

The NAFTA Superhighway

October 30, 2006

By now many Texans have heard about the proposed “NAFTA Superhighway,” which is also referred to as the trans-Texas corridor. What you may not know is the extent to which plans for such a superhighway are moving forward without congressional oversight or media attention.

This superhighway would connect Mexico, the United States, and Canada, cutting a wide swath through the middle of Texas and up through Kansas City. Offshoots would connect the main artery to the west coast, Florida, and northeast. Proponents envision a ten-lane colossus the width of several football fields, with freight and rail lines, fiber-optic cable lines, and oil and natural gas pipelines running alongside.

This will require coordinated federal and state eminent domain actions on an unprecedented scale, as literally millions of people and businesses could be displaced. The loss of whole communities is almost certain, as planners cannot wind the highway around every quaint town, historic building, or senior citizen apartment for thousands of miles.

Governor Perry is a supporter of the superhighway project, and Congress has provided small amounts of money to study the proposal. Since this money was just one item in an enormous transportation appropriations bill, however, most members of Congress were not aware of it.

The proposed highway is part of a broader plan advanced by a quasi-government organization called the “Security and Prosperity Partnership of North America,” or SPP.

The SPP was first launched in 2005 by the heads of state of Canada, Mexico, and the United States at a summit in Waco.

The SPP was not created by a treaty between the nations involved, nor was Congress involved in any way. Instead, the SPP is an unholy alliance of foreign consortiums and officials from several governments. One principal player is a Spanish construction company, which plans to build the highway and operate it as a toll road. But don't be fooled: the superhighway proposal is not the result of free market demand, but rather an extension of government-managed trade schemes like NAFTA that benefit politically-connected interests.

The real issue is national sovereignty. Once again, decisions that affect millions of Americans are not being made by those Americans themselves, or even by their elected representatives in Congress. Instead, a handful of elites use their government connections to bypass national legislatures and ignore our Constitution-- which expressly grants Congress the sole authority to regulate international trade.

The ultimate goal is not simply a superhighway, but an integrated North American Union--complete with a currency, a cross-national bureaucracy, and virtually borderless travel within the Union. Like the European Union, a North American Union would represent another step toward the abolition of national sovereignty altogether.

A new resolution, introduced by Representative Virgil Goode of Virginia, expresses the sense of Congress that the United States should not engage in the construction of a NAFTA superhighway, or enter into any agreement that advances the concept of a North American Union. I wholeheartedly support this legislation, and predict that the superhighway will become a sleeper issue in the 2008 election.

Any movement toward a North American Union diminishes the ability of average Americans to influence the laws under which they must live. The SPP agreement, including the plan for a major transnational superhighway through Texas, is moving forward without congressional oversight-- and that is an outrage. The administration needs a strong message from Congress that the American people will not tolerate backroom deals that threaten our sovereignty.