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Governor Granholm Announces Downriver, Belle Isle Eliminated as Options for New Border Crossing

October 4, 2005

LANSING – Governor Jennifer M. Granholm today announced the elimination of two areas under consideration for a new border crossing between southeast Michigan and Ontario – Downriver, located south of the U.S. Steel property in Ecorse, and the area upriver near Belle Isle. The decision was made by the Border Transportation Partnership which consists of the U.S. Federal Highway Administration, Transport Canada, the Ontario Ministry of Transportation, and the Michigan Department of Transportation.

“Today’s announcement that the Downriver and Belle Isle alternatives have been eliminated is another step in this critically important process,” said Granholm. “The study team will continue their work to ensure that the right decision is made for the residents of southeast Michigan and every traveler who relies on safe, efficient crossings with Canada.”

The Detroit River International Crossing (DRIC) study is a joint project to build another U.S.-Canada border crossing between southeast Michigan and Ontario.

“This is the right decision at the right time for the right reasons,” said Senator Ray Basham (D-Taylor). “The state should be commended for following the proper procedures, and today’s announcement confirms what we have stressed all along – that there are better options than the Downriver region for an additional international crossing.”

The Governor emphasized that decisions regarding which alternatives should be eliminated or studied further have been, and will continue to be, made by balancing the need for the project and the potential social, economic, and environmental impacts. Less than a dozen alternatives remain under consideration.

“This is welcome news to Downriver communities who can continue to enjoy a good quality of life without worrying about the ill-effects of an international bridge,” Representative Kathleen Law (D-Gibraltar) said. “For months, Downriver residents have stood together and opposed any plan to put an international U.S.-Canada bridge through their neighborhoods, and today their hard work has paid off.”

The DRIC is bound by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) which calls for rigorous data analyses on environmental impacts, technical feasibility, and costs. Additional sites are expected to be eliminated by the end of November.

“I want to thank Governor Granholm for her foresight and sensitivity in listening to the needs of the Downriver citizens on this issue,” said Wayne County Executive Robert Ficano. “I appreciate her leadership and congratulate her on making the right decision for the good of the communities.”

The DRIC is on schedule to complete an environmental impact statement by 2007, with a final decision expected sometime next year.

“Throughout the study process, we have asked for public input and have been very pleased with the high level of public engagement on this issue” said Granholm. “Through a complicated process, we have asked local communities for patience, and now it is only right that we, in turn, share details and decisions as we learn them.”

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For more information on the Border Transportation Partnership, visit their web site at:

<http://www.partnershipborderstudy.com/>

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