Gov. Rick Perry’s Remarks at the Closing Ceremony of the 24th Border Governors Conference

*Note - Gov. Perry frequently departs from prepared remarks.

Friday, August 25, 2006

My fellow governors, distinguished guests and delegates to the Border Governor’s Conference: I present to you today the joint declaration that will serve as a roadmap for addressing our common challenges and realizing our collective potential in the years ahead. In signing this declaration, we commit our resources and our resolve to making the border healthier, better educated and more secure. We commit to more efficient checkpoints so that we realize our full economic potential and the development of a joint strategy to improve our infrastructure and energy potential while protecting our environment. And we commit ourselves to a future of limitless opportunity by developing the technology resources that create high-paying jobs, a better quality of life and new wealth.

As the declaration itself states, “the border states, united as never before by common interests and open dialogue, are determined to seize this opportunity to achieve unprecedented bilateral cooperation.” It is in that cooperative spirit that we approach a multitude of issues. It is the collective will of the border governors to work together to prevent agriculture terrorism, ensure high standards for food safety and ensure a vibrant and prosperous agriculture industry. We desire to fund and adopt a border-wide schedule for SENTRI and FAST lane projects, to establish a pilot program to improve new and existing border crossings, and to ensure a reasonable implementation of new passport requirements in order to minimize the economic impact on border businesses. We recognize that safe, efficient border crossings with the newest technology can ensure a stronger border economy and a better framework for preventing illegal activity at our ports of entry.

We are committed to improving our economic outlook through bi-national forums designed to create high-tech economic clusters, help small and mid-sized businesses expand into new markets and grow, and graduate economic development specialists from our universities who can improve our commercial and trade ties. We support efforts to improve education, including programs that help students in Mexican border states to master the English language while helping students with limited English proficiency in the United States become fluent in English as well. We also firmly believe in cultural and educational exchange programs that can expand the economic, cultural and social horizons of our students who will one day be the leaders of industry and our

Related Content

Tuesday, July 20, 2010 | Houston, Texas | Speech
Governor Perry Speaks at the Houston Firefighters’ Relief and Retirement Fund Retiree Barbecue

Monday, July 19, 2010 | Austin, Texas | Appointment
Gov. Perry Appoints Matthews to Texas Council on Autism and Pervasive Developmental Disorders

Wednesday, July 14, 2010 | Austin, Texas | Press Release
Statement by Texas Gov. Rick Perry on Attorney General’s Amicus Brief in U.S. v. State of Arizona Case

Monday, July 12, 2010 | Austin, Texas | Appointment
Gov. Perry Appoints Three to Advisory Council on Emergency Medical Services

Wednesday, June 30, 2010 | Austin, Texas | Appointment
Gov. Perry Appoints Stoebner-May to Texas State Board of Examiners of Psychologists
We are also mutually committed to cultivating our energy resources in a manner that is consistent with environmental protection goals, and improving the conservation practices of industrial users. We share a common commitment to the development of renewable energy sources and removing barriers to cross-border commercialization of natural gas and electricity. In addition, we are committed to monitoring particulate matter and call upon the Environmental Protection Agency to continue to support air monitoring programs in the border region. We applaud the use of ultra-low sulfur diesel in Mexico and the United States and the retro-fitting of commercial vehicle engines in order to reduce emissions.

We also recognize the critical importance of a cooperative effort in containing and controlling pandemic influenza because disease recognizes no international boundaries. We request that both of our federal governments provide additional funding for public health threats and commit to the development of bi-national work plans so we are better prepared to respond to public health emergencies. Our commitment to developing the high-tech, knowledge economy that will power the future means we will aggressively work to develop and commercialize new technologies that can change the marketplace and create new wealth, attracting even greater financial capital that will help us build foundational industries for our future. We also pledge our commitment to maintaining vibrant tourism industries, and specifically in our border communities.

We also recognize the vital importance of protecting the water and wildlife resources we share. As someone who has represented Valley farmers for nearly 16 years, I can tell you that one of the most significant bi-national successes in the last two years has been the resolution of the 1944 water treaty dispute. In addition, we recognize the need for a conservation demonstration project involving border surface waters that would make them available for beneficial use by existing water rights holders. We also renew our commitment to protecting wildlife habitat and ecosystems and implementing conservation practices to preserve and protect selected species in the border region.

Lastly, we affirm our common commitment to a more secure border where the rule of law is established and affirmed. We express our resolve to protect our citizens from the violent acts of criminal organizations and to ensure justice is done in response to criminal acts of violence and intimidation. We agree, whenever possible, to share specific information and intelligence to advance bi-national investigations into auto theft, criminal gangs, fugitive and missing persons cases, drug trafficking, terrorism and human smuggling. No civilized society that values freedom and the rights of the individual can allow the unique criminal threat that exists along our international border to go unchallenged or unchecked. The protection of our people is an imminent obligation requiring an increased investment in law enforcement resources to aid in the detecting and deterring criminal activity along the border.

These are the challenges we face and the issues to which we pledge our collective resolve. May we succeed where others have failed, recognizing we have a common destiny that requires a cooperative approach. Thank you, and God bless the border region.