

INFORMATION RELEASE



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BENTON COUNTY LEGISLATORS PRESENT CHECKS TO ARKANSAS HIGHWAY & TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT *Legislators Provide \$200,000 for Truck to be based in Benton County*

LITTLE ROCK (7-8) – Benton County legislators Jonathan Barnett and Mary Lou Slinkard experienced the harsh winter felt by all Arkansans this past year. And they heard complaints about road conditions, partially brought about by a lack of adequate equipment owned by the Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department (AHTD).

But instead of just listening to the complaints or passing them on to others, the two representatives decided to help find a solution. “We knew there was General Improvement Fund (GIF) money available, and we thought some new road equipment would be a great benefit for our constituents in Benton County,” Barnett said. “We made the application, and here we are today with checks totaling \$200,000 for the Highway Department.”

The money will be used to purchase a Belly Plow that will be based in the Department’s Area Headquarters in Gentry. A Belly Plow is actually a 12-yard tandem-axle dump truck that gets its name from the snow plow blade mounted beneath the belly of the truck, between the front and rear axles. The truck also has a front mounted plow blade and a state-of-the-art spreader bed used to distribute snow and ice fighting materials.

“We learned this past winter that our aging equipment fleet is no match for a significant ice storm,” said Scott Bennett, Director of the AHTD. “We took delivery of our first Belly Plow in December and quickly learned how effective they could be in battling snow and ice. We now have six belly plows in our inventory, another eight are ordered, and we plan to purchase 28 more in the coming year. And thanks to Representatives Slinkard and Barnett, we can add one more to that total specifically for Benton County.”

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PHOTOS ARE ATTACHED

