRB created of the Airport Cooperative Research Program; established the second Strategic Highway Research program; increased participation by women and members of minority groups in transportation activities and leadership positions; and enhanced promotion of transportation as a career path for young people, including minority students, through the creation of TRB’s Minority Student Fellows Program and Young Members Council.

Prior to becoming executive director in 1994, Skinner directed TRB’s policy study activities where he supervised the conduct of more than 30 studies that helped guide federal and state
policy decisions. These included studies that led to the development of geometric design
guidelines for highway resurfacing, restoration, and rehabilitation projects; that helped promote
the establishment of the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Bureau of Transportation Statistics;
and that examined the impacts of airline deregulation.

Before joining TRB in 1983, he was a Vice President of Alan M. Voorhees and Associates, a
transportation consulting firm where he managed the firm’s activities in the eastern United
States.

In addition to his service to TRB, Skinner has been frequently called upon for advice and
leadership on a range of transportation issues. He chaired the Special Advisory Panel for the
Stem-to-Stern Safety Review of the Boston Central Artery/Tunnel Project and served on the
Metrolink (Los Angeles) Commuter Rail Safety Review Panel. In addition, he has served on a
number of university and research advisory groups, including the Board of Trustees for the
School of Engineering and Applied Science at the University of Virginia, the Advisory Board for
the Center for Urban Transportation Research at the University of South Florida, the External
Review Committee for the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Portugal Project, the
Advisory Council for the Carnegie-Mellon Transportation Center, and the Visiting Committee
for MIT’s Engineering Systems Division.

Mr. Skinner earned his bachelor’s degree in civil engineering from the University of Virginia
and received a master’s degree in civil engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of
Technology. A registered professional engineer, Mr. Skinner received the James Laurie Prize
from the American Society of Civil Engineers; the P.D. McLean Memorial Award from the
Washington, D.C. Road Gang; and the Director’s Research Champion Award from the Texas A&M Transportation Institute.

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