

Governor Rauner announces completion of new Illinois Route 29 expansion

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Joined federal, state and local officials to highlight four-lane highway improving safety and connecting Rochester, Taylorville

ROCHESTER – Governor Bruce Rauner joined by Illinois Transportation Secretary Randy Blankenhorn, U.S. Rep. Rodney Davis, U.S. Rep. John Shimkus and local officials announced the completion of the final 7.25 miles of Illinois 29 expansion between Berry and Edinburg today in Rochester. This was the culmination of more than a decade of construction to widen the highway connecting Rochester and Taylorville to four lanes.

“We’re building a highway to prosperity,” Governor Rauner said. “This project shows what is possible when all parties, state, local and federal, work together. Farmers, healthcare workers and other Illinois residents take this road every single day to get to

work. We hope these final improvements not only provide a safer route for motorists along this busy stretch of highway but also contribute to a brighter economic future for the region.”

Work on the most recently completed 7.25-mile section began in August 2012 and included construction of a 3-mile bypass around the village of Edinburg. Work began on the first of three phases in 2003 and included additional safety features beyond the additional capacity, such as embankment and drainage improvements and enhanced roadway lighting.

The third and final phase of the \$102.3 million project was finished in October 2016, following the completion of a 5-mile section of new four-lane road in 2004 between Rochester and Berry and a 6.7-mile section in 2006 between Edinburg and Taylorville. The completed project creates a 23-mile four-lane highway from Springfield to Taylorville.

Safety was a key factor driving the project, which received strong support from federal, state and local officials, and communities along the route. The project also provides land for a future bike trail adjacent to the new expressway.

“The upgrades to Illinois 29 correct roadway deficiencies, increase road capacity and improve safety,” said Secretary Blankenhorn. “What was once considered a dangerous stretch of highway is now better designed to serve the thousands of motorists who travel this road each day. I commend all involved for the time and talent that was contributed to this project – your efforts will save lives.”

“After witnessing the death of a young woman on Route 29 more than 20 years ago, widening and updating this highway has been one of my top priorities,” U.S Rep. Rodney Davis (R-Taylorville) said. “As a resident of Christian County, congressional staffer, and member of Congress, I was proud to work with countless leaders at all levels of government to arrive where we are today: celebrating the completion of this project which will ensure a safer route for drivers traveling between Rochester and Taylorville.

"The completed expansion of Route 29 will make travel safer and easier between Rochester and Taylorville," said U.S. Rep. John Shimkus (R-Collinsville). "This project, many years in the making, is an example of how congressionally directed spending can help state and local leaders make necessary and important infrastructure improvements. I'm proud to have been a part of this team effort."

Officials gathered outside the Rochester Public Library along Illinois 29 to commemorate the project's completion.