



COLORADO

Department of Transportation

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DATE: March 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 dramatic and emotional time passed at the Capitol this week. With the session halfway through, there are still many issues to resolve. The largest is passing a balanced budget. Another includes new transportation funding and policies that will be a major part of the legislators' conversation over the remaining 60 days.

Legislation

As of today, CDOT is tracking 26 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 19-1207 (Winter Conditions and Traction Control Requirements):

Every winter, highways around the state have vehicles that spin out or crash as a result of snowy weather and poor tire treads. Nowhere in the state is this impact felt more than along the I-70 mountain corridor between Morrison and Dotsero. This bill says passenger vehicles must have adequate tire treads or traction control devices during snowy and icy conditions on state highways. Vehicles will need to have tires with at least a 3/16" tread depth during snow events when CDOT declares traction law. If a vehicle's tread is not 3/16" then an approved traction control device must be used. If chain law is declared, every vehicle on the road needs to have a traction control device. The bill passed out of the House Transportation committee on a bipartisan 9-2 vote and passed the House on 2nd readings.

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

This bill clarifies a Colorado Supreme Court's decision that said the Transportation Commission must approve all of CDOT's land 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.

Senate Bill 19-032 (Hazardous Materials Transport Routing):

This bill would require CDOT to convene stakeholders to study what infrastructure projects would be necessary to allow hazardous fuel trucks to travel through the EJMT tunnel. The focus of the study would be to review work already done on this issue and quantify how much it would cost to mitigate the dangers of transporting fuel over these two roads.

House Bill 19- 1199 (Clean Pass Act)

In order to incentivize an increased electric vehicle (EV) market share, the Clean Pass Act allows qualified EVs to travel in express lanes with a 50% toll reduction. The EV owner pays a fee to be included in the program. Each vehicle has a three-year timeframe for reduced tolls and then either cycles off of the list or is sold to a new owner and the three-year clock begins again. The bill passed out of the House Transportation Committee on a party line vote. The next steps for the bill will be to the Finance and Appropriations committee.

