



Gulf Coast Strategic Highway Coalition

Connecting U.S. Army Facilities and Texas Strategic Ports

Three-State I-14 Congressional Caucus Taking Shape

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WASHINGTON – Members of Congress from Texas, Louisiana and Mississippi have agreed to create a congressional caucus to promote the expansion of Interstate 14 and to introduce the necessary legislation to authorize that expansion.

Formation of the I-14 Congressional Caucus was one of the objectives of the first I-14 Day in Washington held January 24-25. The caucus will work on expanding the I-14 congressional designation which is now limited to Central Texas and will seek to raise awareness of the strategic importance of I-14 in connecting military facilities and deployment ports. Congressman Brian Babin of southeast Texas has agreed to chair the caucus.

A total of 25 community leaders from Texas, Louisiana and Mississippi participated in I-14 Day events including meetings in the offices of six senators and a dozen House member. The I-14 delegation included mayors, county judges, county supervisors, aldermen, city staffers and economic development officials.

“I couldn’t be happier with the conversations and commitments of support we received in meeting with all the congressional offices representing the I-14 route,” said Mayor Brenda Gunter of San Angelo, Texas. “This new interstate highway will bring our economic development efforts to a new level. Transportation improvement is one of the most important priorities we have.”

I-14 Day participants met with the staff of their respective congressional representatives along the proposed I-14 route running from West Texas through Central Texas, Central Louisiana and Central Mississippi. In each case the delegation received commitments that members will co-sponsor legislation to be developed which will expand the authorization of I-14 across the three states.



I-14 Day in Washington participants meeting in the Capitol Hill office of Rep. Mike Conaway of Texas.

Meetings were held in the offices of: TEXAS – Sen. John Cornyn, Sen. Ted Cruz, Rep. Mike Conaway, Rep. John Carter, Rep. Kevin Brady, Rep. Brian Babin and Rep. Randy Weber; LOUISIANA – Sen. Bill Cassidy, Sen. John Kennedy, Rep. Mike Johnson, Rep. Ralph Abraham, Rep. Steve Scalise, Rep. Clay Higgins and Rep. Garret Graves; MISSISSIPPI – Sen. Thad Cochran, Sen. Roger Wicker, Rep. Gregg Harper and Rep. Steven Palazzo.

In 2015, the Congress created the Central Texas Corridor generally along US 190 and designated it as future I-14. The first 25-mile section of I-14, near Fort Hood, became part of the Interstate Highway System in 2017.

Members of the Gulf Coast Strategic Highway Coalition are seeking a designation expansion starting at the Texas-Louisiana border and generally following LA 8, LA 28 and US 84 eastward in Louisiana through Leesville, Fort Polk, Alexandria, Pineville and Vidalia where it would cross the Mississippi River. In Mississippi it would follow US 84 eastward from Natchez to Brookhaven and Laurel where it would terminate at Interstate 59.

In Texas the corridor would be expanded to the west so that it will serve San Angelo, Goodfellow Air Force Base, Midland-Odessa and the Permian Basin. At Midland-Odessa the corridor will connect to Interstate 20 which runs westward to join with I-10 and leads to El Paso and Fort Bliss, completing the linkage between six military facilities across three states. Spur routes in Texas would extend southward to provide better access to the seaports at Corpus Christi and Beaumont.

Steve Floyd, County Judge of Tom Green County in West Texas, came away from I-14 Day meetings optimistic that the three-state designation can get done this year. “The importance of connecting West Texas oil, gas and sand production to the Port of Corpus Christi and the value of greater safety and connectivity was fully understood by the congressional offices we met with. It was easy to see the value of taking this step forward. There is optimism for congressional action very soon,” he said.

Floyd also pointed to the benefit of Texas community leaders meeting with local officials from Louisiana and Mississippi who strongly support the proposed route expansions in Texas and agree that route additions in each state will provide obvious value to the nation.

Coalition Chairman John Thompson said the expanded corridor will provide greater efficiency in the movement of freight in each of the three states and nationally.

“It will bring economic development opportunities to communities in all three states. It will provide an important high-elevation alternative to storm vulnerable sections of Interstate 10 and will provide greater hurricane evacuation capacity for growing coastal populations. Expanding the route to include San Angelo and Midland-Odessa will provide significant connectivity benefits for these growing population and commercial centers. It will also provide an all-freeway route connecting West Texas energy producing regions with manufacturing centers and global shipping connections on the Texas Coast,” Thompson said.

The three-state corridor concept grew out of the efforts of local governments to improve the east-west highways and bridges linking the central parts of the three states. For more than a decade this concept has been described as a “Forts-to-Ports” strategic highway system.

About the Coalition - The Gulf Coast Strategic Highway Coalition is made up of cities, counties, local authorities and economic development organizations in Texas, Louisiana and Mississippi. The organization has been working for more than a decade in support of highway upgrades that will improve access between major U.S. military installations at Fort Bliss, Fort Hood, Goodfellow AFB, Fort Polk, Camp Beauregard, Camp Shelby and the Texas strategic deployment seaports that support them – the Port of Beaumont and the Port of Corpus Christi.

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