



Legislative Wrap-Up

Last month, the 2017 legislative session came to an end. The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) followed more than 50 pieces of legislation that impacted the department. Department priorities included legislation on autonomous vehicles and various bills that made Colorado's



roads safer. From the beginning of the 120 day legislative session, political leaders from both sides of the aisle pronounced that aged highways and congested roads harm Colorado's future and showed their concern that funding for transportation was one of the highest priorities for the General Assembly.

Legislators introduced five funding bills concerning transportation funding and/or including state budgetary matters and supplementary funding for other CDOT programs. Of the five bills, two generated the most interest and optimism, House Bill (HB) 17-1242 and Senate Bill (SB) 17-267. These two bills traveled very different paths towards the goal of additional funding for roads.

Legislators had other policy issues to solve this session and SB 17-267 allowed them to address some of the most pressing problems in rural health care and education funding along with transportation. The bill instructs the state treasurer to leverage \$1.8B worth of state buildings for certificates of participation to use on state highway projects beginning in 2018. Leadership in both chambers hammered out a compromise that allowed majorities in both parties to support SB 17-267 which the Governor recently signed it into law. CDOT will work with planning partners to identify projects for the \$1.8B, of which 25% must be used in rural areas around the state. *cont on page 2*

Transportation Summit

Registration is now open for the 2017 Colorado Transportation Summit. This will be the 4th iteration of this popular meeting that brings together state and civic leaders with the business community and transportation industry to talk about transportation in Colorado. The 2017 Summit will be held on Monday October 23rd at the Hyatt Regency-Denver Convention Center Hotel. This is a change of venue from the last 2 years and will give us enough space to almost double our attendance.



This year the Colorado Department of Transportation is teaming up with the Transit Alliance to bring together an even wider audience to discuss this important topic. Recently the American Road and Transportation Builders of America (ARTBA) Western Regional meeting decided to join with the Summit as well, further expanding the base of knowledge and breadth of subject matter experts that will be in attendance.

For more information on the Summit contact Thomas Lorz at (303) 757-9084 and be sure to visit our website www.codot.gov/summit.

Legislative Wrap upcont from page 1

The SB 17-267 funds are a small down payment on CDOT's ongoing \$1B annual funding deficit. The new funds will allow the department to address some critical projects and CDOT will continue to educate and advocate for the funding needed to address all of our state's needs in the future.

Other important transportation related measures that passed during the legislative session included bills on autonomous vehicles, a move over law and strengthening texting and driving prohibitions. Stay tuned to Interchange in the coming months as we take an in depth look at each of these important changes to Colorado transportation related laws.

Upcoming Legislative Closer Looks

<u>July</u>	<u>Autonomous Vehicles</u>
<u>August</u>	<u>Move Over</u>
<u>September</u>	<u>Texting and Driving</u>

For questions or more information on State legislative issues contact Andy Karsian, CDOT Legislative Liaison at 303-757-9703.

CDOT Heroes

When a fuel tanker caught fire on I-25 near Orchard around noon on Wednesday, May 31, two CDOT employees— driving the highway inspecting for potholes and debris—rushed to help the driver and stop traffic. Matt Bell and Richard Smith, CDOT maintenance employees covering the South Metro Denver area, were the first on scene.

"We saw smoke in the distance and thought it may have been a blown out tire," Smith said. "It wasn't until we were able to get closer that we realized the seriousness of the situation and ran to help. Bell was the one to run to the driver, and I helped set up traffic control to stop vehicles from passing the fire." When asked what compelled them to put their own safety on the line, Bell replied, "That's what all our crews are trained to do." He said everyone on the road was a hero and does not want the spotlight to be on just the two men. "I would just hope that someone would do the same for me," Bell said.



Matt Bell, Shailen Bhatt and Richard Smith

CDOT's goal is to save lives and make people's lives better. Nearly 100 crew members from both CDOT and contractor partners Brannan Sand and Gravel, Alpha Milling Company and Kraemer, were out working diligently to repair the roadway to make I-25 safe, and to have it open by rush hour.

"What Matt and Richard did was truly heroic," said Shailen Bhatt, CDOT executive director. "They went above and beyond our safety values. Truly, all of our crew members who were out on the roadway last night into the early morning demonstrated determination and a high regard for the people of Colorado's lives."