

### **Ray LaHood – Secretary of Transportation**

Ray LaHood was born in 1945. He graduated from Bradley University. LaHood held several jobs prior to his public service career. Most notably, he was a junior high school teacher in Illinois for several years. He also worked as an aide to former Representatives Tom Railsback and Robert Michel.

LaHood was first elected to Congress in 1994, filling the seat left vacant by Michel. He served for seven terms and did not run for re-election in 2008. He gained a reputation as a centrist in Congress, at times publicly criticizing fellow Republicans and working with Democrats in the House.

LaHood served on the Appropriations and Agriculture committees in the House, and is noted for his successful efforts to bring federal money for projects in his district. He is also seen an expert on rules of congressional procedure, leading to his chairing the House during debate on the impeachment of President Clinton.

Much of LaHood's district was represented by Abraham Lincoln when the latter served in the House; LaHood authored legislation creating the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission to commemorate Lincoln's birth in 1809.

LaHood has known President-elect Obama for over a decade and is said to be close to incoming White House Chief of Staff Rahm Emanuel, both of whom represented Illinois in Congress.

#### **Sources:**

Tackett, Michael and Hughes, John. *Republican LaHood Likely Obama's Transportation Pick*. BLOOMBERG NEWS, December 17, 2008.

Congressman Ray LaHood (2008). *Ray LaHood Biography*. Retrieved on December 17, 2008, from <http://www.house.gov/lahood/bio.shtml>.