



COLORADO

Department of Transportation

Office of Policy and Government Relations

2829 W. Howard Place, Suite 562
Denver, CO 80204

DATE: March 1, 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

The session is halfway through. There are three more weeks before the Joint Budget Committee introduces the state budget, the so-called Long Bill. Legislators race to get their bills heard and through their chambers' various committees before the budget bill passes. Legislation that carries a fiscal note, i.e. a budget impact, should pass before the budget since after the Long Bill passes, there is no more money to use. Therefore, there will be a strong push to get legislation passed in the next three weeks.

Legislation

As of today, CDOT is tracking 23 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.

House Bill 19-1157 (Specific Ownership Tax):

This bill modifies the specific ownership tax (SOT) which is part of the annual vehicle registration. After a number of years this tax decreases for older vehicles and revenue drops accordingly. This bill continues the SOT levels into future years so instead of declining the revenue grows as additional vehicles age to the point in the formula where this new delta of dedicated revenue begins to grow. This new funding is distributed through the existing HUTF formula for the state and local governments. Proponents bring this bill every year with the hope of creating a conversation around a new way of funding transportation; however, the existing SOT is dedicated to local governments and school districts and there is stiff opposition to the idea of 'co-opting' an existing local government revenue source that provides essential funds for municipalities statewide. Finally, this bill does not require voter to approve the new revenue, although in years past that was part of the legislation. The bill is calendared in the House Transportation committee, but it was laid over while the sponsor continues to work on getting the votes for it to move out of the committee.

House Bill 19-1209 (Obsolete Aeronautics Reporting):

CDOT's Division of Aeronautics and their board identified this reporting issue as a priority for the session. Currently outdated statutory language requires intrastate air carriers to report specific data to the Colorado Aeronautics Board. The Board has the ability to fine carriers that do not comply with the reporting requirements. The problem is, there are no pure intrastate air carriers anymore and all carriers report this information to the federal government as they are interstate carriers. Furthermore, the Board has no capacity to collect fines from carriers. This bill repeals this entire section of statute, removing the reporting requirement on air carriers and the need for the Colorado Aeronautics Board to collect it. The bill passed the House Business Affairs committee unanimously.

Senate Bill 19-101 (Prerequisites for Construction of Managed Lanes):

This bill required CDOT to consider a variety of options prior to building any future managed lanes. It also required the department to provide written minutes of all public outreach meetings concerning a future public private partnership and/or managed lane. Finally, additional reporting and a polling prior to finalizing projects were part of the bill. The proposed policy was duplicative under the existing NEPA process and existing reporting requirements and department public outreach efforts. The bill died in the Senate Transportation Committee.

