|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **cid:image001.jpg@01D0567A.7191E510** | **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**March 24, 2015      Contact: Neal Patel (Heller) 202-224-6244Kristen Orthman (Reid) 202-224-2939Brian Rogers (McCain) 202-224-2235Bronwyn Lance Chester (Flake) 202-224-4521 |

**Nevada, Arizona Senators Collaborate to Expand I-11**

**(Washington, DC)** - Today, U.S. Senators Dean Heller (R-NV), Harry Reid (D-NV), John McCain (R-AZ), and Jeff Flake (R-AZ) introduced legislation to extend the future Interstate 11 (I-11) through the State of Nevada to Interstate 80 (I-80) and south toward Arizona’s southern border, ensuring the future interstate is connected to the Mountain Northwest and plays a key role as an international trade route. Specifically, the Intermountain West Corridor Development Act of 2015 (S. 842) provides both states’ Departments of Transportation the flexibility to develop a Northern Nevada connectivity corridor and a Southern Arizona connectivity corridor as part of the I-11 effort. This full north-to-south, Canada-to-Mexico interstate system is critical for our nation’s mobility, economy, and national defense.

Following introduction, the senators issued these statements:

“Developing critical infrastructure in our state is the first step toward long-term job growth and sustainability. With the mountain west region, including Nevada, expecting a population surge of 32 million residents between now and 2030, it is imperative I-11 serves as an artery of commerce, solidifying the Silver State’s role in an important international trade route,” **stated Senator Heller.** “Trucking, tourism, trade, and transportation needs will all be met with this bipartisan legislation, and I’m proud to team with Senators Reid, McCain, and Flake to make this a reality.”

“For years I worked to make Interstate 11 a reality,” said **Senator Reid**. “A few years back I was able to insert language in a transportation bill that established this corridor between Phoenix and Las Vegas and it makes sense that we would continue this interstate to Reno. Connecting three of the largest cities in the Southwest will create good-paying jobs, increase commerce, and significantly boost tourism to our state. I’m happy to work with Senator Heller and our Arizona colleagues to make this happen.”

"As the population in Arizona continues to grow and innovative businesses increasingly settle in our state, we must ensure that we have the infrastructure in place to foster economic development, international trade and job creation,” said **Senator McCain**. “Our legislation emphasizes the importance of the proposed Interstate-11 and the critical need for a route that reaches all the way to Arizona’s southern border, connecting our state to the global market. The highway would be a vital step forward in unlocking our state’s economic potential and connecting Arizona’s businesses and communities to major domestic and international trade partners.”

“I’m pleased to join my colleagues to cosponsor this legislation to convey the importance of expanding the I-11 designation,” said **Senator Flake**. “The highway’s potential to serve as a boon to U.S. trade and economic growth ought to be recognized.”

**Background:**

The Nevada and Arizona delegations on Capitol Hill have been working for years to move forward a proposed I-11. In the 113th Congress, they were successful in including language in the Surface Transportation Authorization bill, known as MAP-21, to officially designate an Interstate route connecting Phoenix and Las Vegas. These two cities are the largest major metropolitan areas without an interstate highway connecting them.

After enactment of MAP-21, the Nevada and Arizona Departments of Transportation initiated the [two-year I-11 and Intermountain West Corridor Study](http://i11study.com/wp/). The study included detailed corridor planning of a possible interstate link between Phoenix and Las Vegas as well as high-level visioning for extending the corridor south to Mexico and north to Canada. The Intermountain West Corridor Development Act of 2015 would solidify Nevada and Arizona’s long-term vision to fully integrate the southwest region into our nation’s existing federal highway system.

Last year, Senator Heller urged Department of Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx to support the designation of I-11 from Las Vegas to Northern Nevada. Fortunately, [Secretary Foxx committed to working with Nevada’s Congressional delegation to help secure this designation.](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZI1isB5n_KE)



*###*