



Senator Eliot Shapleigh

District 29

Texas Press Release



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SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION & HOMELAND SECURITY TO MEET IN EL PASO

"Senator Carona has been a state champion for solid infrastructure. In our region infrastructure is the key to jobs, prosperity and mobility."

EL PASO - On Tuesday, November 10, 2009 at 10:00 a.m. at The University of Texas at El Paso, Natural Gas Center, the Senate Committee on Transportation & Homeland Security will hold their quarterly hearing to discuss the needs for additional transportation funding, homeland security, and the important steps needed in combating violent transnational gangs.

In a recent [report](#), titled "Moving Texas to the 21st Century," Cambridge Systematics, a leading U.S. consulting group on infrastructure, reported that Texas highway funds are at least \$8 billion short each year from meeting the basic needs of a growing state.

Here below, in Chart 1, you can see how much Texas needs to spend to build the transportation and infrastructure we need:

Chart 1

Total statewide Transportation Investment Needs Estimates (2005-2030)	
Mode	Average Annual Needs Estimate (2005-2030) (\$ Millions)
Highways & Local Roads (Capital and Maintenance)	\$15,928
Public Transportation	\$1,183
Freight Rail and Intermodal Freight (Capital)	\$637
Bicycle and Pedestrian (Capital)	\$29
Aviation (Capital)	
Commercial	5893
Noncommercial	5158
Total	\$19,083

Source: Cambridge Systematics, Inc. Estimates of all needs were made in 2000 dollars and adjusted to 2003 dollars by applying Consumer Price Index inflation factors.

Chart 2 shows how much money we actually have:

Chart 2

Current Estimated Texas Transportation Expenditures By All Levels of Government	
Mode	Average Texas Expenditure Estimate (\$ Millions)
Highways & Local Roads (Capital and Maintenance)	\$10,005
Public Transportation	\$420
Freight Rail and Intermodal Freight (Capital)	Not calculated
Bicycle and Pedestrian (Capital)	\$352
Aviation (Capital)	
Commercial	\$141
Noncommercial	\$71
Total	\$11,008

Source: Federal Highway Administration; Federal Aviation Administration; TxDOT.

With Texas set to grow up to 49 million inhabitants by 2050, we are \$256 billion short of meeting mobility needs, or \$8 billion each year. The basic infrastructure is the key to a competitive economy—without the ability to move people and products, manufacturers and others will go to states and countries that can.

Senator Shapleigh filed several bills including [S.B. 855](#), that would have allowed counties to raise money to fund local rail and road projects.

Regarding Homeland Security, in the United States today, there are at least nine well established gangs engaged in criminal enterprise with Mexican cartels.

According to the annual National Drug Threat Assessment by the National Drug Intelligence Center, Mexican drug trafficking organizations represent the greatest organized crime threat to the United States. Mexican gangs control distribution in most U.S. cities and are gaining strength in areas they do not yet control. Mexican gangs maintain cross-border communication centers near the U.S. border to coordinate smuggling and continue to increase their connections to U.S.-based crime organizations, including street and prison gangs.

During the 81st legislature, the Senate passed [S.B. 11](#), authored by Senator John Carona (R-Dallas) and co-authored by Senator Eliot Shapleigh (D-El Paso), which is designed to curb gang activity in Texas and stop violent transnational drug cartels.

The goal of the hearing is to discuss infrastructure improvements, homeland security, and to hear updates from the Texas Department of Transportation, Texas Department of Motor Vehicles, Texas Department of Public Safety and the Adjutant General's Office.

"El Paso leads Texas in many ways," said Senator John Carona (R-Dallas), Chairman of the committee. "I always look forward to bringing the Senate Committee on Transportation and Homeland Security to El Paso, where we get a perspective you can't match anywhere else."

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Senator Eliot Shapleigh (D-El Paso), a member of the committee, added, "Senator Carona has been a state champion for solid infrastructure. In our region infrastructure is the key to jobs, prosperity and mobility."

Members of the Senate Transportation of Homeland Security include Chairman John Carona (R-Dallas), Vice Chairman Senator Kirk Watson (D-Austin), Senator Wendy Davis (D-Fort Worth), Rodney Ellis (D-Houston), Senator Joan Huffman (R-Houston), Senator Robert Nichols (R-Jacksonville), Senator Florence Shapiro (R-Dallas), Senator Eliot Shapleigh (D-El Paso), and Senator Jeff Wentworth (R-San Antonio).

What: Senate Committee on Transportation & Homeland Security Quarterly Hearing

When: Tuesday, November 10, 2009 at 10:00 a.m.

Where: The University of Texas at El Paso, Natural Gas Center ([map](#))

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