



Senator Steve Buehrer
1st Ohio Senate District

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BUEHRER, SENATE COLLEAGUES URGE SUPPORT FOR CONSTRUCTION OF DETROIT RIVER INTERNATIONAL BRIDGE

COLUMBUS—The Ohio Senate voted unanimously yesterday to approve a resolution sponsored by State Senator Steve Buehrer (R-Delta) which urges support for the construction of a new Detroit River bridge between the United States and Canada to ensure the future of trade between the two countries and help protect and grow jobs in Ohio and other states.

“Right now our primary focus must be on jobs,” said Buehrer. “Improved transportation links with Canada have the potential to create billions of dollars in trade and thousands of jobs for Ohio and the U.S. Likewise, any thing that impedes trade with Canada has the potential to cost jobs and slow the economy.”

Senator Buehrer, who is a member of the U.S.-Canada Relations Committee for the Council of State Governments Midwestern Office, explained that Canada is the largest foreign trade partner for the United States, with hundreds of millions of dollars in goods crossing the border each day, and much of this commerce comes from or is destined for Ohio. Canada is Ohio’s top export market, and bilateral trade accounts for nearly \$36 billion in economic activity and supports an estimated 267,500 Ohio jobs.

“Trade with Canada is critical to the success of our state, regional and national economy and impacts the livelihood of hundreds of thousands of workers and their families,” said Buehrer.

Since 1929, the Ambassador Bridge stretching from Detroit Michigan to Windsor, Ontario has been a vital tool in the U.S.-Canada trade relationship. Approximately 54 percent of U.S. trade with Canada moves by truck, and nearly half of this truck traffic travels through the Detroit and Port Huron, Michigan border crossings.

In recent years, however, the 81-year-old, privately-owned bridge has been a point of delay for trucks and other vehicles crossing the border, and there are reports that the structure is in need of major repairs. With jobs, development and the future stability of billions of dollars in trade on the line, the State of Michigan and Transport Canada, the Canadian transportation department, are pursuing a public-private partnership to finance and build an additional bridge over the Detroit River. The Detroit River International Crossing (DRIC) would consist of six lanes, with three lanes bound for the U.S. and three lanes bound for Canada.

While much of the preliminary work is complete, the Michigan Department of Transportation needs legislative authority to enter into an agreement with Canada and other public and private partners to move forward with the construction of the DRIC.

Today, the Ohio Senate approved Senate Resolution 223, a proposal sponsored by Senator Buehrer which urges the Michigan Legislature to act swiftly to authorize the DRIC and ensure that people and goods can continue to move safely and efficiently across the border. The resolution, which passed the Senate 32-0, states that “a modern border crossing that can support the ever-increasing amount of trade and travel between the United States and Canada is essential to the economies of Ohio and the Midwest.” It goes on to say that the Ohio Senate “fully supports the new Detroit River International Crossing project,” which will “lay the foundation for future productivity, growth and economic stability.”

Senator Buehrer added that the DRIC project would create an estimated 10,000 construction jobs and more than 30,000 indirect jobs.

“Construction of the new bridge is needed to maintain a secure, efficient network for trade and tourism between the U.S and Canada and help preserve thousands of jobs and billions of dollars in economic activity in Ohio and other Midwest states,” said Buehrer. “I appreciate my Senate colleagues joining me today to urge action from Michigan lawmakers to ensure this vital project moves forward and the relationship between American and Canadian governments, businesses and citizens remains strong for generations to come.”

To view the resolution, visit http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/res.cfm?ID=128_SR_223.