



BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL

Infrastructure Media Summary

February 23, 2017

Committee OKs Indy Mass Transit Proposal

Inside Indiana Business

Dan McGowan

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INDIANAPOLIS - A proposal to fund a mass transit expansion in Marion County has been approved by the City-County Council's Rules and Public Policy Committee. The measure involves an income tax increase and now heads to the full council. Proposal 3 is slated for a final vote with the council Monday. In November, voters approved a referendum to pay for expanded public transportation with a 0.25 percent income tax increase. IndyGo, the city and county's mass transit corporation, says the Marion County Transit Plan would create shorter wait times, extend weekend and late night operations and include investments in new equipment and rapid transit lines. The committee cleared the proposal by a 5-2 vote.

<http://www.insideindianabusiness.com/story/34566677/committee-oks-indy-mass-transit-proposal>

Tribune-Star Editorial: Spread burden on infrastructure repair

Tribune Star

2/22/17

Take a drive on Interstate 70 and count the "thumps" as your vehicle motors along. Walk under an aging bridge in your home county. Hoosiers know the roads and infrastructure in Indiana sorely need repairs, sustained upkeep and modernization. As has been noted repeatedly, a state that bills itself as the "Crossroads of America" loses credibility when lumpy asphalt patches hold those roads together. Revitalization is necessary to keep existing business, attract new employers and employees, and keep current residents' cars and trucks from being shaken apart. Such a project will be expensive, but the costs should not inordinately fall on the backs of working-class Hoosiers. Senators and representatives in the Indiana General Assembly should adjust their funding plans for road improvements so the financial responsibility is shared. Corporations have benefited from numerous tax cuts during recent years. Other tax cuts affecting inheritances, financial institutions and personal income have primarily benefited the wealthy. Those tax cuts have eliminated \$600 million in state revenue in the past five years, according to an Indianapolis Star report. The conservative philosophy of lowering corporate taxes to spur business activity is well understood in Indiana. Such policies have prevailed as a top priority since former Gov. Mitch Daniels took office in 2005, beginning an era of Republican control of the Statehouse that continues today. As a result, companies operating on Hoosier soil enjoy a low-tax, low-regulation atmosphere. That business-friendly climate's benefit to average working Hoosiers is not direct. Employment levels are high and incomes have improved, but Indiana per-capita incomes ranked 36th nationally in U.S. Department of Commerce figures released last year. The poverty rate is the country's 16th highest, according to the Kaiser Family Foundation.

<http://www.tribstar.com/opinion/editorials/tribune-star-editorial-spread-burden-on-infrastructure->

[repair/article_3c85dac7-2507-5c68-886a-b58bd3e7ddca.html](http://www.wishtv.com/2017/02/21/governor-holcomb-speaking-at-build-indiana-road-funding-day-event/)

Holcomb speaks at Build Indiana Road Funding Day event

WISH-TV

2/21/17

INDIANAPOLIS (WISH) — Gov. Holcomb spoke Tuesday morning at an event designed to push for road funding across Indiana. The Build Indiana Council, a coalition representing the transportation construction industry, hosted the Road Funding Day event from 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the downtown Marriott. The Indiana Department of Transportation says a billion dollars a year will be needed for road repairs around the state. Now lawmakers are trying to figure out how to pay for it. Gov. Holcomb addressed attendees at the event: “I am wide open to a wide range of options, quite frankly, to ensure revenue keeps with increased demand and need. The bottom line is you get what you pay for, and you get what you don’t pay for. And a number of ideas have been floated.” Republicans presented a plan that would increase the gas tax by 10 cents, as well as create annual vehicle fees. The House passed that bill last week. Democrats introduced their own plan, which did not include a tax increase. The Senate is scheduled to discuss the road funding proposal in March. <http://wishtv.com/2017/02/21/governor-holcomb-speaking-at-build-indiana-road-funding-day-event/>

Mass transit advocates push to increase state funding

WISH-TV

2/21/17

Howard Monroe

INDIANAPOLIS (WISH) — The debate over expanding mass transit hit the statehouse Tuesday as part of Transit Day. The state currently spends \$44 million on mass transit. Advocates want that funding to be increased to \$60 million. Advocates met with lawmakers to discuss funding options. There are four pieces of legislation being debated on mass transit. That includes House Bill 1001 which would increase the Public Mass Transit Fund to \$60 million. That money would be divided among the 64 mass transit systems in the state. The reason why this bill is so critical is because it’s the state budget. Despite the improvements that could be made to mass transit with increased funding, advocates acknowledge they’re in an uphill battle. “It’s not going to be easy, I would say that it’s going to be a tough sell to Hoosiers,” said Mayor Andy Cook of Westfield. “We don’t really like mass transit because it sounds like NJ. We like to drive our cars. Advocates say current systems aren’t granting enough access. “When we continue to not invest in it at the level that’s needed and at a level that has not kept pace with demand we’re short changing not just individual people, but our communities as whole,” said Kim Irwin of Indiana Citizens’ Alliance for Transit. INDOT Commissioner Joe McGuinness met with the advocates, but appeared to be more committed to finding a way to fund the state’s roads. “We have to plan for 20 years down the road, many of these bridges for example, we have 5600 bridges that INDOT is responsible for and about 45 percent of those bridges right now are about 50 years of life,” he said. <http://wishtv.com/2017/02/21/mass-transit-advocates-push-to-increase-state-funding/>

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