



TEXAS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION
P.O. Box 2910 • AUSTIN, TEXAS 78768-2910 • (512) 463-0818

February 11, 2010

Mrs. Deirdre Delisi
Chair, Texas Transportation Commission
125 E. 11th Street
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Madame Chair,

As you recall, on January 28, 2010, the Commission directed the Executive Director and staff to negotiate with the North Texas Tollway Authority (NTTA) and the Regional Transportation Council of the North Central Texas Council of Governments for the SH 161 and Southwest Parkway/Chisholm Trail projects, subject to the NTTA's compliance with all of the prerequisites for developing those projects and obtaining such financial assistance, including the submittal of one or more requests for financing to the department and required Commission approvals.

While I applaud the efforts of both the Texas Department of Transportation and the NTTA to work collectively on these projects, I have some concerns about using Fund 6 money as a "backstop" for this project. Given the amount of debt the department has already incurred, and the uncertainty of future revenue to replenish Fund 6, what protections, if any, are there for Fund 6? Are there other financial options available to proceed with this project, and if so, what are they?

The next Commission meeting is scheduled for two weeks from today, February 25, 2010. It is my understanding, that is possible for the Commission to have reached an agreement prior to this meeting, and will potentially be voting on this minute order. However, I respectfully ask that before the Commission approves any financial agreement with the NTTA, that you seek some input from the House and Senate budget writers, and Senator Carona.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joe C. Pickett".

Joe C. Pickett
Chair, House Committee on Transportation

JCP/lal