



RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE U.S. HIGHWAY 96 EXPANSION COALITION

WHEREAS, U.S. Highway 96 is designated as a primary evacuation corridor by the State of Texas for the Southeast Texas and Deep East Texas regions, and as a main artery for logistical transport vehicles carrying much-needed food, water, ice, medical supplies and fuel to affected areas and communities after a hurricane makes landfall ; and

WHEREAS, Hurricane Rita made landfall in Southeast Texas in September, 2005, and Hurricane Ike made landfall in Southeast Texas in September, 2008, both forcing a massive evacuation of citizens in Southwest Louisiana and Southeast Texas, whereby untold thousands of citizens from Jefferson, Orange, Hardin, Jasper, Galveston, Chambers, Harris, Liberty, Tyler and Newton Counties utilized this corridor through Sabine, San Augustine and Shelby Counties to evacuate to escape the wrath of Hurricanes Rita and Ike; and

WHEREAS, a bottleneck north of Recreational Road 255 in Jasper County, where the four-lane divided portion of U.S. Highway 96 becomes a two-lane highway running north through Sabine, San Augustine and into Shelby County, created congestion that hindered and, in several cases prevented, the safe evacuation of citizens, including those identified as Special Needs individuals aboard buses and other forms of transport; and

WHEREAS, the completion of a four-lane divided highway on U.S. Highway 96 from Beaumont, Texas to Tenaha, Texas will greatly improve the ability of state and local authorities to safely evacuate citizens and route essential supplies to emergency service workers in the event of future disasters; and

WHEREAS, the Port of Beaumont in Jefferson County is home to the U.S. Surface Deployment and Distribution Command's 842nd Transportation Battalion, and is recognized as the busiest military port in the world, making the expansion of U.S. Highway 96 crucial to the military mission at the Port of Beaumont due to its current connectivity to Fort Polk in Louisiana, and its future connectivity to the Interstate 14 Gulf Coast Strategic Highway in Jasper County, as well as to Interstate 69 in Shelby County, linking the Port of Beaumont directly to military bases throughout the United States; and

WHEREAS, the completion of a four-lane divided highway on U.S. Highway 96 from Beaumont, Texas to Tenaha, Texas will further improve the economic development in the entire East Texas region, providing greater north-south connectivity from the ports in Jefferson and Orange Counties to the rest of the United States, promoting future growth and benefiting the citizens of the State of Texas for many generations to come.

NOW BE IT RESOLVED, that the Commissioners Court of Sabine County, Texas joins, endorses and supports the efforts made by the U.S. Highway 96 Coalition to promote awareness of the tremendous need to complete construction of a four-lane divided highway from Beaumont, Texas to Tenaha, Texas, and realizes the benefits in evacuation safety, military deployment and economic development that a four-lane divided highway would provide not only to Sabine County's population, but to the entire population in the Southeast Texas and Deep East Texas regions.

PASSED, this the 11th day of July, 2016 at a Regular Session of the Commissioners Court of Sabine County, Texas.


ATTEST:

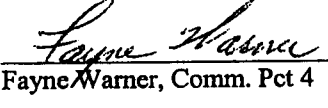

Janice McDaniel, County Clerk


Daryl Melton, County Judge


Tommy Clark, Comm. Pct 1


Jimmy McDaniel, Comm. Pct 2


Doyle Dickerson, Comm. Pct 3


Fayne Warner, Comm. Pct 4