

Reactions from the public on September 11, 2008

Ulysses, Kansas

Reported by Julius Karash

David Crase, Garden City Mayor - "Regionally, Highway 83 and Highway 50 between Garden (City), Dodge (City) and Liberal, that's the biggest concern. With the building of the casino in Dodge City, Highway 50 is going to have to be addressed pretty fast here by getting some decent four-lane road. This casino is supposed to draw about a million people a year."

Delmar Hammond, Road Supervisor, Hamilton County - "We need better highways to take products originating in western Kansas throughout the nation. I think a sales tax is fairer, because it catches everybody. That would be a way to help fund what we need to fund. It takes a lot of dollars to keep our road system going."

Jack Taylor, Executive Director of SPIRIT (Southwest Passage Initiative for Regional and Interstate Transportation), Liberal - "Highway 54 is one of the heaviest traveled two-lane highways in the United States. We don't have the voices of the Kansas City area, but we have the economic development to be heard." (Note: SPIRIT advocates for the upgrade of U.S. 54 to four-lanes)

Kathy Sanko, Office Manager, Good Samaritan Center nursing home, Liberal- "There are many people who need specialized services that are out of our county. I see a need for more funds in assisting those who are disabled or low-income to get transportation to the medical services they need."

Madison "Matt" Traster, Grant County Commissioner - "With the advent of ethanol plants and other economic development ventures we are promoting, we felt it was necessary to improve our railroad. We believe this new transportation plan, with an emphasis on enhancing short-line railroads, is an endeavor that KDOT should undertake."

Steve Phillips, Board Member, Kansas Association of Airports, Syracuse - "...52 Kansas counties lack instrument approaches to their airports, which impedes emergency air ambulance service in bad weather. The hospital then has to transport that patient by ground. In a time-critical situation, especially with heart patients, this causes great concern."

Tanner Lucas, Communications Specialist for Garden City - "Funding is always a major concern. Because of our population base we obviously have high taxes in this region. I think there's going to be some hesitancy on the part of many residents to raise taxes across the board."