



# PORTS-TO-PLAINS ALLIANCE

Securing the Benefits of Commerce to North America's Energy & Agriculture Heartland

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As you will not as you go through this Newsletter, two topics are standing out: The Transportation Funding Crisis and the Keystone Pipeline.

Both in Washington DC and in state capitols around the nation, the discussion about the critical importance of our nation's infrastructure is gearing up. There are some interesting alternatives being discussed, but at least the discussion comes from the viewpoint that the current system is hurting the economy and creating long range liabilities. **The question, of course is, how do we move this from a conversation to action?** Transportation is too important to be pushed down the road (pun intended). In the Ports-to-Plains region the discussion is going on in Texas, Colorado, Wyoming, Nebraska, North Dakota and hopefully other about funding and new policies to expand and maintain the system.

The Keystone XL Pipeline has taken another step towards approval. Nebraska Governor Heineman approved the Nebraska pipeline route sending the decision making back to President Obama. The Ports-to-Plains Alliance is encouraged by this action, but also the support for approval coming from the U.S. Senate and many governors. A majority of the U.S. Senate sent a letter to President Obama stated: "We ask you not to move the goalposts as opponents of this project have pressed you to do. We urge you to choose jobs, economic development and American energy security. It is vital for the country that you promptly finalize the SEIS and the National Interest Determination and approve the pipeline."

It is so encouraging to hear a leader like Senator Max Baucus of Montana say: "This is about one simple thing: jobs. Thousands of jobs to build the pipeline; thousands of jobs from manufacturing; and many more jobs supported by carrying Bakken oil from Montana and North Dakota across the country. America can't afford to wait for these jobs any longer. We've done more than four years of careful studying and planning. We've addressed safety concerns. No more excuses; it's time to put Montanans to work building the Keystone pipeline."

**The Ports-to-Plains Alliance believes wholeheartedly with Senator Baucus... This is about one simple thing... jobs... no more excuses... it is time to put people in the Ports-to-Plains region to work!**

## Upcoming Activities of the Ports-to-Plains Alliance

- February 14-15 – Ports-to-Plains Alliance Southern Workgroup Conference, San Angelo, TX
- February 17 -- Ports-to-Plains Alliance Board of Directors Meeting, Austin, TX (1 p.m. at Austin Hilton Hotel, Room TBA)
- February 17-19 – 8th Annual Texas Transportation Forum, Austin, TX
- February 26-28 – PTP Alliance Staff to Washington, DC
- April 10-12 – Economic Developers Alberta Conference and Annual General Meeting
- April 22-26 – Ports-to-Plains Alliance D.C. Fly-In
- April 23 – Ports-to-Plains Board Meeting at 9 a.m. in office of Jack Schenendorf
- April 26 – Ports-to-Plains Energy Conference on the Hill
- July 18-19 – Ports-to-Plains Regional Meeting and Board Meeting in Sonora, TX (Tentative)
- October 1-3 – 16th Annual Ports-to-Plains Conference in Amarillo

## TRANSPORTATION

### [Failure to Act: The Impact of Infrastructure Investment on America's Economic Growth](#)

This is a must read. Economic developers, business owners, consumer, taxpayers... What is the cost of failing to act to address our nation's infrastructure?

### [Theodore Roosevelt Expressway Expansion Beginning: New look for Highway 85 will stretch DOT](#)

Turning Highway 85 between Watford City and Williston into a four-lane highway will be the biggest state Department of Transportation project in its history and some of the major work is scheduled this summer.

The project will be done in two phases with the first, longest phase scheduled for construction this year...

### [TxDOT director says agency needs \\$1B alone to shore up maintenance budget](#)

With state lawmakers already beginning the discussion about how to address Texas' growing transportation needs, Texas Department of Transportation Executive Director Phil Wilson helped Thursday to define the debate's starting point.

### [Energy boom brings wear and tear to area's county, state roads: Increased traffic prompts state to widen West Texas thoroughfare south of Lamesa](#)

The TxDOT project will widen the road from two lanes to four, without a median, starting from just south of Lamesa in Dawson County, for about 13 miles to the Martin County line. TxDOT officials estimate that project will cost about \$17 million, she said.

### [Good transportation in Texas costs money, but who should pay?](#)

"My point is, an increase in fuel tax would be huge for funding but barely noticed by the consumer as a percentage of fuel cost; we see larger swings in retail price sometimes weekly."

### [Lincoln senator would repeal roads funding through sales tax](#)

While discussions around the United States are focused on increasing transportation funding to address the need to maintain and expand transportation infrastructure, one Nebraska State Senator has introduced legislation to go the opposite way.

### [New tax hikes eyed for roads, transit](#)

Two articles from USA Today addressing the discussions around the nation about the need to have adequate revenue to maintain and expand the transportation infrastructure.

### [U.S. Chamber Chief Calls for Higher Gas Tax](#)

"A lot of people in the Chamber get a little squishy because a lot of people on [Capital] Hill don't like anything that sounds like a tax," Donohue said. "It's not a tax, it's a user fee. And if you don't want to ride on the roads you don't have to pay for it."

### [State Transportation Funding: Indiana and Missouri... What are State Leaders Saying?](#)

"You put that all together, and you've got a big problem that's going to come upon us. And, to me, we need to be ahead of the curve in solving this problem rather than behind it, because road infrastructure is so important in Indiana," Kenley said

"Whether you're a soccer mom or whether you're the CEO of a major company, transportation is important," Farber said

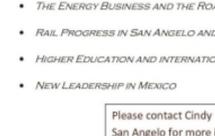
### [GAO Suggests Mileage Fees for Trucks](#)

Congress might want to consider a mileage fee for trucks and electric vehicles when it looks for ways to strengthen highway funding, says the Government Accountability Office.

### [Massachusetts: Patrick pushes for new taxes to overhaul transportation system](#)

### [Wisconsin: Panel Recommends Higher Gas Tax, Registration Fees to Fund Transportation Improvements](#)

### [Wyoming House approves fuel tax increase](#)



### PORTS TO PLAINS SOUTHERN TASK FORCE – FEBRUARY MEETING

FEBRUARY 14 AND 15, 2013  
HOST CITY: SAN ANGELO, TEXAS

#### TOPICS TO BE DISCUSSED:

- THE ENERGY BUSINESS AND THE ROADWAYS
- RAIL PROGRESS IN SAN ANGELO AND WEST TEXAS
- HIGHER EDUCATION AND INTERNATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES
- NEW LEADERSHIP IN MEXICO

Please contact Cindy Hartin at the City of San Angelo for more information:  
[cindy.hartin@sanangelotexas.us](mailto:cindy.hartin@sanangelotexas.us)



[Click Here to Download Flyer](#)

Speakers Include:

- Fred Underwood, Texas Department of Transportation Commissioner
- Michael Reeves, Ports to Plains Alliance
- Daniel Valenzuela, City of San Angelo
- Dr. Brian May, Angelo State University
- Esteban Rosas Palacios, Undersecretary of Economic Development for the State of

HOTEL INFORMATION:

Clarion Hotel  
41 Rio Concho Drive, San Angelo, Texas  
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<http://www.clarionhotel.com/>



#### News Release - For Immediate Release

January 23, 2013  
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### Ports-to-Plains Supports Nebraska Governor's KXL Decision

Nebraska Governor Dave Heineman approved a revised route for the Keystone XL Pipeline through Nebraska; a route that he says will avoid the Sandhills area. The process now moves to the U.S. State Department and President Obama for approval.

"We are pleased with Gov. Heineman's decision, and hope that President Obama will follow suit and approve the Keystone XL Pipeline," said Ports-to-Plains Alliance President Michael Reeves. "The pipeline allows us to gain energy independence from Middle East and Venezuelan oil by increasing supplies from our stable and friendly neighbors in Alberta and provides improved transport of Bakken oil from Montana and North Dakota. It also creates American jobs, not only in construction of the pipeline, but also in American companies that supply Alberta oil development."

The Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality's evaluation report on Keystone XL to Gov. Heineman concluded the environmental impacts would be minimal and that TransCanada Corp., the pipeline sponsor, had agreed to special mitigation and monitoring measures.

Because the pipeline crosses an international border the State Department must review the project and President Obama must issue a permit for construction to proceed. The State Department is currently conducting a supplemental environmental impact statement on the route, which is expected to be completed by the end of March. An earlier State Department Environmental Impact Statement found that the project would have minimal adverse effects along the route.

Ports-to-Plains has been a vocal advocate for the Keystone XL Pipeline, testifying at public hearings and submitting letters of support from more than 100 local leaders throughout the corridor.

"Our members understand that Keystone XL is good for our country's energy future, and is good for our local economies, and they are proud to support it," said Reeves.

[Click Here to Download News Release](#)

## ENERGY

### [PTP supports Heineman Keystone XL Pipeline Decision](#)

On December 4, 2012 the Ports-to-Plains Alliance had written to express strong support for findings of the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality on the Keystone XL pipeline. The Alliance fully supports this project because we believe it is in the best interest of our constituents, the state of Nebraska and the entire country.

The link above is to a news release addressing the approval by Nebraska Governor Heineman and includes a thank you sent to the Governor that includes the original letter and its more than 125 local elected officials and other local leaders from ten states in the Ports-to-Plains Alliance region that signed the letter.

### [53 senators push Obama to approve Keystone XL](#)

The Ports-to-Plains Alliance appreciates the support shown for approving the Keystone XL Pipeline. Every state through which the pipeline passes is included in the letter urging President Barack Obama to approve the Keystone XL pipeline.

### [Baucus Says Keystone Pipeline is About Jobs](#)

"This is about one simple thing: jobs," Baucus told a crowd of fellow Senators, press and onlookers during today's press conference. "Thousands of jobs to build the pipeline; thousands of jobs from manufacturing; and many more jobs supported by carrying Bakken oil from Montana and North Dakota across the country. America can't afford to wait for these jobs any longer. We've done more than four years of careful studying and planning. We've addressed safety concerns. No more excuses; it's time to put Montanans to work building the Keystone pipeline."

### [GOP governors, Canadian leader press Obama to approve Keystone pipeline](#)

Link includes the Letter  
"Mr. President, we consider the Keystone XL Pipeline fundamentally important to the future economic prosperity of both the United States and Canada"

### [Texas economist says U.S. approval for Keystone XL is logical](#)

"It was all very passionate on both sides. President (Obama) is between two strong constituencies and that is the dilemma that he faces, but he has given indications now that he is leaning toward approving it," said Perryman.

## THANK YOU VISIONARIES

*Without your leadership and support, our continued existence would not be possible.*

### [Current Members](#)

### [Membership Opportunities](#)

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