



News release

Contact: Kathryn Cooper
Communications Manager
2525 Bay Area Blvd., Suite 640
Houston, Texas 77058
Phone: 281.486.5535
Fax: 281.486.5068
Email: kathryn@bayareahouston.com
Visit: www.bayareahouston.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

King gives keynote address to BAHEP membership

BAY AREA HOUSTON, TEXAS – William E. “Bill” King is not yet a declared candidate for mayor of Houston when current Mayor Bill White reaches his term limit in 2009. However, his extensive knowledge of and potential solutions to the city’s transportation issues would certainly make an interesting topic of debate with any potential mayoral challengers.

The Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership welcomed King as the keynote speaker at its General Membership Meeting held July 16, 2008, where he presented his insight on *Transportation: Infrastructure and Mobility*. The meeting was held at the Bailey’s American Grille banquet room in Seabrook, Texas, and was sponsored by Madison Benefits Group Inc., one of BAHEP’s members.

Dr. Bernard A. Milstein, chairman of the partnership’s Board of Directors, welcomed King and spoke briefly of his background that includes service on the Governor’s Task Force on Evacuation, a local task force to study hurricane preparedness as well as transportation committees and councils. He later commented, “Bill’s grasp of our traffic problems is remarkable. It will take an enormous, cooperative effort by everyone, not only in Houston but in all of Texas, to determine the best solutions.”

King’s informative presentation noted that traffic congestion in Houston is at its worst level in almost 20 years, and traffic engineers at Texas A & M University estimate that congestion will double over the next two decades. The current annual cost of Houston traffic congestion is staggering as commuters spend an estimated 124 million hours on the road, using 92 million gallons of fuel and adding 874,000 tons of carbon dioxide to the air we breathe.

King emphatically stated that voters must send a clear signal to their elected officials saying that relieving traffic congestion is a top priority. He also said that investments made to reduce congestion have to have the highest cost to benefit ratio.

King offered ideas on ways to tackle the problem. The crash rate has to be addressed, he said, by improving intersections, using safety based law enforcement efforts, and using methods to reduce the incidence of truck rollovers. King also spoke of the dangers of Houston’s 1,200 “at

grade” railroad crossings, the need for improvements to the areas high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes as well as better facilities for passengers at Park and Ride lots.

Of course, any solution comes with a pretty high price tag, and King spoke of the estimated annual benefits of a number of construction projects versus their one-time cost. In the matter of Houston’s traffic congestion, the cost of doing nothing appears to far exceed the cost of solving the region’s transportation problems.

Detailed analysis on traffic congestion in Houston and King’s take on it can be found on his Web site at www.BillKingHouston.com.

BAHEP is a member-driven organization that provides the leadership to stimulate regional economic development and employment in southeast Texas. Its members include over 270 business partners encompassing 13 cities and Galveston and Harris counties. Visit www.bayareahouston.com to learn more about this dynamic partnership.



Houston City Council Member Mike Sullivan, left, and William “Bill” E. King take a moment to visit before King’s keynote address during Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership’s General Membership Meeting on July 16, 2008.

#####

Bay Area Houston is an economically and internationally diversified, high-tech region that is home to NASA -Johnson Space Center and numerous industries including aerospace, specialty chemical, and a rapidly growing health care industry.

The Space Alliance Technology Outreach Program is administered by the Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership. It is a State of Texas funded initiative designed to transfer the knowledge and technology of the U.S. Space Program to small businesses to solve technical challenges they are unable to solve themselves. Visit www.spacetechnologies.com/bahep.