



NEWS RELEASE

Contact: **Gloria Roemer**
 Communications Director
 713 – 755-4027
 713 – 398-3139 (Cell)
 Gloria.Roemer@cjo.hctx.net

Date: May 16, 2007
Release: Immediate

COMMISSIONERS COURT VOTES UNANIMOUSLY TO WITHDRAW FROM ALLIANCE FOR I-69 TEXAS

Houston - Harris County Commissioners Court voted unanimously yesterday to withdraw its membership from the Alliance for I-69 Texas. County Judge Ed Emmett commented, "When the Alliance was first formed, the organization was committed to upgrading U.S. 59 to interstate status and designating portions of U. S. 59 to be part of I-69, the NAFTA highway. The Alliance now supports a corridor toll road that may run parallel to U. S. 59". Judge Emmett stated that the Alliance of I-69 Texas was no longer an alliance for I-69 but an alliance for the Trans Texas Corridor.

In addition, Judge Emmett objected to the board of directors of the Alliance for I-69 Texas writing a letter to Governor Perry asking him to veto HB 1892, a bill that gives the Harris County Toll Road Authority control over toll projects in Harris County and that calls for a two-year moratorium on Comprehensive Development Assessments as part of the Trans Texas Corridor projects. Judge Emmett stated that a veto of HB 1892 would affect the county's ability to address transportation infrastructure needs in the absence of state or federal dollars.

Precinct 2 Commissioner Sylvia Garcia added that she feels that Harris County spends too much money on membership fees without receiving real value for the dollars spent.

(more)

Harris County Commissioners Court supported the original provisions in HB 1892 that would have allowed local elected officials to have greater flexibility regarding their transportation needs. CSSB 792, a compromise bill, has been worked out with the Governor and will allow Harris County to proceed with the development of six pending toll projects.

The pending projects include the following (or functional equivalents of the following): Beltway 8 Tollway East (between U.S. 59 North and U. S. 90 East); the Hardy Downtown Connector; the U.S. 290 Toll Lanes (from IH 610 West to proposed SH 99, or the Grand Parkway); State Highway 288 (between U. S. 59 and Grand Parkway); Fairmont Parkway East; and the South Post Oak Road Extension (as needed).

####