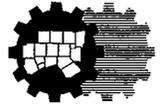




Regional Transportation Council

The Transportation Policy Body for the North Central Texas Council of Governments
(Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Dallas-Fort Worth Region)



November 15, 2012

The Honorable David Dewhurst
Joint-Chair, Legislative Budget Board
Lieutenant Governor
State Capitol, Room 2E.13
Austin, TX 78701

The Honorable Joe Straus
Joint-Chair, Legislative Budget Board
Speaker of the House of Representatives
State Capitol, Room 2W.13
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Lieutenant Governor Dewhurst and Speaker Straus:

The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG), Regional Administrator of the Low-Income Vehicle Repair Assistance, Retrofit and Accelerated Vehicle Retirement Program (LIRAP) for all participating counties in North Central Texas, continues restricted operations with a small core of quality employees to ensure success during a time of significant budget cuts. Several counties in the North Central Texas region also continue limited emissions enforcement operations due to budget cuts affecting the Local Initiative Projects (LIP). I am writing on behalf of participating counties in North Central Texas to request that the Texas Legislative Budget Board amend the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) Fiscal Year (FY) 2013 budget to increase funding for LIRAP and LIP per the Agency Discretionary Transfer Provisions in Article 9, Sec. 14.01 of House Bill 1, passed by the 82nd Texas Legislature.

LIRAP and LIP are two elements in place in North Texas to reduce high-emitting automobile emissions. LIRAP assists owners, with high-emitting automobiles, to comply with vehicle emissions standards by offering financial incentives to repair or remove them from the roadways. LIP has assisted with creating Regional Emissions Enforcement Programs to combat the exploitation of counterfeit, fictitious, and improper State inspection certificates for polluting vehicles in the region.

This effort not only minimizes the illegal operation of motor vehicles, but also ensures estimated local and State revenue streams from the inspection/maintenance program are collected. Without additional funding in FY 2013, LIRAP will lose its overall effectiveness and several emissions enforcement programs will be forced to completely suspend operations. This will cause the region to lose ground on emissions benefits gained in the battle against fraudulent activity. Furthermore, these programs are self-funded and the funds cannot be used for any other purpose.

Again, I ask the Board to reprioritize funding and transfer funds within TCEQ per the provisions of House Bill 1. Given the significant budget cuts the programs faced in FY 2012, every available dollar for FY 2013 becomes even more important. We hold strong to our commitment to assist the TCEQ in improving air quality in North Central Texas.

Lieutenant Governor David Dewhurst
Speaker of the House Joe Straus
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November 15, 2012

Thank you for your valuable service to the State of Texas and for being leaders on transportation issues. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Chris Klaus, Senior Program Manager, at (817) 695-9286.

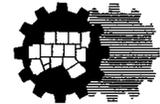
Sincerely,



Pete Kamp
Chair, Regional Transportation Council
Mayor Pro Tem, City of Denton

SS:lk

cc: The Honorable Tommy Williams, Chair, Senate Finance Committee
The Honorable Jim Pitts, Chair, House Committee on Appropriations
The Honorable Harvey Hilderbran, Chair, House Committee on Ways and Means
The Honorable Keith Self, Judge, Collin County
The Honorable Clay Jenkins, Judge, Dallas County
The Honorable Mary Horn, Judge, Denton County
The Honorable Carol Bush, Judge, Ellis County
The Honorable Roger Harmon, Judge, Johnson County
The Honorable Bruce Wood, Judge, Kaufman County
The Honorable Mark Riley, Judge, Parker County
The Honorable Jerry Hogan, Judge, Rockwall County
The Honorable B. Glen Whitley, Judge, Tarrant County
Zak Covar, Executive Director, TCEQ
Mike Eastland, Executive Director, NCTCOG
Michael Morris, P.E., Director of Transportation, NCTCOG
Chris Klaus, Senior Program Manager, NCTCOG



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(Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Dallas-Fort Worth Region)

November 15, 2012

The Honorable Jim Pitts
Chair
House Committee on Appropriations
State Capitol, Room 1W.2
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Representative Pitts:

The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG), Regional Administrator of the Low-Income Vehicle Repair Assistance, Retrofit and Accelerated Vehicle Retirement Program (LIRAP) for all participating counties in North Central Texas, continues restricted operations with a small core of quality employees to ensure success during a time of significant budget cuts. Several counties in the North Central Texas region also continue limited emissions enforcement operations due to budget cuts affecting the Local Initiative Projects (LIP). LIRAP/LIP, along with the Texas Emissions Reduction Plan (TERP), has been instrumental in reducing emissions in North Texas and I am concerned that further budget cuts to these programs will hinder concerted efforts to improve air quality. I am writing on behalf of participating counties in North Central Texas to request your support in restoring full funding for these important air quality initiatives.

LIRAP/LIP and TERP are key elements in place in North Texas to reduce high-emitting mobile source emissions. Funding cuts to these programs have made it more difficult for the region to reach and/or maintain federal air quality standards. Not only have those who work specifically on these programs been affected, but many Texas businesses, including car dealerships, vehicle inspection stations, vehicle repair shops, heavy-duty equipment dealerships, and equipment installation shops have also been affected. These programs are self-funded and the funds cannot be used for any other purpose.

In recent years, NCTCOG has been successful in securing alternative funding to help supplement reduced TERP dollars. NCTCOG has distributed more than \$29 million to local governments and private-sector fleets in North Central Texas since 2006 to help minimize their impact on air quality. Last year, NCTCOG provided over \$1.3 million in clean vehicle and equipment funding. However, these alternative funding sources are no longer readily available and future opportunities are unknown at this time, making TERP funding once again increasingly important especially since the region failed to meet the federal standard for ozone and was reclassified from moderate to serious nonattainment last year.

Again, I ask for your support in restoring full funding for these important programs so they may continue impacting efforts to improve air quality in the region. Given the significant budget cuts the programs faced in Fiscal Year (FY) 2012, every available dollar for FY 2013 as well as the upcoming FY 2014-2015 biennium becomes even more important. We hold strong to our commitment to assist the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) in improving air quality in North Central Texas.

November 15, 2012

Thank you for your valuable service to the State of Texas and for being a leader on transportation and air quality issues. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Chris Klaus, Senior Program Manager, at (817) 695-9286.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pete Kamp". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Pete Kamp
Chair, Regional Transportation Council
Mayor Pro Tem, City of Denton

SS:lk

cc: The Honorable Keith Self, Judge, Collin County
The Honorable Clay Jenkins, Judge, Dallas County
The Honorable Mary Horn, Judge, Denton County
The Honorable Carol Bush, Judge, Ellis County
The Honorable Roger Harmon, Judge, Johnson County
The Honorable Bruce Wood, Judge, Kaufman County
The Honorable Mark Riley, Judge, Parker County
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