



Public comments re: TPC MOU Agenda Item, H-GAC Transportation Policy Council Meeting, 3/25/21, By Harrison Humphreys, AAH Transportation Policy Advocate

Good morning committee members, staff. My name is Harrison Humphreys and I am commenting on behalf of my organization, Air Alliance Houston. I'll be commenting on the MOU resolution item.

Our organization is opposed to the resolution before the body today, and would ask the committee to vote 'no' on it. When the original resolution was presented to the TPC in January, we voiced our concerns that the resolution lacked any substance, would fail to implement effective accountability measures, and contained language suggesting a level of cooperation and good faith that did not reflect reality. The resolution before the body today is somehow even less substantive and the affected parties and stakeholders are even farther from any sort of shared vision than two months ago. So, we're confused why this resolution is even being considered.

TxDOT has made it clear that they will not listen to community concerns nor consider the community-driven redesign options being offered. They have yet to respond to *any* of the comments they received on the FEIS, indicating a distressing lack of consideration for the people who will be most affected by this project. And the Federal Highway Administration has now gone as far as to order TxDOT to halt the project entirely in order to address the immense civil rights and environmental justice concerns. How does any of this indicate a quote "cooperative approach" as stated in the resolution? And I'll say that we're incredibly disappointed that our friends at the North Houston Association, Greater Houston Partnership, and TAG show so little concern for the thousands displaced as soon as money is on the line.

I'd also like to use my time to provide some additional perspective on TxDOT's approach today. As we've all witnessed numerous times, TxDOT has no qualms with repeatedly threatening the region with pulling funding unless things are done their way. Recent public statements by TxDOT director James Bass seem to indicate that they are more than willing to pass off the blame for the negative aspects of this project as well. During the last TPC meeting, in a letter read by Eliza Paul, Bass states "The NHHIP is the product of many years of planning work that has followed federally prescribed processes originating with and guided by HGAC." In a separate statement, Bass claims "We look forward to discussing our efforts to mitigate concerns about implementing the HGAC's vision for I-45." In light of the recent legal developments with the project, I'd like to remind the TPC that as a recipient of federal funding, the H-GAC is subject to

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Title VI as well. This should be at the forefront of committee members' minds as TxDOT shifts to calling this "H-GAC's vision." And as you deliberate today, please consider whether this resolution will actually do anything to address community concerns, or if this is a futile effort to engender good faith with a partner who has no interest in cooperating.

Thank you for your time.

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