



**DATE:** February 19, 2016  
**TO:** Transportation Commissioners, Executive Director, Executive Management Team, Branch Managers, and Office Directors  
**FROM:** Andy Karsian, Office of Policy & Government Relations  
**RE:** Weekly Legislative Report – 2016 Session of the Colorado General Assembly

---

## Overview

An exciting and busy week under the dome this week. First, congratulations to the seven Transportation Commissioners who appeared before the Senate Transportation Committee for their confirmation hearing. Every commissioner did an excellent job answering questions and providing their visions for the future of CDOT.

## Legislation

As of today CDOT is tracking 33 bills for possible direct or indirect impacts to its employees, or the state's transportation network. In the next few weeks legislators will vote on these bills while preparing to introduce the next round of legislation. Some bills heard this week include:

***Senate Bill 16-123 (Prohibit Switchable Transponders for HOV Lanes).*** This bill would prevent CDOT and HPTE from requiring switchable transponders in HOV lanes. The purpose of the bill is to promote free travel in HOV and HOT lanes for HOV vehicles. The problem is the bill does not take into consideration the ramifications of this policy change. Enforcement of HOV lanes would be challenging as cameras or law enforcement would need to verify HOV vehicles. Additionally, vehicles using the HOV lanes without transponders would be assessed a license plate toll since there is currently no other way to verify an HOV vehicle's occupants. The fiscal cost to the CDOT and HPTE would also be significant due to increased costs impacting the Plenary Roads US 36 contract, and absorbing the cost of more than 35,000 ordered transponders.

***Senate Bill 16-011 (Repeal FASTER Transit Funding)*** This bill sought to repeal the FASTER statutory language that allows \$15M for transit projects, and diverted this money to the FASTER safety road projects instead. The bill died in House Transportation Committee and CDOT testified in opposition. The loss of transit funding would have significantly impacted transit fleets across the state, as well as zeroed out all funding for Bustang.

***House Bill 16-1008 (Bus on Shoulder).*** The Senate Transportation Committee passed CDOT's priority bill for allowing buses to travel on highway shoulders. Currently, no highway except for US 36 is built to accommodate buses on the shoulder of the road, however, even with the shoulders, signage and striping a legislative exemption was necessary to allow the buses to pass slow moving traffic on the right, i.e. on the shoulder.

If you have any questions on these or any other legislative issues please contact Andy Karsian at 303-757-9073. Weekly memos and our bill tracking chart are available online at: <http://www.coloradodot.info/about/governmentrelations/state-government-liaison>.

