



Public Notice: Request for Input on Authorization of the Surface Transportation Program

The Texas Department of Transportation (department) is soliciting public comments regarding authorization of a new federal surface transportation program.

In the near future, Texas will face severe funding shortfalls in addressing the state's existing and planned highway system. Funding to the department comes from several sources including: state motor fuels taxes, state motor vehicle registration fees, the issuance of bonds, and federal reimbursements. Federal reimbursements come to the state as a percentage of what Texas pays in federal motor fuels taxes. Federal funding is apportioned to states through periodic Congressional authorizations of the surface transportation program. The most recent multi-year federal authorization program expires on September 30, 2009. It is anticipated that the actual legislation authorizing the program will not pass until several months after that deadline. Congress will be working to identify the transportation policies and funding levels that Texas will operate within during what will likely be the next several-year authorization period. Many of these concepts and proposals may be found in draft legislation proposed by Chairman James Oberstar (MN) and can be found at the following link on the U.S. House of Representatives' Transportation and Infrastructure Committee website at: http://transportation.house.gov/Media/file/Highways/HPP/OBERST_044_xml.pdf.

The department and the Texas Transportation Commission are seeking public input and comment on the transportation, project delivery, and funding policies that individual citizens and interested parties of this state believe to be an important part of authorization of the surface transportation program. The department is seeking both general ideas as well as specific recommendations. The information gathered through this process will assist the department in informing members of Congress on the issues of importance to Texas for authorization of a new surface transportation program.

The department will accept only written comments and they should be addressed to Jefferson Grimes, Deputy Director, Government and Public Affairs Division, Texas Department of Transportation, 125 East 11th Street, Austin, Texas 78701. Comments also may be provided via e-mail at the following address: federal@dot.state.tx.us or sent via facsimile transmission to 512-463-9389. The deadline for receipt of comments is 5:00 p.m., November 15, 2009. These instructions will also be available on the department's website: http://www.txdot.gov/public_involvement/public_comment/legislative_input.htm.

The department will not respond individually to comments received pursuant to this notice, however, it may contact individuals to verify or seek clarification of their comments.