

participating in the work of the Joint Committee. interested members of the public are invited to submit written notice of their interest and their qualifications.

**DATES:** Written expressions of interest in participating in the work of the Joint Committee should be submitted no later than August 11, 2000.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For procedural questions concerning public comments contact Gloria Blue, Executive Secretary, Trade Policy Staff Committee, Office of the United States Trade Representative, (202) 395-9557. All questions concerning the Joint Committee may be directed to Regina Vargo, Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Western Hemisphere, U.S. Department of Commerce (202) 482-5324, Regina\_Vargo@ita.doc.gov.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** At the Second Summit of the Americas in April 1998, in Santiago, Chile, the 34 democratically elected Western Hemisphere leaders initiated negotiations to create the FTAA no later than the year 2005. They established nine initial negotiating groups, a consultative group, and two committees, one of which is the Joint Committee, which began its work in August 1998. The trade ministers mandated that both government and private sector experts meet as the Joint Committee to make recommendations on how to increase and broaden the benefits of electronic commerce; the Joint Committee is not a negotiating group. Inclusion of the private sector on the committee is consistent with President Clinton's principle that the private sector should take the lead in global electronic commerce.

The Joint Committee was chaired by the government of Barbados during the initial 18-month period and will be chaired by an Uruguayan private sector representative and vice chaired by a Canadian government representative through April 2001. Regina Vargo, Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Western Hemisphere, U.S. Department of Commerce, leads the joint U.S. government-private sector delegation to the Joint Committee.

**Status of Work in the Joint Committee:** At the FTAA Ministerial meeting in Toronto in November 1999, trade ministers received, and released to the public, a report prepared by the Joint Committee reflecting its discussions over the preceding 18 months on a broad range of electronic commerce issues; its recommendations on increasing and broadening the benefits of electronic commerce issues; its recommendations on increasing and

broadening the benefits of electronic commerce were drafted with the full participation of government and private sector experts from every region in the Hemisphere. FTAA trade ministers committed to share the report and its recommendations with other relevant authorities within their governments. They also requested that the Joint Committee continue its work as a non-negotiating group and produce further recommendations over the next 18-month period. The full report ("Report with Recommendations to Ministers," FTAA.ecom/01) is available in English and Spanish on the official FTAA website (<http://www.ftaa-alca.org>) and the U.S. Government Electronic Commerce website (<http://www.ecommerce.gov>).

At the Joint Committee's January meeting in Miami, the Joint Committee's private sector and government representatives identified issues to be discussed during the next phase of its work. The Joint Committee will focus on issues related to access and infrastructure, small and medium-size enterprises, authentication, and online payments, and consider developments in other areas such as intellectual property, taxation and consumer protection. The Joint Committee will make further recommendations to trade ministers for their consideration at the next FTAA Ministerial meeting in April 2001. At the next meeting, August 28-30, the Joint Committee will address issues on its workplan including authentication and payment systems. Consumer protection issues may also rise.

**Private Sector Participating:** During the first 18-month period, 13 U.S. private sector representatives, reflecting a balance of interests and electronic commerce issue expertise, participated in the work of the Joint Committee. Each representative had responded to notices in the **Federal Register** (63 FR 42090 August 6, 1998 and 64 FR 26811, May 17, 1999) or a request to official trade advisors inviting expressions of interest and qualifications to participate in the work of the Joint Committee.

When the Committee entered its second phase of work, the TPSC solicited U.S. private sector interest in participating, taking into consideration the current workplan (FR Notice February 29, 2000, Vol. 65, No. 40). However, the TPSC received no responses from individuals with expertise in consumer issues. The newly constituted U.S. private sector contingent in the Joint Committee includes 19 participants. The TPSC is now seeking to expand private sector participation on the Joint Committee to

include an expert on consumer issues related to electronic commerce.

## Public Comments

The TPSC is seeking to supplement U.S. private sector participation on the Joint Committee, to include expertise in consumer issues related to electronic commerce. In order to assist the TPSC in identifying U.S. private sector expert(s) on consumer issues related to electronic commerce, members of the public are invited to submit written notice of their interest and describe their qualifications. Qualifications of interest include: Demonstrated expertise in one or more aspects of electronic commerce and consumer protection; an ability and willingness to broadly solicit views from and disseminate information to consumer groups; and familiarity with U.S. and foreign trade and investment policies and obligations. Knowledge of the Western Hemisphere, including established contacts with foreign private sector interests in the region, would be helpful.

Those persons wishing to make written submissions should provide twenty (20) typed copies (in English) no later than noon, August 11, 2000 to Gloria Blue, Executive Secretary, Trade Policy Staff Committee, Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, Room 122, 600 17th Street, NW., Washington, DC 20508.

Written submission in connection with this request will be available for public inspection in the USTR Reading Room, Room 101, Office of the United States Trade Representative, 600 17th St., NW., Washington, DC. An appointment to review the file may be made by calling Brenda Webb, (202) 395-6186. The Reading room is open to the public from 9:30 a.m. to 12 noon, and from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday.

**David Walters,**

*Acting Chairman, Trade Policy Staff Committee.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Highway Administration

#### Environmental Impact Statement: Dallas County, Texas

**AGENCY:** Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), DOT.

**ACTION:** Notice of intent.

**SUMMARY:** The FHWA is issuing this notice to advise the public that an environmental impact statement will be

prepared for a proposed transportation project in Dallas County, Texas.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mr. Salvador Deocampo, Acting District Engineer, Federal Highway Administration, 300 E. 8th Street, Room 826, Austin, Texas 78701, Telephone 512-916-5988.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The FHWA, in cooperation with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and the North Texas Tollway Authority (NTTA), will prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) for the Eastern Extension of the President George Bush Turnpike from SH 78 to IH 30 within northeast Dallas County. The corridor is approximately 10.5 miles in length and crosses Lake Ray Hubbard. From a regional and local perspective, there is a great demand for additional transportation capacity and access through the corridor. Over the last 30 years, the area has experienced tremendous growth and has nearly tripled in population.

As directed by TEA-21, the Major Investment Study (MIS) will be integrated with the EIS. Previous feasibility studies and Mobility 2025, the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) for the Dallas-Fort Worth region have examined a full range of alternatives and alignments within the corridor. The Eastern Extension is included in the MTP as a new location 4-lane tollway with controlled access. The environmental study will examine viable alternatives and potential transportation modes including the No-Build; Transportation Systems Management/Congestion Management Systems; controlled access freeway; and tollway options. It will also include extensive and continuous public involvement to address the long-term mobility needs of both the region and local community. The environmental study will include the determination of the number of lanes (four to six lanes are anticipated), roadway configuration, and operational characteristics. It will also include a discussion of the effects on the social, economic, and environment and of other known and reasonably foreseeable agency options proposed with the Eastern Extension Corridor.

Letters describing the proposed action and soliciting comments will be sent to appropriate Federal, State, and local agencies, and to private organizations and citizens who have previously expressed an interest or are known to have an interest in this proposal. A public scoping meeting is planned to be held in the Fall of 2000. The date will be announced locally at a later time.

This will be the first in a series of meetings to solicit public comments on the proposed action during the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. In addition, a public hearing will be held. Public notice will be given of the time and place of the meetings and the hearing. The Draft EIS will be available for public and agency review and comment before the public hearing.

To ensure that the full range of issues related to this proposed action are addressed and all significant issues are identified, comments and suggestions are invited from all interested parties. Comments or questions concerning this proposed action and the EIS should be directed to the FHWA at the address provided above.

(Catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Number 20.205, Highway Planning and Construction. The regulations implementing Executive Order 12372 regarding intergovernmental consultation on Federal programs and activities apply to this program)

**Salvador Deocampo,**

*Acting District Engineer, Austin, Texas.*

[FR Doc. 00-19664 Filed 8-2-00; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4910-22-M**

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Highway Administration

#### Environmental Impact Statement: Forsyth County, North Carolina

**AGENCY:** Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), DOT.

**ACTION:** Notice of Intent.

**SUMMARY:** The FHWA is issuing this notice to advise the public that a supplemental draft environmental impact statement will be prepared for a proposed highway project in Forsyth County, North Carolina.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mr. Roy Shelton, Operations Engineer, Federal Highway Administration, 310 New Bern Avenue, Suite 410, Raleigh, North Carolina 27601, Telephone: (919) 856-4350.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The FHWA, in cooperation with the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT), will prepare a supplemental draft environmental impact statement (EIS) on an extension of the proposed Northern Beltway (Eastern Section) of Winston-Salem in Forsyth County. The proposed action would be the construction of a multi-lane divided, controlled access highway on new location from US 421 east of Winston-Salem to US 311 southeast of Winston-Salem. A Draft Environmental Impact

Statement on the Eastern Section, the portion of the facility from US 52 northwest of Winston-Salem to US 421 east of Winston-Salem (FHWA-NC-EIS-95-04-D) was approved by FHWA on 14 September, 1995. The Eastern Section together with the Eastern Section Extension will carry proposed I-74 and will relieve congestion on US 52 and US 421. The proposed action is a part of the 1987 Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Thoroughfare Plan.

Alternatives under consideration include: (1) The "no-build", (2) improving existing facilities, and (3) a controlled access highway on new location.

Letters describing the proposed action and soliciting comments will be sent to appropriate Federal, State, and local agencies. A public meeting and meetings with local officials and neighborhood groups will be held in the study area. A public hearing will also be held. Information on the time and place of the public hearing will be provided in the local news media. The supplemental draft EIS will be available for public and agency review and comment at the time of the hearing. No formal scoping meeting is planned at this time.

To ensure that the full range of issues related to the proposed action are addressed and all significant issues are identified, comments and suggestions are invited from all interested parties. Comments and questions concerning the proposed action should be directed to the FHWA at the address provided above.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Number 20.205, Highway Research Planning and Construction. The regulations implementing Executive Order 12372 regarding intergovernmental consultation on Federal programs and activities apply to this program)

**Roy C. Shelton,**

*Operations Engineer, Federal Highway Administration, Raleigh, North Carolina.*

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**BILLING CODE 4910-22-M**

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Highway Administration

#### Environmental Impact Statement: Jefferson Parish, LA

**AGENCY:** Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), DOT.

**ACTION:** Notice of intent.

**SUMMARY:** The FHWA is issuing this notice to advise the public that an Environmental Impact Statement will be