



COLORADO

Department of Transportation

Office of Policy and Government Relations

DATE: March 18, 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

It was a busy week down at the legislature. Legislators voted on two significant bills impacting CDOT, as well as passing a Department bill out of committee. Each of those bills are described in more detail below.

There are now 565 introduced bills to date, and 99 bills have died. As always, CDOT will continue to make sure the Department is at the table and working hard to ensure your voices are heard.

Legislation

As of today CDOT is tracking 38 bills for possible direct or indirect impacts to its employees, or the state's transportation network. Bills the Legislature heard, or introduced, this week include:

Senate Bill 16-123 (Switchable Transponders on HOV Lanes). The Senate had a spirited debate about HOV policy in the state this week. The introduced version of this bill prevented CDOT from using switchable transponders on HOV lanes. The bill was amended in committee to include language allowing motorcycles to travel free in HOV lanes. When Senators debated the bill on the floor, however, the conversations turned towards the transition from HOV2 to HOV3+ in 2017. Legislators expressed concern about the transition and amended the bill to prevent the switch until 2018. In addition, another amendment requires CDOT to repay the \$15 transponder costs, the fiscal impacts of this bill are around \$4M to \$10M depending on existing US 36 contract language. CDOT opposes the bill.

Senate Bill 16-122 (More Oversight for CDOT). This bill comes from the FASTER audit that found areas that CDOT could address to make processes and communication more transparent and available. The largest part of the bill requires the State Auditor to perform a risk based performance audit of the Department. This will not include the entire department, instead specific areas within the Department will be audited. The bill also provides for administrative processes, some new and some already in existence, which will provide the legislature, stakeholders and the Transportation Commission additional information. It passed out of the House Transportation Committee unanimously.

House Bill 16-1298 (Height, Weight Limits for Vehicles). This is a CDOT bill that codifies federal language from the FAST act in state statute. The bill also clarifies that CDOT is able to publish a map that designates the bridges under 14'6" instead of all the bridges at or above this height. This will allow for a much clearer map for freight haulers in the state. The bill passed the House Transportation Committee 11-1.

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>.

