

## 2009 Federal Priorities

The five categories listed in the Chamber's Federal priorities are the issues for which the Chamber will actively advocate.

ARMED FORCES	HEALTHCARE	BORDER INFRASTRUCTURE AND SECURITY & IMMIGRATION REFORM
Secure the funding needed to accommodate the influx of new troops and their families as a result of the transformation of Ft. Bliss. Funding includes the areas of housing, education, transportation, and workforce development.	Expansion of Federally Qualified Healthcare Center (FQHC) program dollars which could allow for expansion of medical centers in the community. Funding found through Department of Health and Human Services.	Support border security and immigration reform that recognizes natural migration and meets the needs of employers while maintaining the balance and facilitation of trade and international commerce.
Support additional Federal Resources to expand the services and capabilities of William Beaumont Army Medical Center.	Support the Communities Building Access Act, which would provide \$45M in federal grants for proven, locally-designed and administered health care programs for the uninsured, such as Three-Share Programs and Volunteer Specially Provider Networks like El Paso Healthcare Heroes.	Support the Texas Transportation Institute and Border Trade Alliance initiative to develop standardized, automated methods to measure total border crossing times from Point A and Point B across major US land border crossings, not just the travel time it takes to move through U.S. federal inspection facilities.
Position Region to ultimately obtain a Joint Integrated Training, Testing, Experimentation capability.	Continued support for more funding towards Medicaid allocations to the States, which will, in turn, lead to greater Medicaid reimbursement rates from the State of Texas.	Secure Federal Funding necessary for El Paso Regional transportation projects outlined by the Comprehensive Mobility Plan through the reauthorization of the Federal Transportation Bill.
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>	In concert with other federal healthcare funding initiatives for this region, initiate Federal Funding towards the establishment of a full fledged VA Hospital to support veterans' healthcare being provided in the community.	Support Texas Transportation Institute's (TTI) request for \$550,000 to perform a detailed feasibility analysis of the implementation of the Universal Freight Shuttle in the El Paso region to improve the cross-border shipment of freight.
Secure Federal Funding necessary for El Paso Regional transportation projects outlined by the Comprehensive Mobility Plan such as improvements to Interstate 10, the completion of Loop 375 and funding for the Northeast Parkway Project.	Support additional funding for Graduate Medical Education through the Resident Physician Shortage Reduction Act which would increase the number of GME positions eligible for Medicare funding in states with fewer GME positions per capita than the national average, including Texas.	Support the full exploration of new technologies such as facial recognition, wireless access, Treasury Enforcement Communications System (TECS), Interagency Border Inspection System (IBIS) and other measures aimed at increased international bridge efficiency, mobility and security and support the testing of such measures at the region's international ports of entry.
Seek federal funding to purchase 30 Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) buses to follow the City's substantial investment in replacement of the total fleet (95 new buses in 2 years).	Support EPMHMR's request for funding to establish a Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) clinic designed to work with mental health providers affiliated with the federal government in order to improve access to care and expand services.	<b>BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT</b>

Seek funding to design, engineer, and construct four Bus Rapid Transit Corridors throughout the City that will combine intelligent transportation systems technology, priority for transit, rapid and convenient fare collection and integration with land use policy.

Support the passage of the Small Business Contracting Program Improvements Act and the amendments to the Small Business Fairness in Contracting Act that increase opportunities for locally owned businesses to participate in more government contracting opportunities

### EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Secure funding to maintain and further enhance programs of local workforce intermediaries specific to funding to assist teaching and healthcare professions. **\*Pending EWDD Executive Committee Approval.**

# Federal Support and Monitor Issues 2009

The Support and Monitor Issues list is comprised of areas in which the Chamber will provide advocacy and support where and when needed.

## ARMED FORCES

Support additional resources necessary for the transformation of Ft. Bliss.

## EDUCATION

Pursue expansion of federal dollars through the Pell Grant Programs to students who are in academic/training programs with fewer required hours, such as nursing assistants, to offset start-up costs associated with those programs (i.e. background checks, shots, drug testing, etc). *\*Pending EWDD Executive Committee Approval.*

Secure support and continued federal funding for the Carl Perkins Fund for career and technical education. *\*Pending EWDD Executive Committee Approval.*

## HEALTHCARE

Support legislation that would provide federal grants to establish a data assistance center to evaluate and aid in the proliferation of local designed and administered health care programs for the uninsured.

Support the New Market Tax Credit Program, which allows for the equivalent of the Housing Tax Credit Program to be used for the construction of community facilities, basically resulting in 0% loans.

## HOMELAND SECURITY AND PORTS OF ENTRY

Support the Construction of a new state of the art border crossing between the El Paso, TX and Ciudad Juarez, CH, Mexico.

Support expansion of the Zaragoza Port of Entry.

Ensure the exchange of commerce through the El Paso port of entries while not compromising security through Operation Secure Movement

Secure effective and seamless implementation of the United States Visitor and Immigrant Status Indicator Technology (US VISIT) Program at El Paso's ports of entry.

Secure federal funding for the design and construction of federal facilities at the Guadalupe/Tornillo port of entry.

Secure funding to hire additional federal inspectors and alleviate the shortage of federal inspectors at El Paso's ports of entry.

Support initiatives that aid in the development of a Just-In-Time (JIT) international commerce port such as expanding the Free and Secure Trade (FAST) Program, developing more secure and smarter containers, and expanding the structured training program for Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terror (C-TPAT) Supply Chain Specialist.

Secure the implementation of a Southbound FAST lane and amend the policy of the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) agency to restrict FAST lane exports to certified exporters only.

Secure federal funding to identify and minimize infrastructure vulnerabilities along the U.S./Mexico border.

## BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Secure legislation that allows for Associated Health Plans (AHP).

Secure legislation that allows banks to offer interest on business checking.

## LABOR

Support labor policy that protects the employer's ability to do business and provide services efficiently and effectively, by maintaining fair standards in arbitration, collective bargaining, and unionization, and oppose any mandates upon business that impair the ability to compete.

## TECHNOLOGY

Secure federal funding to support the Tech Initiatives, a bundle of closely interknit economic development efforts to develop high-value, high-growth industries in the Paso del Norte region

## TRANSPORTATION

Secure federal funding to upgrade the Sun Metro Bus service system. Update Sun Metro's bus fleet to include vehicles for paratransit, international service, American Disabilities Act compliant buses, Trolleys. Support new transit terminals, Gas Fueling stations and Job Access systems.

Federal Relief Sought for Central Business District (CBD) Infrastructure Improvements Phase IV.

Federal Relief Sought for Great Streets Program.

Federal Relief Sought for Sun Metro Area Rapid Transit (SMART) Starter Line.

Rehabilitation/Reconstruction of Alameda Avenue-This project is currently listed as "develop status" under TxDOT, which entails it not being a construction project for some time. The Alameda Avenue area from Boone to Paisano, however, will sustain a substantial increase in use and, in turn, congestion with the addition of the continued development of the Medical Center for the Americas health complex.

## WATER

Secure federal funding for the construction of reclaimed water facilities to provide reclaimed water to large volume water customers in El Paso.

## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Support higher salaries for nursing faculty at the college and university level.

Support of federal funding for increased nursing faculty salaries and the budget request to provide funding for Nursing Workforce Development programs (Title VIII, Public Health Service Act).

Support additional Federal Funding for programs to assist spouses of soldiers find employment.