



COLORADO

Department of Transportation

Office of Policy and Government Relations

DATE: March 30, 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 week was the first of two focused on the state budget. The House debated the budget first this year. The \$29B budget bill, known as the Long Bill, traditionally does not include much for transportation; however, every year legislators offer amendments during floor debate to take money away from one area to give money to highways. Ultimately few of these amendments are approved. There are additional budget bills introduced at this time. One such bill, HB1340, transfers general funds to transportation and generated significant debate during the late night House budget debate (see below). Next week the Senate will offer their amendments to the Long Bill and then the Joint Budget Committee determines which House and Senate amendments remain on the bill after the Senate passes the budget.

Legislation

As of today, CDOT is tracking 30 bills with direct or indirect impacts on the department, its employees, and the state's transportation network. Below are summaries of a few bills introduced or heard this week.

Senate Bill 18-001 (Transportation Infrastructure Funding): After delays and many negotiations, the Senate finally passed SB1 this week. In what may be considered an anticlimactic vote, the Senate unanimously passed the bill on Wednesday. The bill includes a \$500M million transfer to CDOT and protects one year of SB267 funding (\$380M). It also begins transferring \$250 million/year for twenty years to the state highway fund in 2020. This money can be used for maintenance or, if ballot measures are passed either in 2018 or 2019, the \$250 million will be used to bond \$3.5B. The language that hinders toll lane construction remains in the bill for now, and CDOT's remains strongly opposed to this language.

It is uncertain what the House will do with SB1 now that the House Democrats passed HB 1340. The Senate bill has never been popular in the House due to the amount of money dedicated to long term bonding and the belief the long term debt payments could impact education budgets in the future. It is possible that the House quietly kills SB1 in committee, amends the bill to fine tune the Senate's policy, or substantially amends the bill sending a very different version back to the Senate. No matter what the outcome, the future of the bill is uncertain.

House Bill 18-1340 (Funding for Statewide Infrastructure): This is a budget orbital bill, so named since it is tied to the state budget bill and introduced and debated at the same time. HB1340 provides funding for the \$100+ million for statewide capital construction projects. It also transfers \$495 million to transportation projects. The introduced bill transferred this money only to the state highway fund, but House members amended it to include a distribution of 50% to cities and counties, 35% to CDOT, and 15% to multimodal projects. The multimodal funding comes to CDOT for grant distribution for state and local transit projects. There are two funding streams in the multimodal funding, one dedicated to transportation options and another for pedestrian mobility projects. The bill now goes to the Senate for their input and amendments. It is expected the Senate will amend off the multimodal language and change the allocation to reduce the portion to transit in favor of more money for CDOT and local governments.

