



**DONNA CAMPBELL, M.D.**  
TEXAS STATE SENATOR  
DISTRICT 25

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## **Sen. Campbell Blasts TxDOT Funding of Streetcar and Light Rail**

AUSTIN-- In a strongly-worded letter to Transportation Chair Ted Houghton, State Senator Donna Campbell questioned the Texas Transportation Commission's vote last week to approve funding of \$267 million on light rail, streetcar, and busses when highway improvements are vastly underfunded.

The full text of the letter is included below:

July 1, 2014

Chairman Ted Houghton  
Texas Transportation Commission  
125 E. 11th Street  
Austin, TX 78701-2483

Dear Chairman Houghton,

I am deeply troubled by the Commission's decision to approve over \$250 million in grants for multi-modal projects that will divert dollars away from our roads. I believe this is a gross misuse of resources and represents a breach of trust with Texas taxpayers who have been told repeatedly that our roads are facing a funding crisis.

According to TxDOT officials, our state faces a shortfall of nearly \$4 billion per year just to maintain the highway system at current capacity levels. Given this crisis, it is wasteful to put hundreds of millions of dollars into streetcar, light rail, and dedicated bus lanes that fail to relieve congestion - especially when lawmakers are pooling every available resource to try and improve our highways without tolls.

Bexar County has nine of the top 100 congested corridors in the state and 5 of the top 50. They cost San Antonio drivers more than 1.5 million hours in delays and more than \$182 million in congestion costs each year. Fixing these corridors should be TxDOT's top priority. There is no evidence that diverting \$250 million to multi-modal transportation can come close to relieving this congestion at the same efficiency as adding highway capacity.

In voting to approve this funding, the Commission has neglected the general welfare of the majority for the benefit of a tiny few. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, less than 2% of Texans use public transportation to commute to work. This misallocation of resources is a gross disservice to all those who have worked so hard to make funding our roads a priority. I strongly urge you to reverse your decision and take the necessary actions to restore your commitment to road and highway funding.

Sincerely,



Senator Donna Campbell, M.D.

Cc: Commissioner Jeff Austin III, Commissioner Jeff Moseley, Commissioner Fred Underwood, Commissioner Victor Vandergriff, Executive Director LtGen Joe Weber, USMC (Ret)

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*State Senator Donna Campbell sits on the Senate Transportation Committee and the Select Committee on Transportation Funding. She is an emergency room physician who represents Senate District 25, including parts of Austin, San Antonio, San Marcos, Seguin, and New Braunfels.*