

WEEKLY LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Arizona Transit Association

April 7, 2006

AzTA Legislation Awaits Governor's Signature

SB 1166, initiated by the Arizona Transit Association, passed the full Senate this week and is awaiting action by the Governor. Per the Arizona Constitution, the Governor has five days to act on the legislation. As the bill was sent to the Governor on April 4th, it is anticipated that the Governor will sign the bill within the next few days.

Briefly, the legislation provides public transit systems with the ability to provide service along state routes that meet certain speed, signalization and other safety related criteria.

While the statutory authority will apply statewide, the legislation is intended to benefit rural Arizona communities in which eligible state routes also simultaneously serve as the main thoroughfare for the community.

While AzTA has been the lead proponent of the legislation, the bill received critical support from the Arizona Department of Transportation and other interested stakeholders.

LTAF II Progress Continues

Within the Arizona Senate, the effort to support the restoration of LTAF II program levels to the statutory distribution amount

of \$18 million is gaining momentum in the ongoing budget discussions.

As a result of AzTA lobbying efforts, combined with direct contact by local governments impacted by the previous cuts, several key Senators involved in the budget negotiations have expressed support for the restoration of LTAF II.

Under existing statute, after the state General Fund receives \$31 million in revenue from the multi-state lottery game, county and municipal governments receive the next \$18 million in available funds for public transportation projects.

During the 2005 legislative session, however, the LTAF II program was reduced in session law for FY 2006 when the General Fund threshold was increased to \$37 million and the amount of available revenue to be distributed was reduced to \$12 million.

While the final state budget negotiations for FY 2007 are likely over a month away, the fact that LTAF II considerations are occurring at this early stage represents a significant shift in state policy towards improving public transportation funding.

A Preview for the Week Ahead

As the deadline has passed for committee hearings, except for the Committees on Appropriations, there are no hearings scheduled for either the House or Senate Committees on Transportation for the week beginning April 10th.

Comments

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LEGISLATIVE TRACKING REPORT

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BILL	TITLE	SPONSORS	SUMMARY	HOUSE COMMITTEES	SENATE COMMITTEES	ACTION
HB 2332	appropriations; highway monies; repayment	McClure and (2)	As introduced, appropriates \$52,215,300 in FY 2006-2007 from the state general fund to the Highway Users Revenue Fund for payment of monies diverted in FY 2004-2005.	Transportation, Appropriations (P), Rules		passed, House Transportation, 1/26
SB 1166	stopping vehicles on highways	Verschoor and (3)	As introduced, permits public transportation service vehicles to stop on specified state highway routes for the purposes of embarking and disembarking passengers. These highways must conform to specified conditions, including: a speed limit that does not exceed forty-five miles per hour, designated and marked stopping locations and signalized intersection controls. AMENDMENT: Permits the Director of ADOT and the appropriate local authority to determine if a pullout or any other method is necessary. AMENDMENT: Requires the local authority to conduct a traffic and engineering study of the proposed location.	Transportation, Rules	Transportation, Rules	passed Senate final read 28-1, 4/4; awaiting Governor's signature
SB 1278	lottery proceeds; university scholarships	Hale and (10)	As introduced, establishes the Lottery Tuition Fund to pay for a percentage of tuition costs for in-state students who maintain at least 2.5 grade point average and served in the military.		Higher Education, Appropriations, Rules	passed, Senate Higher Education, 2/15
SB 1298	appropriation; highway fund repayment	Flake and (22)	As introduced, appropriates \$63,200,000 from the state General Fund in fiscal year 2006-2007 to the State Highway Fund for repayment of monies diverted last year for Department of Public Safety salaries.		Transportation, Appropriations, Rules	passed, Senate Transportation, 2/7



BILL	TITLE	SPONSORS	SUMMARY	HOUSE COMMITTEES	SENATE COMMITTEES	ACTION
			AMENDMENT: Inserts "Highway Revenue User Fund" for the referenced "State Highway Fund."			
SB 1466	vehicle license tax reduction	Rios and (25)	As introduced, reduces the vehicle license tax by a percentage (up to 75%) depending on the fuel efficiency of a motor vehicle. Requires the use of General Fund dollars to replace any lost VLT dollars.		Transportation, Appropriations, Finance, Rules	passed, Senate Transportation, 2/14
SB 1521	transportation board; Native American member	Hale and (2)	As introduced, requires that a Native American is a member of the transportation board. AMENDMENT: Changes the Native American member to a representative of a tribal government.		Transportation, Rules	passed, Senate Rules, 3/13