



AUSTIN'S NEWS SITE

Widower campaigns for highway barriers

11:28 PM CDT on Friday, August 5, 2005

By MICHAEL MENDOZA / KVUE News

An out of control car that crossed the median on 360 took a woman's life last year. Her husband is trying to keep that from happening again.

Jose Bracamonte met his wife 30 years ago in Mexico walking in downtown Monterrey.

They moved to Austin and started a business.

"We were the pioneers of breakfast tacos in Austin," he said.

But a fatal accident on 360 in August of last year took her life.

Investigators say a Suburban crossed the median, hitting Ruth Bracamonte's SUV head on.

Bracamonte says his wife's death was preventable.

"I'm sure if they had barriers or cables like they have on some roads, this accident wouldn't have happened," he said.

And he wants to stop a tragedy like his from happening again.

Traffic on 360 has noticeably increased over the past few years but the addition of a barrier all the way down Capital of Texas Highway may not be deemed necessary until the number of accidents increases.

"We haven't had a lot of frequent crossover accidents on 360," Christopher Bishop with TXDoT said. "We don't want any accidents on the roads, but we also know we can't build a highway that somebody won't figure out a way to have a wreck on. So you deal with the things that are the most common problem or the greatest problem in a particular area."

Bracamonte says 360 is a problem.

"That road is still very unsafe for a lot of people. Thousands a day passing through there. And I see a lot of people driving so fast," he said.

According to TXDoT, the cost of installing cable barriers is about \$112,000 a mile.

Some are being installed through pilot projects on various Texas highways but right now Loop 360 isn't on that list.

Online at: <http://www.kvue.com/news/local/stories/080505cccakvueguardrail.46612633.html>