



# The Alliance for I-69 Texas

*Working to Better Connect Texas Communities and  
Create Economic Opportunities*

Contact: Jennifer Shepard, Executive Director, Alliance for I-69 Texas - 703-963-3822.

**For Immediate Release**

**September 18, 2020**

## **I-69 Supporters Urge Increased Federal Support for I-69**

More than 20 representatives of Texas communities spent this week in virtual meetings with the Washington offices of Texas senators and members of Congress, key committee staff and administration officials urging federal officials to continue and accelerate the ongoing development of Interstate 69.

Each year the Alliance for I-69 Texas hosts a "DC Fly-In" but this year COVID-19 concerns made it necessary for the week's events to be held online.

Local leaders briefed the congressional officials on the need for increased overall federal investment in highway construction, particularly additional funding for development of projects under the National Highway Freight Program and ensuring I-69 is eligible for that funding. The highways that make up the I-69 System in Texas are already major freight corridors.

I-69 is being developed by TxDOT as a series of incremental upgrades to existing highways stretching from Texarkana to Houston and south to Laredo and the Lower Rio Grande Valley on US 59, US 77, US 281 and SH 44.

With freight moving on Texas highways projected to double over the next 25 years, supporters underscored the importance of I-69 in improving freight efficiency. At the same time, I-69 development will enhance public safety by adding needed hurricane evacuation capacity and providing congestion relief in urban and rural areas.

"During our visits we stressed that while one third of Texas' population lives in counties along the I-69 route, more than 75% of the corridor passes through rural areas that are largely underserved by the existing interstate highway system," said Polk County Judge Sydney Murphy, chairman of the Alliance for I-69 Texas. "Completing I-69 will provide connectivity to rural Texas communities and spur economic growth for years to come."

During the virtual Washington "fly-in" meetings, Alliance members also urged that Congress change a federal law to make it easier for TxDOT to add completed highway segments to the Interstate Highway System and put up interstate signs. This effort is focused on segments that have been completed to interstate standard, but which are not yet connected to an existing interstate.

“Having an interstate highway in or near a small community is very important to attracting new industry, commerce and jobs. There are two dozen completed freeway sections in East Texas and South Texas that could be signed now and would provide a really valuable benefit to those communities,” Judge Murphy said.

While I-69 advocates continue to press for assistance at the federal level, Alliance members applauded the growing commitment the Texas Transportation Commission has made to building I-69. The state’s most recent 10-year funding program approved in August includes more than 70 upgrade projects covering approximately 300 miles of the I-69 corridor. That includes about \$3 billion for expansion of the existing I-69 freeway in Houston and about \$4 billion for projects through mostly rural areas.

“I am extremely pleased with the partnership we have with TxDOT and of the progress that we have made in advancing the U.S. 77 Corridor from Corpus Christi to Brownsville. The conversion of U.S. 77 into an interstate standard highway is one of our highest transportation priorities,” stated Cameron County Judge Eddie Treviño, Jr.

“The value of I-69 to Texas has been obvious since it was proposed more than 25 years ago. Because the voters of Texas approved more money for Texas highways a few years ago, we are finally going to see significant segments of I-69 in East Texas and South Texas going to construction in the next four years. That will be great for the Rio Grande Valley and great for Texas,” Judge Eddie Treviño, Jr., said.