

May 8, 2008

The Honorable Lee Gonzalez
Chair
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation
P.O. Box 30014
Lansing, MI 48909-7514

Dear Representative Gonzales:

Thank you for the invitation to speak at the May 12 hearing on the Detroit River International Crossing process hosted by the Detroit Regional Chamber. While I am unable to attend in person, I appreciate the opportunity to provide a written testimony on the importance of trade to the economy and security of the state of Michigan and the United States.

In my ongoing discussions with local and state leadership, increased capacity at the Michigan-Canadian Border has been identified as a major priority for Michigan and the nation.

I addressed the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Emerging Technologies during my visit to Michigan in September 2007 to discuss homeland security, and more specific to Michigan, securing the Michigan and Canadian Border. During this meeting, I spoke about the Detroit River International Crossing process as a preferred alternative to a twin bridge to increase capacity and secure trade between the United States and Canada.

The decision, under consideration by your committee between the two bridge solutions, will have serious security implications and will critically impact the economic growth potential for Michigan, the United States and Canada.

Economic Implications

Currently, more than \$1.1 billion in trade crosses between the United States and Canada each day. This represents 40 percent of Canada-bound trucks.

Since my last visit, business leaders across the state of Michigan also have come out in support of the Detroit River International Crossing process. This includes companies and associations from the manufacturing and shipping industries that represent 7.1 million U.S. jobs and more than 200,000 Michigan jobs directly attributed to the goods that cross the border through Michigan.

The twin bridge solution proposes to route additional capacity into Windsor, Canada—onto a City street with 17 stoplights and limited infrastructure capacity to move U.S. exports. Currently, delays on the Canadian side have been noted at up to five miles in length. Adding another bridge that directs traffic through Windsor will only cause further congestion.

Adding capacity at both sides of the Michigan-Canadian border is necessary to further promote the growth of both state and national economies. A freeway-to-freeway connection alternatives study, which is included in the Detroit River International Crossing process, will facilitate efficient movement of goods and people at the U.S.-Canadian border.

A successful solution must include participation from the Canadian government to provide a bi-national solution. To date, Canada has indicated that they will not support a second twin bridge

solution that would force more traffic into Windsor. This topic has spurred dialog most recently between President George W. Bush and Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper during their meeting in New Orleans on the Security and Prosperity Initiative where they spoke in favor of the Detroit River International Crossing.

Security Implications

In a post 9/11 era, the Department of Homeland Security was created in large part to secure our nation's ports, including major border crossings between Canada and Mexico. Twin bridge, high-level, high-capacity river crossings create a unique "high-value" target for terrorists looking to disrupt our nation's economy with a focused attack.

By reducing the importance of any critical point in our national infrastructure, we reduce the threat to our citizens and economy and increase the effort required by terrorist to cause major interruptions. Investing in infrastructure that improves traffic flow along major arteries and reduces vulnerabilities at transportation choke points can reduce the threat of economic disruptions.

When exploring capacity expansion of the US-Canadian border in Michigan, I encourage your committee to consider the risks associated with proximity between existing and future border crossings.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to address this important national and state issue. I am planning a trip to Michigan later this year and look forward to meeting with you in person during my visit. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



Barry McCaffrey

cc: Members of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation