

MEDIA ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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International Relations and Trade Hearing Scheduled for South Texas

Who: State Senator Eddie Lucio, Jr., Chair
What: Senate International Relations and Trade Committee Meets
When: Monday, August 9, 2004 at 9:30 a.m.
Where: Brownsville Independent School District Board Room -- 1900 Price Road

AUSTIN, TX -- Sen. Eddie Lucio, Jr. today announced the Senate Committee on International Relations and Trade will hear testimony on its interim charges at its next hearing for South Texas. Included in the charges are the tasks of studying the 10-year impact of NAFTA on Texas and trade trends along the Border.

The four charges of the committee include the following:

1. Study the activities of the U.S.-Mexico Border Environmental Program: Border 2012, particularly in reference to the grant program. The Committee shall also monitor the distribution of funds from the North American Development Bank and the Border Environmental Cooperative Commission, as well as review the activities of the International Boundary and Water Commission. The Committee should make recommendations for efficient use, tracking, and leverage of funds and for effective coordination of state policies relating to the Border region.
2. Study the implementation of House Bill 109 and make recommendations for improvement of the import/export and certification system and for maximization of the tax dollars collected.
3. Study trends and issues concerning trade, immigration, and employment along the Border, including the impact of 10 years of NAFTA, and make recommendations to enhance economic development and growth. Examine the impact of the US-VISIT program and the Trade Adjustment Act of 2002, and the current transition of oversight of the Border to the Department of Homeland Security and make recommendations for improvement in state law, as necessary.
4. Study and make recommendations for improving colonias infrastructure, including water services, wastewater services and transportation infrastructure. All recommendations should include an analysis of cost effective alternatives for achieving results and an assessment of current efforts to improve infrastructure.

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For further information, interested persons may also contact Committee Director Dan Esparza or General Counsel Laura Garcia at 512-463-0385.
