



COLORADO

Department of Transportation

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DATE: February 8, 2019
TO: Transportation Commissioners, Executive Director, Executive Management Team, Branch Managers, and Office Directors
FROM: Andy Karsian, Office of Policy & Government Relations
RE: Legislative Update

A quieter week for transportation under the dome. Legislators continue to work through a variety of issues impacting the state, health insurance costs, land use notifications, and budget supplemental bills took up most of the debate this week. Once the Joint Budget Committee passes the supplemental bills, the committee dives deep into setting budget amounts for the state departments. Transportation, of course, will be on the committee members' minds, however, until the budget forecast arrives in March, the conversations will be about what people want and then the members will see what they can do with the March numbers showing the amount of money available for distribution.

Legislation

As of today, CDOT is tracking 17 bills for possible direct or indirect impacts to CDOT, its employees, and the state's transportation network. Below are summaries of a few bills introduced or heard this week.

Senate Bill 19-012 (Use of Mobile Electronic Devices While Driving):

This bill addresses the growing number of crashes resulting from distracted drivers. It prohibits drivers from using a mobile electronic device (i.e mobile phone) in their hand. During the last week stakeholders and legislators met to discuss a possible compromise in moving the bill forward out of committee. The latest version still has a total ban on using 'mobile electronic devices' for drivers younger than 18 years old, and a ban from holding a device in an adult driver's hand while operating a vehicle. The fines were reduced and a categorized as a traffic offense instead of a misdemeanor. The penalties for texting while driving remain the same at \$300.

Senate Bill 19-017 (Requirements for CDOT Land Acquisition):

This bill stems from the Colorado Supreme Court's decision that said the Transportation Commission must approve all of CDOT's land acquisitions. Statute says the Transportation Commission and the Chief Engineer may approve acquisitions. Prior to the decision the Chief Engineer approved the acquisitions. The bill clarifies that instead of all of the acquisition approvals, the Chief Engineer may approve those acquisitions that involve willing sellers and the Transportation Commission will approve those that involve condemnation. It passed out of the Senate Transportation committee unanimously, as well as the Appropriations committee. With the unanimous vote, it was placed on the consent calendar and will pass early next week and head over the House.

Senate Bill 19-125 (Budget Supplemental for Dept of Transportation)

Late in the session last year, the legislature passed SB-1, which dedicated funding for statewide transportation projects. This budget supplemental, SB-125, allocates that funding to the newly created Multimodal Transportation Options Fund. In total, \$71.75 million will go into the MTOF. Most of the funding, 85% is pass through dollars sent to local government projects. SB-125 passed the Senate unanimously. There may be some political pushback from House Republicans who voted against SB-1 last year, however, the bill should pass the House quickly along with the other supplemental bills.

