

Where are state officials in Port Huron's time of peril?

Well, Port Huron, if you didn't already feel like someone's unwanted, poor third cousin, you should now. Actually, you should be outraged.

As you know, almost two weeks ago, Michigan Department of Transportation representatives confirmed at a televised Port Huron City Council meeting they were going to place the new Blue Water Bridge Plaza right in the heart of the city.

It was pretty obvious the council was blind-sided. There was not one word as to how MDOT, the state or the feds were going to mitigate the damage to the city or to the county.

I believe City Manager Karl Tomion and St. Clair County Administrator Shaun Groden find this outrageous - and so should you!

It is pretty obvious, and at this point no one is disputing the fact, that this "Customs Hybrid Plan" will do severe financial and environmental damage to the city, not to mention the health and safety hazards to our children.

A landmark study by a team from the University of Southern California that will be published on Feb. 17. It delivers a sobering answer about the health effects of being raised near a busy roadway where air is chronically polluted.

The study will state that growing up in such an environment stunts a child's breathing capacity for a lifetime, significantly increasing the risk of serious lung and heart diseases later in life. It's a big risk factor. What about our 2,000 children being exposed to a giant truck stop?

I have to tell you I can really empathize with Homeland Security, U.S. Customs and MDOT. They have a tough, important job to do while trying to keep everyone happy. The real outrage however should be directed at those responsible for our care and safety who are doing nothing to help us deal with this latest crisis.

A couple of weeks ago, the pharmaceutical companies Pfizer announced it was going to close its Ann Arbor facility, costing Ann Arbor 2,100 jobs. Ann Arbor has one of the strongest economies and lowest unemployment rates in Michigan.

Within hours, Gov. Jennifer Granholm was holding press conferences declaring she would use millions from the state's 21st Century Jobs Fund to aid Ann Arbor. She also set up not one, but five separate committees to

deal with the Pfizer closing.

It certainly appears your governor will use all of the resources of her office and state government to make Ann Arbor whole. But here in River City, we are facing a real crisis. Where is Granholm? Why isn't she looking to protect our children and to make Port Huron whole?

No press conferences; no state committees to help us deal with our crisis; no millions of dollars from the state jobs fund; and not even a visit to feel your pain. Understand, MDOT works for Granholm; she is the boss.

Also missing in action are our state Rep. John Espinoza and state Sen. Jud Gilbert. They are powerful players in our state government who are supposed to be our voice in Lansing and with the feds.

Are you and your children less important to your elected leadership than those in Ann Arbor? My dear cousins, it certainly does appear so.