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Waxman Red Line Legislation Passes the House

Today, the House of Representatives passed Rep. Henry A. Waxman's legislation (H.R. 4653) that would allow subway tunneling along Wilshire Boulevard. A tunneling prohibition was enacted after a 1985 methane gas explosion demolished a Ross Dress for Less store. The legislation passed without objection.

Last year, Congressman Waxman worked with Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa to appoint a panel of scientific experts to conduct an independent safety review of the methane gas area. These experts made a unanimous determination in a November 2005 report that tunneling in this area can be done safely if proper procedures and appropriate technologies are used. It 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."

After the vote, Mr. Waxman said, "Lifting the prohibition has been a priority for me this Congress. I am pleased with the strong vote in the House and will work hard for its speedy passage in the Senate and enactment into law."