



COLORADO

Department of Transportation

Office of Policy and Government Relations

DATE: March 24, 2017
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 - 2017 Session of the Colorado General Assembly

Overview

The 120 day session is more than halfway through and this week was a busy week for CDOT under the dome. Transportation funding, texting while driving, autonomous vehicles, statutory reports and the contracting process were all topics of conversation either in committee or in meetings. Along with busier days, this time of year heralds the long bill, which is the annual budget balancing legislation. It will be introduced next Monday in the Senate. While CDOT does not have a large portion of the General Fund budget, there are always amendments offered in the House and Senate that can limit or harm CDOT funding or projects.

Legislation

As of today CDOT is tracking 43 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.

House Bill 17-1242 (New Transportation Infrastructure Funding Review). The House Transportation committee heard HB1242 this week in a marathon committee hearing. CDOT Director Shailen Bhatt testified in support of the bill and answered many difficult questions about bonding, project lists, and funding impacts from committee members. Local elected officials, former legislators, chambers of commerce and private citizens all came to testify, with some waiting more than seven hours for a chance to tell committee members about the importance of this bill. After testimony, members offered almost 20 amendments for the bill. The amendment impacting CDOT the most included an increase of \$75M to the sales tax funding CDOT will receive. This will defer some of the negative fiscal impacts of the bill from the loss of SB228 funds, and vehicles registration fees. The committee exempted aviation fuel from the sales tax increase and also repealed all of the FASTER late fees. This is just the first step of a long journey for the bill with the next step in the House Finance committee.

CDOT Position: Support

Senate Bill 17-213 (Autonomous Vehicles). This bill got through the Senate this week on a close bipartisan vote. On the Senate floor the members approved an amendment that requires companies to get approval from the State Patrol and CDOT before testing any vehicles that cannot adhere to all traffic laws. The prior language only required companies to collaborate with the department and State Patrol. The opposition to the bill is not centered on the actual language of the bill, but rather the impacts on and disruption of the future workforce as a result of the coming technology.

CDOT Position: Pending

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 is also [available online](#).

