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## **News Release - 1992-05-19**

E. De la Garza

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# news release

## DE LA GARZA URGES EMPHASIS ON BORDER CROSSING INFRASTRUCTURE

For immediate release, Tuesday, May 19, 1992

WASHINGTON -- House Agriculture Committee Chairman E (Kika) de la Garza, D-Texas, is urging Texas business and agriculture groups to develop a consensus priority list of projects needed to expand and improve the capacity and number of crossing points along the U.S.-Mexico border.

Rep. de la Garza made the recommendation at a meeting Tuesday in Washington with members of the Border Trade Alliance (BTA), the Mexico-Texas Bridge Owners Association, and key Federal agency officials. He announced he will sponsor a meeting between BTA, the bridge owners and other interested groups in July in McAllen, Texas, to discuss and refine a list of border infrastructure needs.

"A North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) on paper won't mean much if our border crossing points are not ready to handle the traffic. Already current facilities are being stretched to their limit and frustrating commerce movement for both sides. It is of critical importance that the private sector and government officials on both sides of the border start working together to determine what the border's future infrastructure short-term and long-term needs are," Rep. de la Garza said.

The Washington meeting provided Rep. de la Garza and members of the BTA and the Texas Bridge Owners Association an opportunity to discuss their concerns with top officials from the U.S. Customs Service, the Department of Transportation and the Department of State.

Rep. de la Garza highlighted two commercial transportation issues. He again urged that the Administration, through the NAFTA negotiations, insist upon gradual commercial trucking reciprocity with Mexico and U.S. majority ownership in the Mexican transportation sector.

Lack of coordination in the operating hours between some U.S. and Mexican border inspection facilities was also highlighted by Rep. de la Garza. He pointed out that the apparent lack of communication between some U.S. and Mexico border facilities is contributing to traffic bottlenecks. He urged the Customs Service to work with its Mexican counterpart to standardize operating procedures at border crossing points, perhaps even making this a part of the NAFTA.

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