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Scenic News:

Western New York Southtown Scenic Byway [expanding...](#)

Pennsylvania [roadside trees clear-cut](#) to make way for digital billboard...

Texas State Rep. Garnet Coleman [receives award](#) for highway beautification work...

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Safety risks of digital billboards put before insurance industry

A.M. Best, the leading rating agency focused on the insurance industry, has [produced a video](#) focusing on potential risks to insurers posed by digital billboards.

"Any distraction is going to be of concern to the insurance industry," said Loretta Worters, Vice President of the [Insurance Information Institute](#). "When you turn away from your driving it's going to be a concern and it can cause accidents. [Billboard-related distraction] is something we're concerned about."



[Click here to watch the A.M. Best video.](#)

It should be noted that the state safety studies referred to in the video by host John Weber are from a 2001 Federal Highway Administration [review of research](#) that examined earlier generations of electronic signs.

Effort underway to promote scenic byways in transportation bill

A coalition of groups including Scenic America is [working to make sure](#) that members of Congress understand the importance of the [National Scenic Byways Program](#) during ongoing debate over a new transportation bill.

Until recently, byways organizations around the country were able to apply for an annual competitive grants program for projects including safety improvements, construction of interpretive facilities, resource protection, development of traveler information and byway marketing programs.

Congress eliminated dedicated funding for the grants program in 2012, which has made it extremely challenging for byway organizations to



implement projects and programs that improve the scenic byway experience. As Congress considers a new highway bill we need to ensure that scenic byways are able to compete on a level playing field for funding.

If you haven't already done so, [click here to learn more and express your support](#) for scenic byways to your members of Congress.

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Watch Scenic America's 2014 conference online:



[Click here to watch video of Scenic America's 2014 Conference in Houston, TX](#)

City leaders in Albany, Calif. reject digital billboards after public outcry

Albany, California is the latest city to reject an offer to place digital billboards on public property in exchange for a one-time payment or an offer of revenue sharing.

Clear Channel had offered the city up to \$150,000 towards construction of a new public works facility in exchange for being allowed to build digital billboards on the site.



While the City Council initially signed off on the deal and the changes to the city's zoning code that would have allowed for the digital billboards, a [passionate group of citizens](#) concerned about quality of life, environmental impacts, property values and traffic safety organized in opposition to the proposed signs.

At a hearing on July 21 these citizens made their voices heard and ultimately the City Council voted 4-1 to reject the digital billboards!

The vote will be confirmed and finalized at the September 2 City Council meeting and members of the public are encouraged to attend the session and make sure the decision stands.

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