

1-1 By: Shapleigh S.C.R. No. 10
1-2 (In the Senate - Filed February 2, 2009; March 13, 2009,
1-3 read first time and referred to Committee on International
1-4 Relations and Trade; April 2, 2009, reported favorably by the
1-5 following vote: Yeas 6, Nays 0; April 2, 2009, sent to printer.)

1-6 SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1-7 WHEREAS, The efficient movement and careful surveillance of
1-8 commercial and noncommercial traffic through the United States'
1-9 ports of entry are vital to this country's economic prosperity and
1-10 security, yet serious bottlenecks are choking customs inspection
1-11 lanes on the Texas-Mexico border; and

1-12 WHEREAS, With its entry into the General Agreement on Tariffs
1-13 and Trade in 1986 and the implementation of the North American Free
1-14 Trade Agreement (NAFTA) on January 1, 1994, Mexico has become one of
1-15 the United States' primary trading partners; the strength of that
1-16 partnership is evident in the combined value of United
1-17 States-Mexico export-import trade, which rose from \$81.5 billion in
1-18 1993, the year before NAFTA went into effect, to \$183.7 billion in
1-19 just the first six months of 2008; and

1-20 WHEREAS, The overwhelming majority of United States trade
1-21 with Mexico--80 percent in 2002--passes through Texas ports of
1-22 entry, and over the past decade and a half these ports have seen a
1-23 dramatic increase in commercial traffic; the number of commercial
1-24 vehicles entering Texas from Mexico rose from 2.7 million in 1994 to
1-25 more than 4.3 million in 2001, and some estimates predict that
1-26 cross-border truck traffic in the Texas-Mexico border region may
1-27 increase by 85 percent between 2000 and 2030; and

1-28 WHEREAS, Neither the present border-crossing facilities nor
1-29 the current systems for inspecting and monitoring cross-border
1-30 traffic were designed to handle the volume of people, vehicles, and
1-31 goods now passing through checkpoints in Texas; compounding the
1-32 challenge posed by an inadequate infrastructure are the
1-33 increasingly detailed inspections, which are designed to reduce the
1-34 flow of illegal substances and to guard against terrorism; as a
1-35 result of these pressures, the length of the wait time at Texas
1-36 ports of entry is soaring; and

1-37 WHEREAS, Delays at the border are detrimental to economic
1-38 activity in the United States, adding to a company's cost of
1-39 shipping and impeding production at maquiladoras, which account for
1-40 the largest segment of United States-Mexico trade and which depend
1-41 on just-in-time delivery service to achieve savings and greater
1-42 efficiency; and

1-43 WHEREAS, Congestion caused by these delays also poses a
1-44 threat to public safety--the sheer scale of commercial traffic
1-45 means that only five percent of trucks entering Texas can be
1-46 physically inspected; in addition, pollution from idling vehicles
1-47 has harmed air quality to a marked degree and endangers the health
1-48 of border residents; and

1-49 WHEREAS, Robust foreign trade fosters domestic prosperity
1-50 and generates federal revenue, and a portion of that revenue should
1-51 be invested in support of customs operations, the smooth
1-52 functioning of which promotes the continued expansion of exports
1-53 and imports; expediting the flow of commercial traffic while
1-54 ensuring appropriately rigorous inspections will require a federal
1-55 commitment to fund improved infrastructure, including the
1-56 construction of additional customs inspection lanes and the
1-57 adoption of technology that will speed the movement of low-risk
1-58 traffic, as well as an increase in customs personnel and customs
1-59 operating hours; and

1-60 WHEREAS, In promoting the secure, swift movement of vehicle
1-61 and pedestrian traffic at United States land ports of entry, the
1-62 border states also have a major role to play; Section 1303 of the
1-63 Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act:
1-64 A Legacy for Users directs the United States secretary of

2-1 transportation to implement a coordinated border infrastructure
2-2 program and serves as a funding source for border area
2-3 infrastructure improvements and regulatory enhancements; and

2-4 WHEREAS, Texas legislators and business people are acutely
2-5 aware of the improvements that need to be made at ports of entry on
2-6 the Rio Grande, if the economic promise of NAFTA is to be fully
2-7 realized by this state and nation; these ports serve as a critical
2-8 gateway to foreign trade, and it is essential that they promote,
2-9 rather than hinder, the flow of that vital resource; now,
2-10 therefore, be it

2-11 RESOLVED, That the 81st Legislature of the State of Texas
2-12 hereby respectfully urge the Congress of the United States to
2-13 provide emergency funding and resources to begin immediately
2-14 addressing increasing delays at United States ports of entry on the
2-15 Texas-Mexico border; and, be it further

2-16 RESOLVED, That the congress provide funding for 24-hour
2-17 customs operations and for infrastructure improvements, including
2-18 more customs inspection lanes and more customs inspectors, at
2-19 border crossings between Texas and Mexico; and, be it further

2-20 RESOLVED, That the Texas secretary of state forward official
2-21 copies of this resolution to the president of the United States, to
2-22 the speaker of the house of representatives and the president of the
2-23 senate of the United States Congress, and to all the members of the
2-24 Texas delegation to the congress with the request that this
2-25 resolution be officially entered in the Congressional Record as a
2-26 memorial to the Congress of the United States of America.

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