

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

Support Texas Roadways

359 million hours. That is how many hours Texans will spend in congested traffic this year. Unfortunately, that is the good news. The bad news is that number will double over the next 10 years, unless we take dramatic steps to improve our state's transportation infrastructure.

Increased congestion means parents spending less time with their children, businesses spending more on transportation costs and all of us breathing more polluted air.

Texas families and businesses deserve better.

That is why a number of Texas Republicans and Democrats in Congress have joined together in a bipartisan effort to endorse Proposition 12 on the November 6 ballot.

Proposition 12 will authorize \$5 billion in state bonds to help reduce the massive backlog of high priority roads, bridges and highways that must be built in our urban, suburban and rural communities throughout Texas. If Proposition 12 is defeated, it would put our state, families and businesses into a transportation pothole that would harm our quality of life and economic future for years to come.

Let us be clear. Proposition 12 is not the final solution to Texas' transportation woes, but it is a step in the right direction. As the Chinese proverb says, "A journey of a thousand miles must begin with a single step." Proposition 12 is just that. It is a first step in our long journey ahead toward less congestion, improved roads and transit and cleaner air. It is a step we must take together. The quality of life for our families depends on it.

We intend to do much more. The Texas Congressional delegation in Washington is working together on a bipartisan basis to seek solutions to our transportation challenges.

We have formed a bipartisan transportation working group that has met with Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) Chairman Ric Williamson. We have met with Governor Perry, who has encouraged TxDOT officials to be actively involved in our bipartisan dialogue. In the months ahead we intend to meet with state legislators in Austin to find ways our Texas representatives in Washington and Austin can work together to address Texas' short-term and long-term transportation challenges.

We believe a key initial step in solving a problem is to understand the nature and seriousness of the problem. When it comes to Texas and transportation, our problem is immense.

Here are some facts, according to the Texas Transportation Institute at Texas A&M University.

- 1.) The cost of excess travel time and fuel consumed in congestion in Texas is estimated at \$6.7 billion

- 2.) State GDP has increasingly outpaced the state gas tax revenue. This, together with 52% inflation in construction costs over the last five years, is eating away at our ability to invest in transportation infrastructure.
- 3.) Without additional revenue sources and appropriate planning congestion will continue to worsen and Texas metropolitan areas will experience a doubling of traffic congestion by 2030.

We are not interested in finger pointing. What we are interested in is understanding the depth of our transportation problems and challenges and then finding common ground, common sense solutions. We intend to reach out to business, labor and community leaders for their ideas and to lay a common foundation of understanding about the depth of Texas' transportation crisis. Only then can we develop a consensus for real solutions.

Along the way, we know there will be honest differences and bumps in the road. We understand there are no simple, painless solutions or silver bullets to solve our state's transportation problems, but we intend to work hard, together.

Working together, we can show that genuine, bipartisan cooperation can pave the way for a brighter future for Texas.

For now, Proposition 12 is an essential first step in addressing Texas' transportation challenges. A "yes" vote on Proposition 12 will move Texas forward for the benefit of all Texas families. It is time for us to move forward, together.

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