



COLORADO

Department of Transportation

Office of Policy and Government Relations

DATE: January 26, 2018
TO: Transportation Commissioners, Executive Director, Executive Management Team, Branch Managers, and Office Directors
FROM: Andy Karsian, Office of Policy & Government Relations
RE: Legislative Update

Overview

This was a very busy week for CDOT under the dome. Legislators have introduced 250 bills in the first two weeks leading to a busy committee schedule and busy beginning to the session. CDOT testified on three bills this week, one funding bill and two traffic safety bills (see below).

Legislation

As of today, CDOT is tracking 15 bills for possible direct or indirect impacts on CDOT, its employees, or the state's transportation network. Below are summaries of the few bills introduced or heard this week.

CDOT Legislative Agenda

Senate Bill 18-001 (Transportation Infrastructure Funding): The Senate Transportation Committee heard this bill on Tuesday this week. CDOT testified on the bill speaking to a variety of policy impacts the bill touches. Some of the points made included: a willingness to keep working with the sponsors on an approach towards transportation funding; the complexities around repealing the SB267 funding in favor of the 10% sales/use tax diversion for bonds; the needs for the Tier 1 Development list; and, the annual maintenance deficit. The committee approved four amendments, three, which did little to alter the original bill, and one that delves into how CDOT works with contractors on design build projects.

The bill passed out of committee on a party line vote, 3-2. It is heading to the Senate Finance committee next for the next round of debates. Even though the bill was heard quickly the sponsors have agreed to slow the pace of passage down so that stakeholders can have more conversations about transportation funding to determine if SB1 will be the vessel for a bipartisan solution or if there needs to be different bill introduced to accomplish that goal.

Senate Bill 18-054 (Primary Seat Belts Enforcement): The Senate State Affairs committee heard testimony on this bill Wednesday this week. Advocates, parents, crash survivors and many others filled the room. Testimony took more than two hours as witness after witness come to the table in support of the bill. At the end, after many emotional pleas for a stronger seatbelt law and many shed tears, it was not enough to convince all of the committee members and the bill died along a party line vote, 3-2.

CDOT will continue to work with stakeholders and other state departments to educate the public, legislators and political candidates as to the importance of this policy. Over the next year, working over the interim and a changing political environment will help in passing the bill.

House Bill 18-119 (Highway Building and Maintenance Funding): This bill is very similar to SB1 in that it diverts 7.5% of the general fund's sales and use tax revenues for transportation projects. The department could use the funding for bonding, if the voters approve the debt in 2018. If the ballot measure fails, the 7.5% allocation would still occur. In most ways, this bill mirrors SB1 especially after legislators amended SB1 in the Senate Transportation committee. The bill only has Republican sponsors, which complicates its path through the Democratic controlled House.

