

# 'Across the Waves': Stories of Asian Americans

Farmers Insurance produces educational DVDs for schools

by CYNTHIA DE CASTRO  
AJPress

FARMERS Insurance Group, one of the nation's largest property and casualty insurance companies, released a documentary video highlighting the history of the Asian Pacific community, entitled *Across the Waves*. Designed to teach middle and high school students across America about the history and diversity of the Asian American community, *Across the Waves* will be provided free of charge to educators nationwide by Farmers Insurance.

*Across the Waves* features eight 14-minute oral histories from APA leaders representing APA ethnic groups that have contributed

to the rich culture of America, including Cambodian Chinese, Filipino, Hmong, Asian Indian, Japanese, Korean and Vietnamese. Featured in the documentary are interviews with visible and respected leaders in the Asian American communities such as Congressman Mike Honda, 15th District of California, former Washington State Governor Gary Locke, Minnesota State Senator Mee Moua and the Filipino Administrative Law Judge for California, Casimiro Tolentino.

The episodes bring together members from the different Asian Pacific American communities who share their struggles and triumphs in their own words. With all-original interviews never before seen with stories that are fundamental to understanding the Asian-Pacific American community, *Across the Waves* provides insights and information not found in middle and high school history books.

The DVD will be accompanied by materials and curriculum developed by the UCLA Asian American Studies Center. The comprehensive lesson plans were written by Filipina Cheryl Matias-Padua and Don T. Nakanishi.

Produced and directed by Randy Rice, executive director of education programs at Farmers, *Across the Waves* captures the essence of Asian Pacific American history that cannot be communicated through textbooks. It is the latest in a series of educational programs produced by Farmers Insurance, including the award-winning *Freedom's Song*, which highlights the African American experience, and *The Bronze Screen*, which celebrates 100 years of Latino influence in Hollywood.

"At Farmers, we take great pride in the work that we have done to support educators and diverse markets," stated Faye McClure, Farmers VP of Strategic Marketing.

For more information regarding *Across the Waves* or how to obtain a copy, contact Randy Rice at (323) 930-4995.



by GILLIANS FLACCUS  
Associated Press Writer

# Calif. toll road hearing focuses on security

DEL MAR, CA—More than 1,000 people turned out Sept. 22 at a public hearing over a proposed toll road that would pass through one of Southern California's most popular parks and nearby a world-class surf break.

Until now, the fight over the road—which would bisect San Onofre State Beach and end a half-mile from the surf break Trestles—has focused on its environmental impact.

The California Coastal Commission rejected the plan in February after environmentalists and other opponents argued that the 16-mile, six-lane road would wipe out several endangered or threatened coastal species, decimate an ancient Indian burial ground and block sediment that creates world-class waves at Trestles.

But the company that hopes to build and finance the proposed \$1.3 billion road, the Transportation Corridor Agencies, appealed that decision to the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration, a branch of the U.S. Commerce Department. It hopes to get the state's decision overturned by arguing that the road would play a key role in national security and economic growth.

So many people signed up to speak at NOAA's hearing last September 22—more than 650—that it scheduled the meeting at a fairgrounds to accommodate the crowd and hired security officers to help maintain order. Officials expected to make it through less than a quarter of those speakers before the end of the 10-hour hearing, and most of those were to be elected officials.

More than 1,000 people packed into the space by the start of the hearing, many wearing T-shirts that read either "Save the Park, Stop the Toll Road" or "241: Less Traffic, More Jobs."

Audience members—who frequently interrupted the speakers with cheers or boos—were urged to instead give a thumbs-up or thumbs-down sign to indicate their feelings.

"We're against taking away the shoreline for a road. I think the coast needs to be maintained. It's beautiful, it's rustic, the way Cali-

fornia used to be," Carol Baker, 67, of La Jolla, said just before the hearing began. "They can cut across somewhere else if they need to get their road built."

The company and other proponents, who include Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, say the toll road extension shores up national security by providing an alternative to Interstate 5 in the event of a wildfire or accident at the nearby San Onofre nuclear power plant.

"When those fires in San Diego happened and they had to evacuate all the people, they had one exit route and that was backed up for hours. People were trying to drive 60 miles and it took them five hours," said Lance MacLean, a company board member. "It's in the interest of national security that you have an alternate route."

Proponents also argue that the road would boost an economy that's strangled by heavy traffic.

Environmentalists counter that the proposed road would be little more than another local commuter option for a yet-to-be-built 14,000-home development in south Orange County—hardly a national security linchpin.

Schwarzenegger's brother-in-law, Bobby Shriver, said local residents don't want the toll road. Schwarzenegger was accused earlier this year of dumping Shriver and actor-director Clint Eastwood from the California State Parks and Recreation Commission because they voted against the toll road. The governor's office has denied those accusations.

"There's a very serious traffic problem on the 5, there's no doubt about that," Shriver said, referring to the freeway. "But they do not want to solve that problem by building this road."

But a local city councilwoman disagreed, saying that supporters of the road couldn't be there to speak because they had jobs and families.

"It is their hope that we will listen to the people in the neighborhood and the business owners—the real people," said Linda Lindholm, a councilwoman for Laguna Niguel. "They ask me, 'Why is it taking so long?'"

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