

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

February 12, 2007

The Honorable Robert Eckels
1001 Preston
Houston, Texas 77002

The Honorable Bill White
P.O. Box 1562
Houston, Texas 77251

Dear Judge Eckels and Mayor White:

We are writing to reassure you that the change in majority control of Congress has not affected our shared commitment to work together as a team and bring home every available dollar to help solve Houston's transportation problems. We recognize that Texas, and the Houston-Galveston area in particular, must receive a better return on the gas tax dollars we send to Washington, and you can count on us to do everything in our power to address our regional transportation needs without regard to party affiliation.

We are working together to support the Ports of Houston and Galveston, the Gulf Intercoastal Waterway, the Houston Airport System, our freight rail system, and our highway and transit systems. We also want to reiterate our support for securing the maximum amount of transit dollars available in the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) budget for Houston Metro. The projected growth of our city requires transit to play a larger role in the regional mobility picture, and we are committed to ensuring Houston's success in competition with other major cities around the country for transit dollars.

President Bush's FY2008 budget request includes a total of \$72 million to be divided among six new transit projects. Houston Metro has two of these six projects, the North Corridor Bus Rapid Transit, and the Southeast Corridor Bus Rapid Transit. Although the President's request is only a starting point for budget negotiations, we are pleased that these projects were included in the request and received a recommendation of "Medium" from the FTA, which makes them eligible for federal funding.

The Houston-Galveston Congressional delegation is fortunate to include members of key committees in the House who are dedicated to maximizing federal transportation and transit dollars for the region. We view the President's figure for these transit projects as a floor rather than a ceiling, and as the appropriations process moves forward, we will respect and support the decisions that each member makes about transportation or transit projects within the boundaries of their own district.

As Texans, we always put Texas first. Regardless of which party controls Congress, we are a unified team working hard on behalf of the region.

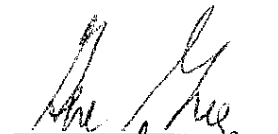
Sincerely,

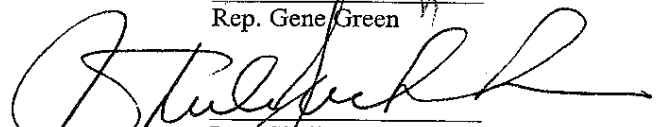

Rep. John Culberson


Rep. Michael McCaul


Rep. Ted Poe


Rep. Nick Lampson


Rep. Gene Green


Rep. Sheila Jackson-Lee


Rep. Al Green