



Windsor & District Chamber of Commerce

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March 29, 2006

Honourable Phil LaJoy  
State Representative – 21<sup>st</sup> District  
Chair, Transportation Committee  
State Capitol  
Lansing, MI 48913

Dear Chairman LaJoy,

The Windsor & District Chamber of Commerce is the “Voice of Business” for Windsor and Essex County representing over 1400 business members who collectively employ more than 80,000 people. We actively work with all government to ensure the business and investment climate in our region remains competitive and believe that any issues that restrict our ability to attract new business or expand existing business must be resolved.

The Detroit/Windsor border crossing plays an integral role in maintaining and developing commerce between the United States and Canada and beyond the North American perimeter. It is a matter of national and economic security to both countries that there be sufficient capacity to accommodate expanding trade at this crossing. Following September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001, the need became more critical as heightened security became the driving force for change in border management and security, compounding the immediate need for improvements to the border.

Recognizing the need for comprehensive action, our Chamber supported the founding of the joint Detroit River International Crossing (DRIC) study group and has been an active participant in the Local Advisory Council (LAC) activities and events in the United States in addition to the Canadian Community Consultation Group (CCG). It has been encouraging to participate first hand with so many legislators from all levels of government in the United States.

Through dialogue with elected representatives, residents and interested parties from all sectors and through their own work, the DRIC has succeeded in focusing the scope of work up to the current stage. The decisions that have been made throughout this study process appear to be supported by engineering and planning principles. The criteria for assessment of all private sector projects was defined and publicly vetted from the beginning of the process. The private sector projects that did not meet the criteria for the long-range goals of this region, both in Canada and the United States, were declined for further consideration. There is documentation that supports the actions taken to date. This information has been provided to all participants for review and it continues to be available from the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) project managers and their consultants in the United States.

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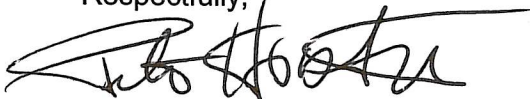
From our own Chamber's experience the MDOT team and the consultants have demonstrated a high degree of professionalism under very difficult circumstances. They provided full response to all questions asked in the very public forum of the LAC. The study team from MDOT has also participated in work on the Canadian side of the border to ensure that the connected nature of the work will result in a seamless transportation corridor that will promote investment in our economic region.

Our chamber remains steadfast in speaking on behalf of our constituents and it is for this reason that it is important to indicate that while recognizing the body of work completed to date, this letter in no way should prejudice our ability to disagree with the activities of the DRIC process or its outcomes in the future. Our official position continues to be committed to the timely completion of a process that provides for the most informed best practice recognizing the national need without sacrificing community.

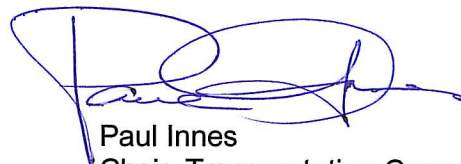
It is also important to note that the governance model for ownership or operation of an additional crossing has yet to be defined. That stage will be clarified by the legislators on all levels of government of both countries and must be subject to public input and review to ensure proper oversight.

In closing, the Windsor and District Chamber of Commerce urges you and your colleagues to take an active role in the timely completion of an additional Detroit River border crossing that can only be accomplished through the reasonable completion of the work that has already been undertaken by the DRIC study group. This region and the wellbeing of both national economies depend on the capacity of this important trade corridor. Building an additional crossing as defined in this study without further delay is critical for our collective future success.

Respectfully,



Peter Hrastovec  
Chair Elect, Board of Directors



Paul Innes  
Chair, Transportation Committee

cc: Honourable Steve Tobocman, State Representative - 12<sup>th</sup> District  
Ms. Gloria Jeff, Director MDOT  
Mohammed Alghurabi, P.E. - MDOT