

WEEKLY LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Arizona Transit Association

April 20, 2007

Week in Review

The TIME Coalition issued vision statement for a statewide transportation planning effort:

Principles of Statewide Coalition

- Our coalition is made up of organizations and individuals joined to promote and advocate for the continued improvement and coordination of the transportation priorities for every city, town, Native American community, and county throughout the State of Arizona.
- The Coalition believes that a quality transportation system drives commerce and is essential for the economic future of our state. Congestion hurts economic growth and impacts our quality of life.
- The Coalition believes that future transportation planning must accomplish the following goals:
 - Preserve new corridors that promote connectivity
 - Expand capacity to reduce congestion

- Integrate use of multimodal transportation solutions [Emphasis added]
- Equally consider privatization options that will expand capacity, expedite construction, and potentially lower costs
- Consider opportunities to increase our ability to transport goods and services
- Build a better quality of life
- Improve our environment
- Proactively support right of way preservation and access control

Goals of Statewide Coalition

- Identify funding options to address the long-term needs of a statewide multimodal transportation system. [Emphasis added]
- Establish a process and timeline involving the Legislature, Executive leadership, ADOT, Councils of Governments, Metropolitan Planning organizations, Native American communities, and the Business community. This process and timeline should be approved by the Legislature to develop a statewide transportation plan by May 31, 2007.
- The process would return a statewide transportation plan to the Legislature by December 31, 2007 for approval.
- Place the comprehensive statewide transportation plan on the ballot for General Election 2008 or as soon as practically possible.
- In addition to the long-term transportation strategy, the committee targets to secure \$500 million in immediate funding to pay for a portion of the most urgent statewide transportation needs.

A Preview for the Week Ahead

Procedurally, both the House and Senate voted to extend the legislative session another week. State statute requires that the legislative session end no later than the Saturday in which the 100th day of session falls. April 17th represented the 100th day of the 2007 legislative session.

For those interested in additional procedural insight, the first extension only requires an announcement by the Speaker of the House and President of the Senate. However, after this first seven day extension expires on April 28th, a majority vote is required to continue to extend the legislative session.

Budget rumors continue to dominate the interests of lobbyists and legislators alike. The House Committee on Rules provided the traditional permission for the late introduction of 20 budget bills. This signals that the House may try to pass a budget in order to claim that it was able to pass out a balanced budget ahead of the Senate.

However, all the focus remains on the Senate budget negotiations between a small bipartisan committee attempting to reach a genuine budget agreement, with Senate Democrats representing the Governor's interests. Of course, it is unlikely that the Senate version will be acceptable to the House Republican majority.

Recently, the Governor yielded on her request to issue bonds for new school construction. This has been a major impasse in the budget negotiations, as Republican Leadership prefers a pay-as-you-go method. No word on what the Governor received in exchange for yielding on the bonding issue.

No reasonable predictions for adjournment.

Comments

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LEGISLATIVE TRACKING REPORT

Arizona Transit Association

April 20, 2007

BILL	TITLE	SPONSORS	SUMMARY	HOUSE COMMITTEES	SENATE COMMITTEES	ACTION
HB 2131	development fees; public transportation	Farley (6)	As introduced, allows municipalities and counties to assess development fees to offset the costs of public transportation.	Counties and Municipalities, Ways and Means, Rules		committee assignment, 1/16
HB 2153	ADOT hearings	Biggs	STRIKE EVERYTHING AMENDMENT: Allows the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) to dispose of property that was purchased with monies from the Regional Area Road Fund (RARF) or Highway User Revenue Fund (HURF) if the property is not needed for transportation purposes and establishes a reimbursement mechanism for the funds.	Transportation, Rules	Transportation, Rules	passed, Senate Rules, 4/2
HB 2228	vehicle license tax; hybrid vehicles S/E: Highway expansion fund; transit capital projects	McClure (2)	STRIKE EVERYTHING AMENDMENT: Sets aside the sum of \$10,000,000 in the <i>Highway Expansion and Extension Loan Program (HELP)</i> fund for eligible transit capital projects in municipalities with a population of fifty thousand persons or less. SECOND STRIKE EVERYTHING AMENDMENT IN SENATE APPROPRIATIONS: Makes numerous changes conforming Arizona's commercial driver license (CDL) and commercial motor vehicle (CMV) statutes to federal regulations and rules.	Transportation, Rules	Appropriations, Rules	passed, Senate COW, 4/17



BILL	TITLE	SPONSORS	SUMMARY	HOUSE COMMITTEES	SENATE COMMITTEES	ACTION
HB 2570	railroad right-of-way acquisition	Biggs	As introduced, on the approval of the State Transportation Board, the Arizona Department of Transportation shall use the monies from a designated fund to acquire a railroad right-of-way to accommodate future freight or passenger rail service. \$650,000 is available for the purchase of such right-of-way. STRIKE EVERYTHING AMENDMNET: Requires evidence of legally authorized presence in the United States in order to obtain a vehicle title or registration.	Transportation, Appropriations, Rules	Transportation, Appropriations, Rules	passed, Senate Appropriations, 4/9
HB 2682	blue ribbon transportation committee	Biggs	As passed by the House, establishes a legislative committee to review reports on transportation and make recommendations on which legislative issues relating to transportation should be addressed in the next legislative session. AMENDMENT: Removes the requirement that the committee makes recommendations on transportation issues and, instead, requires the committee to review existing funding sources for transportation and the allocation of those resources and to review the composition and powers and duties of the State Transportation Board. Makes the co-chairpersons of the blue ribbon committee the chairman of each of the Transportation Committees and states the blue ribbon committee may only meet at the call of the co-chairpersons.	Transportation, Rules	Transportation, Rules	passed, Senate COW, 4/17
SB 1161	HOV lanes; motorcycles; buses	Tibshraeny	As introduced, clarifies existing state law to allow unoccupied public transportation buses and motorcycles to use the HOV at all times. Consistent with federal law that governs the construction and use of federally funded HOV lanes.	Transportation, Rules	Transportation, Rules	Laws 2007, Chapter 32
SB 1585	HOV lane conversion; toll lane	Gould (2)	As introduced, requires the Department of Transportation, by November 15, 2012, to issue a request for proposals for the conversion of HOV lanes		Transportation, Rules	passed, Senate Transportation, 2/13

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			on Interstate 17 between Loop 101 and Interstate 10 into a high occupancy toll lane. Allows ADOT to issue an RFP for the conversion of the HOV lanes on any other highway in this state into a high occupancy toll lane by November 15, 2012.			
SB 1591	performance audits; light rail	Gould (1)	As introduced, states that if the light rail system is not completed on or before January 1, 2009, a separate performance audit shall be conducted twelve months after the minimum operating system is open. Requires the Auditor General to contract with a nationally recognized independent auditor with expertise in evaluating multimodal transportation systems and in regional transportation planning to conduct the performance audit. Requires the costs of the audit to be paid from revenues of the county transportation excise tax.	Transportation, Rules	Transportation, Rules	passed, House Rules, 4/17
SB 1610	highway expansion; extension loan program	Tibshraeny	As introduced, makes transit capital projects eligible for the Highway Expansion and Extension Program. Also makes transit capital purposes under the Federal SIB Act eligible for the Program. Transit capital purposes is defined to mean eligible land, buildings or rolling stock or a combination of eligible land, buildings and rolling stock that is part of the federal Transit Administration's Rural Public Transportation Program for municipalities with populations of less than 50,000 persons.		Transportation, Rules	committee assignment, 2/1
SB 1635	FAST lanes	Gorman (1)	As introduced, requires the Department of Transportation, notwithstanding any other law, to issue a request for proposal by July 1, 2008, to private entities for the purpose of entering into a contract with a private entity for the conversion of an existing HOV lane to a freeway acceleration and sensible transportation (FAST) lane, for the purpose		Transportation, Rules	passed, Senate Transportation, 2/13

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			<p>of constructing new FAST lanes and for the purpose of entering into contracts for the operation of the FAST lanes by private entities. Allows the Department to convert, construct or operate or both convert and operate or construct and operate the FAST lane if no proposal by a private entity is acceptable. States a FAST lane is a lane for use by drivers of vehicles carrying fewer than two persons in a HOV lane who pay a specified fee. A person may operate a motorcycle in a FAST lane without paying a specified fee unless prohibited by official traffic control devices. The Department is prohibited from entering into a contract for the conversion of a HOV lane to a FAST lane if the conversion will result in the loss or refund of federal funds for construction, reconstruction, repairs, improvement, planning, supervision and maintenance of the state highway system and other public highways. Requires the Department to structure a variable fee to ensure unrestricted access to the lanes at all times by eligible vehicles, including buses, vehicles carrying more than one person, environmental protection agency certified low-emitting vehicles with a gross vehicle weight rating over ten thousand pounds and alternative fuel vehicles that have been issued alternative fuel vehicle special plates or alternative fuel vehicle stickers.</p>			
SB 1640	foreign motor carriers	Verschoor (1)	<p>As passed out of the Senate, conforms regulations and restrictions on foreign motor carriers and foreign private motor carriers to Federal rules and regulations.</p>	Transportation, Natural Resources and Public Safety, Rules	Transportation, Rules	Passed House 57-0, 4/17