



Focus on the FAST Act

This month we continue our ongoing series on the long term Federal Transportation Authorization known as the FAST (Fixing America's Surface Transportation) Act. Last month we took a closer look at the TIFIA grants component of the new law. This month our ongoing series provides some insight on the freight components of the authorization.

The FAST Act places additional emphasis on freight planning and freight movement. It creates a National Multimodal Freight Policy, to be administered by the U.S. Department of Transportation Undersecretary for Policy, to improve the condition and performance of the National Multimodal Freight Network (NMFN).

States are encouraged to form State Freight Advisory Committees and the new law mandates that all States receiving National Highway Freight Program formula funds create a State Freight Plan (SFP) within two years of enactment and updated every five years. Colorado already has these components in place.

Freight Soup- Your Guide to FAST Freight Terms:

- National Highway Freight Network (NHFN)
- National Multimodal Freight Network (NMFN)
- Primary Highway Freight System (PHFS)
- Primary Highway Freight Network (PHFN)
- State Freight Plan (SFP)

The Act also establishes a National Highway Freight Network (NHFN) consisting of 41,518 miles (already identified by the Federal Highway Administration) and creates a new formula distribution National Freight Program that will provide Colorado with \$85 million over five years for freight infrastructure improvements. *continued on page 2*



Legislative Update

As of the end of January the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) is tracking 26 bills for possible direct or indirect impacts on CDOT, its employees, or the state's transportation network. In the next few weeks legislators will vote on these bills while preparing to introduce the next round of legislation. Some key bills that have been introduced are below.

Senate Bill 16-11 (Repeal FASTER Fees for Transit). This bill seeks to repeal the fees dedicated for transit funding and instead dedicate that funding for FASTER safety projects. The total amount diverted would be \$15M. The diversion would, shut down Bustang operations, and eliminate the technical assistance provided to many local governments for accessing federal transit grants. The Senate Transportation Committee passed the bill along party lines.

Senate Bill 16-1039 (I-70 Traction Control Devices on Passenger Vehicles). The bill passed the House Transportation Committee with only four no votes. It moves to the House floor for debate. In committee the sponsor amended the bill to put specific dates that CDOT could only require adequate traction during icy or snow packed conditions from October through May, and to clarify in the legislative preamble that checkpoints were not part of the bill's intent. *continued on page 2*

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The act uses formula funds “to improve the movement of freight on the NHFN.” In addition the act creates a \$800 million per year Nationally Significant Freight and Highway Projects Program which is scheduled to grow to \$1 billion by 2020. This program will provide grants to highway, bridge, rail-grade crossing, intermodal and freight rail projects costing more than \$100 million. The program allows up to \$500 million to be allocated to freight rail and/or intermodal projects.

National Highway Freight Network (NHFN) in Colorado

- Rural Freight Corridors
 - No more than 150 miles in Colorado
- Urban Freight Corridors
 - No more than 75 miles in Colorado
- Any portion of the interstate system not included above
- Colorado is a “low primary highway freight system mileage” state and will be eligible to use funds for projects on any component of the NHFN and not just the PHFN.

Federal grants under this program may not exceed 60%. Other Federal assistance may be used to satisfy the non-federal (40%) share of a project except that the total Federal assistance may not exceed 80% of the total project cost.

Next month we will look at the planning and environmental sections of the FAST Act. For more information on federal funding, contact CDOT’s Federal Liaison, Ron Papsdorf at Ron.papsdorf@state.co.us.

The Heat Was On

During the 2015 holiday season, the Colorado Department of Transportation, Colorado State Patrol and local law enforcement agencies teamed up for two “The Heat Is On” DUI enforcement periods in December. From December 4th to the 14th, 91 statewide law enforcement agencies participated in the Holiday Party enforcement period and arrested 596 impaired drivers. The New Year’s DUI enforcement began two weeks later—from December 30th through January 4th, with 104 law enforcement agencies arresting 396 drivers. A combined 992 Colorado drivers were arrested for impaired driving during the two enforcement phases.

The New Year’s DUI enforcement marked the final installment of “The Heat Is On” campaign in 2015. CDOT, CSP and the local agencies led 12 enforcement periods in 2015 and arrested 7,376 impaired drivers, a decrease from the 7,825 arrests in 2014.

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House Bill 16-1008 (Allowing Bus on Shoulder). CDOT’s bill to allow buses to drive on the shoulder of a highway passed the House Transportation Committee with a strong 11-2 bipartisan vote. The sponsor amended the bill to include language that clarifies bus drivers have the ability to determine whether they drive on the shoulders or not, which alleviated the Regional Transportation District (RTD) Drivers Union’s concerns. CDOT will continue to push the bill through the process quickly in order to get the RTD buses on US 36 rolling.

If you have any questions on these or any other legislative issues, please contact Andy Karsian at 303-757-9073. Weekly memos and our bill tracking chart are available online at: <http://www.coloradodot.info/about/governmentrelations/state-government-liaison>.