

Robert Lee Nichols
P. O. Box 1591
Jacksonville, Texas 75766

The Honorable Rick Perry
Governor of Texas
State Capitol Building
1100 Congress
Room 2 S.1
Austin, Texas 78701

Dear Governor Perry,

It is with great regret but no hesitation that I resign my position with the Texas Transportation Commission, effective June 30, 2005, at 8:00 am.

It has been one of my life's greatest honors to have been appointed by both you and former Governor George W. Bush to this position of responsibility that impacts the daily lives of Texas citizens and businesses. It has also been an honor to have been confirmed twice by the Texas Senate and to have served with six distinguished Commissioners.

I have made clear my intention to announce for Texas Senate District 3 if and when Senator Staples makes a formal announcement seeking another office. While an Attorney General's Opinion indicates I do not need to resign until I file for a place on the Republican Primary, I do not consider it ethical or proper to vote on projects within Senate District 3 or approve contracts while seeking elective office.

I leave with the confidence and knowledge that the Department is in its best shape in decades. During the past eight years the Department has:

- 1) Tripled the number of roadway construction projects being built each year.
- 2) Brought more local control and input into the project programming and selection process, including funding allocation.
- 3) Dramatically increased safety projects.
- 4) Approved the establishment of five Regional Mobility Authorities for the acceleration of transportation projects under local control.
- 5) Accelerated the reconstruction of deficient bridges both on and off the state system.
- 6) Funded and scheduled ninety percent of the highway projects planned for the next twelve years to be built in half the time.
- 7) Established and accelerated the construction of corridors throughout the state on the Texas Trunk System.
- 8) Passed historic rail legislation and signed working agreements with major railroads for the relocation and preservation of rail corridors.
- 9) Improved the overall physical condition of the existing state highway system.

- 10) Given Texas voters a voice in clearing traffic congestion by offering a historic Constitutional Amendment resulting in the immediate construction of the 55 mile, \$2.7 Billion Central Texas System with more to come.
- 11) Begun implementation of the Trans Texas Corridor with the signing of the development agreement for the \$6 Billion concession proposal paralleling Interstate 35. Instead of costing taxpayers, it will add an additional \$1.2 Billion to transportation along the corridor, while ensuring property rights protections for landowners.

Currently a project is underway, either large or small, every six miles on the Texas highway system.

Most importantly, without additional employees or raising fees or taxes, the Commission has increased production and safety to the benefit of Texans.

These accomplishments would not have been possible without the policies, programs and new legislative tools with which you have been instrumental.

The Administration, under the leadership of Mike Behrens, is outstanding. The men and women running the Divisions, Districts and other offices are intelligent, motivated and stable. The employees of the Texas Department of Transportation are some of the most dedicated with which I have ever worked. Their willingness to go the extra mile for the citizens of Texas is unmatched. I will truly miss them.

As I travel, I will never look at a highway or road crew the same again.

Thank you for the confidence you have shown in me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert Lee Nichols". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "R".

Robert Nichols