



From Co-Sponsor to Corridor: How Congressional Support Moves Projects Forward

Major transportation corridors are not built by accident. They are the result of sustained **congressional leadership**, coordinated advocacy, and deliberate policy decisions that move a project from concept to construction. For the **Future Interstate I-27**, congressional co-sponsorship has been the critical force transforming an idea into a nationally recognized corridor with a clear path forward.



Why Co-Sponsorship Matters

When a Member of Congress co-sponsors legislation, it sends a powerful signal—both to leadership and to federal agencies—that a project has broad support and national relevance. Co-sponsorship elevates an initiative beyond a regional request and places it firmly within the federal transportation agenda. For Future Interstate corridors, this support is essential to justify long-term funding, coordinated planning, and multi-state delivery.

In the case of I-27, bipartisan co-sponsorship demonstrated that the corridor serves more than local interests. It supports **freight mobility, rural connectivity, energy production, agriculture, and North American trade**—all priorities of national significance.

From Policy Recognition to Federal Designation

Congressional backing directly enabled one of the most important milestones in the corridor's history: the **2022 Future Interstate designation**, secured through the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023. That designation formally established the

corridor from **Laredo, Texas, to Raton, New Mexico**, protecting it for future funding and federal recognition.

Without the strong support of the Congressional members, this designation could not have happened. Early in the 117th Congress, H. R. 1608, the Ports-to-Plains Highway Act of 2021 was introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives by Rep. Jodey Arrington (TX-19), Henry Cuellar (TX-28), Kay Granger (TX-12), Ronny Jackson (TX-13), Tony Gonzales (TX-23), and Kelly Armstrong (ND). In the Senate, S.705 also titled the Ports-to-Plains Highway Act of 2021, was introduced by Senators Ted Cruz (TX), John Cornyn (TX), and Kevin Cramer (ND). Both bills were designed to designate the Ports-to-Plains Corridor in Texas, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Colorado, and a portion of the Heartland Expressway in Colorado. These bills were critical to getting the ball rolling on to ultimate inclusion in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023. Without sustained co-sponsorship and advocacy, that designation would not have occurred. Federal agencies such as USDOT and FHWA look closely at congressional intent when determining which corridors warrant national investment. Broad congressional support provided the clarity needed to act.



Turning Designation into Deliverable Projects

Designation alone does not build highways. The next phase—implementation—requires additional congressional action, including **interstate route numbering**, feasibility studies, and funding mechanisms aligned with the scale of the corridor.

That is why continued co-sponsorship of efforts like the **S. 992 — the I-27 Numbering Act of 2023** is so critical. These actions unlock eligibility for federal programs, authorize official interstate signage, and provide the technical analysis needed to advance projects within state transportation plans. Senators Ted Cruz (TX), John Cornyn (TX), Ben Ray Luján (NM), and Martin Heinrich (NM) carried the bill through the U.S. Senate. U.S. House of Representatives Co-Sponsors were Rep. Jodey Arrington (TX-19) and Rep. Henry Cuellar (TX-28).

Each new co-sponsor strengthens the case that I-27 is not a single-state project, but a **multi-state national corridor** deserving of coordinated federal investment.

The Role of a Unified Congressional Delegation

One of the most powerful lessons from I-27's progress is the importance of a unified delegation. When senators and representatives from multiple states speak with one voice, momentum accelerates. Committee chairs take notice. Federal agencies respond. Funding opportunities expand.

This unified approach mirrors how the original Interstate Highway System was built—through federal leadership paired with state delivery. Today's Future Interstate corridors require the same model.

What Comes Next

The path forward depends on continued congressional engagement. Co-sponsorship today leads to committee action tomorrow, which leads to funding, planning, and construction. Every additional supporter helps move the corridor closer to full interstate realization.

For communities, businesses, and stakeholders along the corridor, the message is clear: **engagement matters**. Supporting members of Congress who champion I-27—and encouraging new co-sponsors—directly advances the corridor from policy to pavement.

The Future Interstate does not move forward on vision alone. It moves forward because Congress acts.

