

Supervisor Pete Rios
District 1



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wide open opportunity

County Supervisors Association (CSA)

Pinal County Board of Health

Pinal County CORP Detention Officer Retirement
Board

Employee Benefits Trust

October 21, 2011

The Honorable Janice K. Brewer
Governor, State of Arizona
1700 West Washington
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Dear Governor Brewer:

This constitutes a request for your leadership and help.

I ask for your help in finding solutions to the recurring problem of serious accidents in Pinal County resulting from wind blown dust. As it currently stands, the problem cuts across jurisdictional, political and administrative boundaries. No single agency or entity really has “ownership” of the problem.

I ask that you appoint a Blue Ribbon Committee to exert that ownership, and to formulate recommendations for measures to reduce or eliminate the risk to the traveling public.

The problem has been particularly acute during our recent on-going drought. However, the problem stretches in gruesome fashion back to the 1960’s. A variety of events have caused problems, ranging from localized events to regional dust storms. To some extent, accidents appear to recur at specific locations. Since a significant portion of interstate traffic is merely passing through Arizona, many drivers remain completely unaware of the risk.

Efforts continue to improve our highway infrastructure. Adding more lanes to the interstate highways will help accommodate the ever-increasing volume of traffic. But facilitating more, faster traffic can only be expected to continue or even compound the problem. Along with those highway improvements, we should also make an effort to mitigate or manage the risk associated with dust events.

At a minimum, the issue involves weather patterns, surface conditions, traffic safety management and driver education.

Interested parties would include the Department of Transportation, the Department of Public Safety, the National Weather Service, and agencies and political subdivisions having management and regulatory authority over areas adjoining the freeways. The latter group would include the County, cities, tribal authorities, private and public landowners, and other entities with authority conferred by the legislature.

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I have no doubt that my colleagues on the Pinal County Board of Supervisors will support an effort to address the problem.

Since the range of interested parties extends beyond the purview of county government, I ask you, Governor Brewer, to take a leadership role in convening a group to formulate a plan to address this multi-faceted problem.

Sincerely,



Pete Rios, Chairman
Pinal County Board of Supervisors District 1

cc: The Honorable Senator Russell Pearce, Senate President
The Honorable Representative Andy Tobin, Speaker of the House
The Honorable Senator John Nelson, Chair, Senate Natural Resources &
Transportation Committee
The Honorable Vic Williams, Chair, House Transportation Committee
Fritz A. Behring, Pinal County Manager

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