

Senate Committee on State Affairs

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Senate State Affairs to Meet on Transportation Issues in Irving

The Senate Committee on State Affairs, chaired by Senator Florence Shapiro, R-Plano, has scheduled a meeting in Irving to discuss transportation issues. The meeting will begin at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 22, in Carpenter Hall at the Irving Art Center, 3333 N. MacArthur Blvd.

The State Affairs Committee has been charged by Lt. Governor Rick Perry with studying the state's intermodal transportation system with an emphasis on NAFTA-related trade corridors and their impact on both metropolitan and rural areas of the state. Additionally, Lt. Governor Perry has requested the Committee study the funding and expenditures of Metropolitan Transit Authorities (MTAs) and their budgetary relationships with the cities they serve.

The Irving hearing will focus specifically on alternative state contracting practices and the use of various modes of transportation including rail, light rail, high speed rail, and aviation. The Committee also will begin examining the relationship between MTAs and the cities they serve.

"One of the most important and overwhelming problems that Texas will face in the 21st century is transportation," Senator Shapiro said. "We must study this issue now, and devise a long-term statewide strategy for safer roads, increased mobility and connectivity of goods and services as well as people across this vast state."

Representatives from the Texas Department of Transportation, the Design-Build Institute of America, DFW Airport, and railways will attend the meeting. Additionally, representatives from the Texas Transit Association, Dallas Area Rapid Transit, Fort Worth Transportation Authority, the Texas Public Policy Foundation, and various locally-elected officials will be testifying before the Committee. Public testimony from the community and surrounding areas also will be taken at the hearing.

The Committee has scheduled hearings in all areas of the state to put together a statewide strategy for transportation that will account for the needs of individual communities. The Irving hearing is the fourth of nine hearings being held by the State Affairs Committee during the interim to discuss transportation-related issues. The Senate Special Committee on Border Affairs also will meet at this time.