

PRESS RELEASE

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Six Area Congressmen Urge Support for 241 Toll Road Project

Washington, DC – This morning, the California Coastal Commission held a hearing on the southern extension of the 241 Toll Road project. At the conclusion of the hearing, the Commission is expected to vote on whether to concur or withhold concurrence from the Transportation Corridor Agencies' (TCA) certification that the project is consistent with the enforceable policies of the California Coastal Management Program.

In a letter read before the Commission, six area Congressmen including Reps. Gary Miller, Ken Calvert, Ed Royce, Dana Rohrabacher, John Campbell, and Darrell Issa expressed their strong support for this critical project. The full text of their letter to the Commission reads as follows:

“As Members of Congress whose districts and constituents will directly benefit from the improved quality of life and economic opportunity offered by the completion of the 241 Toll Road, we respectfully request the California Coastal Commission’s support of this important project.

“Day in and day out, Southern Californians suffer from the endless traffic congestion that stifles our economy, drains our gas budgets, pollutes our air, and takes us away from spending time with our families. To complete the work that was started in 1981, toll road officials are moving forward with the completion of the last segment of its 67-mile toll road system, which has a wide range of support throughout Southern California. The southern extension of the 241 Toll Road will be an important corridor linking coastal and inland communities, by providing an alternative to traveling the congested I-5 freeway. Aside from the traffic reduction benefits, the completion of the final piece of the toll road project will include a number of environmental benefits to ensure that sensitive environmental habitats in both Orange and San Diego Counties will be protected.

“The 241 Toll Road project may be the most studied 16 miles of highway in our history by a host of federal and state agencies with strict environmental standards. Its final route was determined by a historic collaborative effort of six different agencies – the Federal Highway Administration, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Environmental Protection Agency, Caltrans, the U.S. Marine Corps, and the Army Corps of Engineers. This route complies with the Coastal Act and provides coastal access for our constituents, the Inland Empire, and San Diegans traveling north. No other viable route will work.

“Without the toll road, what is the alternative? Studies have shown that widening the I-5 to future traffic levels would require the condemnation of hundreds of homes and businesses in south Orange County. Indeed, this would require bulldozing over 800 homes and tearing down

nearly 300 businesses and cost more than \$2 billion, none of which has been budgeted or planned by Caltrans. That is not a feasible option. Our communities, our economy, our families, and our environment would continue to suffer if we do not move forward to complete this important road.

“The fact is, the proposed toll road has been thoroughly studied for years and plans are in place to continue environmental protections that have been implemented with the existing roads. For years opposition to this project has been led by people who live far away from the toll road, and who do not have to sit through the stand-still traffic on the I-5 everyday. It is time to move forward with solutions that can provide real traffic relief for all of Southern California and improve access for residents in the Inland Empire to South Orange and Northern San Diego County beaches.”

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