

**STATE OF INDIANA
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

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Elections and Apportionment, Redistricting Chairman
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September 11, 2002

Mr. Brian Nichol, Commissioner
Indiana Department of Transportation
Indiana Government Center North, Room N755
100 N. Senate Avenue
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Dear Commissioner Nichol,

Thank you for attending the meeting of the Decatur Civic Council. As you witnessed, the I-69 project has generated a great deal of interest and frustration across Indiana. Decatur Township residents are particularly concerned about options that incorporate Mann Road.

As you will recall, many concerns about the Mann Road route were expressed at the meeting. These concerns include easement and eminent domain issues as well as the potentially negative effect this route would have upon the community.

I-69 is needed. However, I am puzzled that Mann Road is being considered. Mann Road is home to a variety of relatively new housing developments. The impact on local residents would also be significant. Besides displacing several homeowners, this route would have a negative impact on property value in this residential area. The cost of acquisition of these homes and land is also likely to be substantial.

I agree with many of the sentiments expressed at the meeting. This is not the place for a highway. The local impact is far too high, particularly when a better alternative exists nearby. Please remember, Decatur Township is also home to the large and constantly expanding Indianapolis International Airport. The I-69 Mann road option would place an even greater transportation burden on the residents of Decatur Township. Surely these residents have endured enough traffic, noise and construction. Let's not add another major project to the mix.

The US-70 to US-41 option seems far more reasonable. I-70 is already a fully developed interstate. Only US-41 would need to be upgraded. This route would seem to reduce both cost and disruptions to the local communities. I encourage you to strongly consider this option.

Frankly, I am surprised that we have only heard of this option recently. The I-69 project has been contemplated for some time. It is troublesome that, until recently, so little was known about the prominence of the Mann Road option. Local residents feel blindsided by the belated publicity of this route.

Thank you for your consideration. Please keep me informed as the discussion of this route progresses.

Sincerely,

Robert W. Behning
State Representative