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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Alamo RMA Chairman Statement on MPO Action on October 26, 2009**

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**(SAN ANTONIO)** – October 27, 2009 Dr. William E. Thornton, Chairman of the Alamo Regional Mobility Authority released today the following statement concerning the San Antonio Bexar County Metropolitan Planning Organization actions on Monday, October 26, 2009.

“On behalf of the Alamo RMA, we would like to thank everyone who attended last night MPO’s meeting, and to thank the MPO Policy Board for spending the many hours on this issue. We have a long road ahead of us. We need all options on the table, and last night’s vote to keep the two Environmental Impact Statements moving forward, as well as the non-toll Loop 1604/US 281 Interchange and the US 281 Super Street is a strong reflection that we are committed, on a regional basis, to moving congestion relief forward as fast as possible.

“The votes taken last night to keep US 281 and Loop 1604 in the long range transportation plan is not a victory for tolling in our community, it’s a victory for finding long-term solutions to the congestion we are seeing across our community.

“We recognize the intense passion on this issue, both for and against what the Alamo RMA is doing moving forward with two Environmental Impact Statements on US 281 and on Loop 1604. We recognize that there are deep divisions in our community given the history of the US 281 project, and we recognize fully the concerns over protecting our natural resources as part of any new capacity along these two roadways.

“As the local entity charged with the study, and ultimately the implementation of any long-term solution, we will study both toll and non-toll alternatives throughout the Environmental Impact Statements. No one wants to build a toll road, but no one wants to be stuck in traffic, day after day, wasting fuel and our most precious resource, our time.

“In 2011, the next session of the Texas Legislature will convene, and during that session, we all need to come together to support new funding options for our transportation needs both in Bexar County and across the state. Tolling should remain an option, but if there are other ways we can pay for the needed improvements to our roadways, we should seek those options as well.

“We have serious needs in our region all of which require new funding and new ways to help bring about not just roadway expansion, but a multi-modal transportation system that provides choices for our community, dependable quality service, and helps all of us enjoy the rich cultural heritage and quality of life for which San Antonio is known.”