

GAAS:258:08
For Immediate Release:
Friday, May 16, 2008

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Gov. Schwarzenegger Issues Executive Order to Help Ease Congestion During Fix I-5 Project

Governor Schwarzenegger today issued Executive Order S-04-08 to encourage state workers in the Sacramento region to adopt alternative work schedules and transportation options to relieve congestion during the Fix I-5 project.

“Fixing our freeways and ensuring the efficient movement of goods and people throughout our state is important to keeping our economic engine strong,” Governor Schwarzenegger said. “To create a faster and safer commute here in Sacramento during construction, I’m encouraging all state agencies to promote creative options for state workers. By getting more cars off the road, we can help relieve traffic headaches while also cutting down on air pollution from idling cars.”

Highlights of the executive order include:

- Directs agency secretaries and department directors to encourage telecommute programs, alternative work schedules, public transit, and video and teleconferencing and calls on private companies to participate as well
- Directs the Department of Personnel Administration to issue operating guidelines and provide other assistance to state agencies and departments to smooth implementation
- Calls for a report to analyze the effectiveness of the order to promote alternate work and travel options with the intent to ease traffic congestion and reduce pollution

Nearly 200,000 daily commuters travel on Interstate 5 in Sacramento, where the freeway serves as the main crossing over the American River. State employees represent one of the largest commuter groups in the Sacramento area, totaling more than 75,000 people who work in and around downtown.

The effort to promote work and travel alternatives through the duration of the Interstate 5 closure is supported by a growing public/private partnership in Sacramento and throughout the state, including Chevron, Environmental Defense, the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District, HP, Comcast Cable the Sacramento Municipal Utility District and others.

The state’s partners are helping to fund and contribute technical support for a final report analyzing the effectiveness of the Executive Order. Researchers already are on the ground collecting traffic data before the closure begins. The University of California, Davis and the University of Southern California are conducting the study, with the technical support from partners, to better prepare the state for other planned and unplanned road closures, emphasizing disaster relief, emergency preparedness and security.

Work on the \$27 million Fix I-5 project to repair Interstate 5 between R Street and Richards Boulevard in Sacramento is set to begin Friday, May 30 at 8 p.m. Caltrans has a regional public outreach effort underway to assist travelers with planning their travel during construction. For more information, go to www.fixi5.com.

Below is the text of the Governor's Executive Order:

EXECUTIVE ORDER S-04-08

WHEREAS Interstate 5 serves as the transportation backbone of the State of California and the western United States, providing travelers with connections extending to Canada and Mexico, and supporting vital trade and goods movement routes that sustain California's economy; and

WHEREAS the California Department of Transportation and its contractor C. C. Myers, Inc., will begin an innovative construction project to ensure the safe and continued operation of Interstate 5, near downtown Sacramento. The construction schedule includes unidirectional closures of Interstate 5, beginning May 30, 2008, to expedite the replacement of the failing freeway drainage systems and reconstruct the freeway surface; and

WHEREAS reports indicate that the closure of portions of Interstate 5 could cause up to nineteen times the amount of current traffic congestion during commute hours; and

WHEREAS greenhouse gas emissions ("GHG") pose a serious threat to the health of California's citizens and the quality of the environment; and

WHEREAS California's transportation sector is the leading source of GHG emissions in the State, contributing over 40 percent of the State's annual GHG emissions; and

WHEREAS the State is committed to reducing the pollution that causes global warming; and

WHEREAS Assembly Bill 32 (Chapter 488, Statutes of 2006) requires a cap on global warming pollutants and authorizes market mechanisms to ensure this cap is met by 2020; and

WHEREAS collaboration and partnerships between California government, California companies, labor representatives, non-governmental organizations and California universities are essential for the development and implementation of policies needed to accomplish the goals of AB 32; and

WHEREAS State employees represent one of the largest commuter groups in the Sacramento area, totaling over 75,000 people; and

WHEREAS almost 200,000 daily commuters travel on Interstate 5 in Sacramento, where the freeway serves as the main crossing over the American River; and

WHEREAS telecommuting, alternative work schedules, and use of public transit are available strategies to significantly reduce traffic congestion, reduce global warming pollutants and improve air quality.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER, Governor of the State of California, in accordance with the authority vested in me by the Constitution and statutes of the State of California, do hereby issue the following orders to become effective immediately:

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that beginning June 2, 2008, and through the duration of the Interstate 5 closures, agency secretaries and department directors in my administration shall encourage the maximum feasible and practicable use in the impacted Sacramento area of telecommute programs, alternative work schedules, public transit, and video and teleconferencing, consistent with Government Code section 14200 et seq. and existing policies. These measures shall be implemented so as to be (a) in the best interests of public safety and continued service to the people of California, (b) operationally feasible, (c) within existing resources and without impact to the General Fund, and (d) pursuant to applicable laws and personnel policies to avoid any abuses.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the Department of Personnel Administration will issue operating guidelines and provide other assistance to State agencies and departments encouraging them to take full advantage of the telecommute program, alternate work schedules, and other transit options, including the Department of General Services' "Greening Your Commute" travel suggestions during the duration of this project.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that the California Department of Transportation and the California Environmental Protection Agency shall work with the City of Sacramento, companies in and around Sacramento, labor representatives, non-governmental organizations, and California universities, as appropriate, to create a report on the effectiveness of these orders, and shall report to me on lessons learned that could translate into increasing telecommuting, alternative work schedules, and use of public transit to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the Sacramento region and the state. The report shall also indicate how data collected during the Interstate 5 closures could be used to better prepare the state for other planned or unplanned road closures, emphasizing disaster relief, emergency preparedness and security.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that agencies and departments within my administration shall cooperate in the implementation of this Executive Order.

IT IS FURTHER ENCOURAGED that other officers and entities impacted by the Interstate 5 closures and not under my direct executive authority, including constitutional officers, the legislative and judicial branches, and other Sacramento area public entities and private sector employers, consider implementing increased telecommuting and video and teleconferencing options for their employees beginning June 2, 2008, and through the duration of the Interstate 5 closures.

This Executive Order is not intended to, and does not, create any rights or benefits, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity, against the State of California, its agencies, departments, entities, officers, employees, or any other person.

I FURTHER DIRECT that as soon as hereafter possible, this Executive Order be filed in the Office of the Secretary of State and that widespread publicity and notice be given to this Executive Order.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF I have hereunto
set my hand and caused the Great Seal of

the State of California to be affixed this 16th
day of May 2008.

ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER
Governor of California

ATTEST:

DEBRA BOWEN
Secretary of State

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