

7106-03
RESOLUTION NO. ____ OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
OF LAPORTE COUNTY, INDIANA

Whereas, the Governor has proposed leasing the Indiana Toll Road for a seventy five year term to a foreign conglomerate in return for the payment of upfront monies to the State of Indiana to be used to fund road repairs and other infrastructure needs, and

Whereas, this Board is opposed to such public assets being leased and is concerned about the fairness of the terms of such lease and supports the near unanimous vote of the NIRPC governing board to delay consideration of such lease until a summer study session of the Indiana General Assembly can weigh the advantages and disadvantages to the public, and

Whereas, such lease arrangement has already passed the House of Representatives and may well (despite our misgivings and the multiple concerns of our constituents) be on its way to passage in the Indiana Senate, and

Whereas, our legislators will need guidance and direction from this body as to our wishes if in fact such lease arrangement and the subsequent up-front lease proceeds do materialize for the state, and

Whereas, the Northwest Indiana Regional Development Authority (RDA) was formed to encourage regional economic development and assistance with infrastructure and consists of Lake and Porter Counties, but requires a significant up-front membership of \$3.5 million from each participating entity, and

Whereas, an amendment was inserted into the Governor's Toll Road lease proposal that would create the formation of a Northeastern Indiana Regional Development Authority consisting of Steuben, LaGrange and Elkhart Counties to be funded with \$10 million per year in lease proceeds for a total endowment of \$100 million but without any local match required, and

Whereas, both St. Joseph County and LaPorte Counties have a mutual interest in economic development and road/infrastructure improvements and have a range of historical ties that could potentially make for a unified regional approach to economic development and job creation, and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF LAPORTE COUNTY, INDIANA THAT we oppose the lease or sale of the Indiana Toll Road and believe there are better means to accomplish road repairs and infrastructure improvements including bonding against future gas tax proceeds and revenue bonds based on gradual, phased increases in tolls.

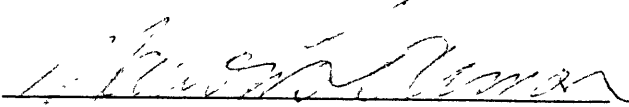
We further hope that the Indiana General Assembly does not approve such Toll Road

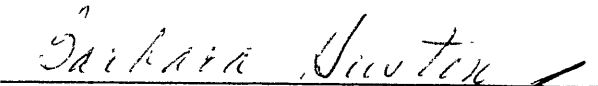
lease but follows the urging of the NIRPC board of directors and evaluates this proposal in a summer legislative study committee that permits appropriate consideration of a contract which will have an impact on Hoosiers for the next three quarters of a century.

If despite our strongest urging, the General Assembly insists on proceeding forward with the approval of the Governor's Toll Road lease plan and such legislation does provide for the establishment of a northeastern Indiana RDA, then we request that an amendment be added for the establishment of a North Central RDA - consisting of LaPorte and St. Joseph Counties - with a board consisting of trustees appointed by the county executive and legislative bodies of both counties.

We further request that such North Central RDA - similar to the Northeastern Indiana RDA - be endowed with \$10 million placed in trust annually in toll road lease proceeds for a ten year period. Furthermore, similar to the northeastern Indiana RDA, neither St. Joseph nor LaPorte Counties should be required to provide a local match or membership fee and our support for the establishment of such regional development authority is strictly contingent on there being no local membership or entry fee required. Finally, we would request that both counties be permitted to draw an equal share annually on the interest from such trust fund and that the RDA trustees should be permitted to create a means to fairly allocate principal for various economic development and infrastructure projects in both LaPorte and St. Joseph Counties.

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF LAPORTE COUNTY, INDIANA**







Dated 2-7-06

Attest: 