

Jan Brewer urges tribe to allow freeway on tribal land

13 comments by [Cathryn Creno](#) - Feb. 1, 2010 05:34 PM
The Arizona Republic

Gov. [Jan Brewer](#) has joined the lineup of officials who want the planned South Mountain Freeway built on the Gila River Indian Community.

Brewer sent a letter to [Gila River](#) Gov. William Rhodes Monday pledging support from the Arizona Department of Transportation for studying a potential freeway corridor on the reservation.



[Read Gov. Brewer's letter](#)

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[Tribe OKs land study for proposed freeway](#)

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[DiCiccio's stake in freeway plan questioned](#)

[ADOT's](#) current plan calls for the \$1.9 billion South Mountain - which would complete the Loop 202 by connecting Chandler to Laveen to be built along Pecos Road. It would require destruction of neighborhoods in Ahwatukee and three [mountain preserve](#) ridgelines.

"I am hopeful for the opportunities that may exist to consider the economic development potential of this much-needed transportation corridor, while mitigating any negative impacts to the community's culture and land," [Brewer](#) said in the Feb. 1 letter.

Brewer's letter responds to one sent by

Rhodes last week offering to allow the state to study a potential freeway corridor on [tribal land](#). Rhodes said the tribe would prefer that the freeway not be built at all, But, if it must it built, the tribe's preference is not to destroy part of South Mountain in the process.

U.S. Rep. Harry Mitchell and Phoenix City Councilman Sal DiCiccio, who represent Ahwatukee, applauded Brewer for getting involved and urged ADOT to get to work fast.

"I encourage ADOT to work swiftly to ensure this option receives full and fair consideration," Mitchell said in a statement.

DiCiccio, who has been criticized for jumping into the freeway issue while owning long-term leases on commercial property on reservation, said Rhodes' and Brewer's letters mean his work is done.

"Now it is up to them to figure out what the freeway is going to look like," he said.

If ADOT and the tribe come up with a plan for a freeway on tribal land, it could be put on a Gila River election ballot later this year.

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