Gov. Perry: Infrastructure a Major Reason Businesses Expand and Relocate to Texas

*Note - Gov. Perry frequently departs from prepared remarks.
Wednesday, October 24, 2012 • Lockhart, Texas • Speech

You know, a fresh patch of asphalt just up the road from here is getting a lot of attention what with the Formula 1 race and all, but this particular stretch of roadway promises to help a whole lot of people in the years to come.


A day like today reminds us that while nobody likes road construction, everybody's happy when it's time to finally open the lanes.

As anyone who's spent significant time stuck on I-35 between Austin and San Antonio can tell you, that's not a place you want to be.

Time spent locked in the midst of a traffic jam is lost productivity, lost opportunities and, worst of all, lost time with your friends, family and loved ones.

Thanks to Highway 130, traffic flowing north-south along one of America's most important trading routes has a new option, which should help ease travel times for everyone in the area.

This stretch of road holds a special place in our history, the first state road financed and built via a public-private partnership, enabling this stretch to be built without placing a new burden on the taxpayers in local counties and Texans statewide.

When we debated and passed legislation enabling this sort of project in 2003, there was no shortage of individuals from inside and outside the Capitol insisting it wouldn't work.

Well, today the proof of that concept is complete, and can be seen in concrete and asphalt.

And I'd like to commend everyone involved in this project, from conception to completion, for all their hard work over the years.

Public-private partnerships are an important tool in the production of new roads, but it's just one tool among many.

Earlier this year, I introduced the Texas Budget Compact, a key piece of which
was a call to end diversions from one fund to another, which directly affects one of the key tools we have available for transportation projects in the state, Fund 6.

All too often, Fund 6, used to fund road maintenance and construction and financed by a variety of taxes, including gas taxes, is tapped for entirely unrelated projects. This has to stop.

First, because it's not a transparent and honest accounting of our financial situation, and second, because we need to build more roads like this one.

Infrastructure is a major reason businesses continue to look to Texas when it comes time for expansion or relocation, and while we have been more than competitive in attracting employers, we have to keep up with demand.

While innovative and creative solutions like the public-private partnership we used here are helpful, it's not a one-size-fits-all situation.

We have to use all our creativity and fiscal discipline, and every tool at our disposal, to create the infrastructure necessary to handle a population that's growing by 1,000 people a day.

In the upcoming legislative session, we'll work to address those needs, without compromising the sound conservative principles that have made Texas the top state in the country to live, work, raise a family and start a business.

Once again, I'd like to commend everyone involved with the design, planning, financing and construction of this highway, and I look forward to using it for trips myself.

God bless you and, through you, may He continue to bless the great state of Texas.