



# **BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL**

## **Infrastructure Media Summary**

**March 1, 2016**

### **Foes try to puncture Red Line claims**

Indianapolis Star  
John Tuohy  
3/1/16

Opponents of the city's proposed Red Line bus rapid transit system have mounted an information counteroffensive. The latest salvo is a study Red Line foes commissioned that asserts ridership on the electric bus system would be unlikely to be as high as transportation planners predict and would slow down thousands more drivers than the number of bus passengers it would help. The study, by a researcher at the Cato Institute, a libertarian think tank in Washington, D.C., questions many claims of Red Line proponents about how many riders will take the buses, how much economic activity they will generate around the route and how much they will ease traffic congestion. Cato senior fellow Randal O'Toole says too few jobs exist Downtown to make the line cost efficient. He said the city would be better served by running standard, gas-powered buses more frequently than investing millions of dollars into new electric buses, station platforms and dedicated lanes. "If you don't have at least 80,000 to 100,000 jobs in the downtown business district, I don't recommend spending very much at all on mass transit," O'Toole said. About 73,000 people work in Downtown Indianapolis, 8 percent of the metropolitan Indianapolis workforce, said O'Toole, citing figures gathered by urban planner Wendell Cox of St. Louis. That number is much fewer than cities with advanced mass transportation systems. Chicago, for example, has 500,450 downtown jobs. Philadelphia has 239,625, according to Cox's data. But Cox admittedly uses a "tighter" definition of central business districts than some other economic analysts. Steve Lamont, senior vice president for Commercial Real Estate Services said the number of full-time jobs in what Indianapolis considers downtown — a 4 square mile area — is 134,000. An additional 137,000 jobs are within a half-mile of the Red Line, said Sean Northrup, assistant executive director at the Metropolitan Planning Organization.

<http://www.indystar.com/story/news/2016/02/28/foes-try-puncture-red-line-claims/80931050/>

### **EDITORIAL: Lawmakers must show fortitude in road-funding fix**

NWI Times  
2/28/16

One theme should rise to the top of the Indiana General Assembly's final leg of this legislative session: Don't play kick the can down the crumbling roads of Indiana. The can is likely to get stuck in a pothole anyhow. A crucial plan to provide a long-term, sustainable funding source for repairing and maintaining Hoosier highways and byways appears stranded in an Indianapolis committee, and it has nothing to do with the road-strangling blizzard the Region just experienced. Late last week, we learned the author of that plan, Indiana House Rep. Ed Soliday, R-Valparaiso, took steps to keep it alive, moving the plan into a roads bill originally championed by Gov. Mike Pence. The crucial difference between the two plans is that Pence's original proposal would have

included borrowing money to tackle \$1 billion in investments to our deteriorating roadways. Soliday's plan, now part of the Pence bill, would free up more gas sales tax money for roads while adding an additional \$1-per-pack cigarette tax to make up for Medicaid's portion of the sales tax, which would be flowing to roads. Soliday said he made the change because he expects his original bill, House Bill 1001, will undergo "significant surgery" in a Senate committee Thursday, and he wanted to keep the House provisions alive. "We need this in order for the process to work and to make sure we have all the pieces on the table," Soliday said. "This is one step in a process that will become more intense over the next seven to eight days." The real question is why there is any question at all.

[http://www.nwitimes.com/news/opinion/editorial/editorial-lawmakers-must-show-fortitude-in-road-funding-fix/article\\_d1424d20-63f7-5335-9a1e-ca48079e6729.html](http://www.nwitimes.com/news/opinion/editorial/editorial-lawmakers-must-show-fortitude-in-road-funding-fix/article_d1424d20-63f7-5335-9a1e-ca48079e6729.html)

## **Mega Transportation Bill Moves Ahead With Tweaks**

Inside INdiana Business

Dan McGowan

2/25/16

INDIANAPOLIS- A massive transportation bill has unanimously cleared the Senate Appropriations Committee with some major changes. The committee approved a slate of amendments offered by Chair Luke Kenley (R-20), which include removing a proposed gas sales tax increase and indexing that would've gone with it. The changes also cut a tolling feasibility study for Interstates 65, 70, and 80/94. House Bill 1001 heads to the full Senate. Kenley's amendments also trim out income tax reductions that were added by the House the first time through. The amended version of the bill also includes a \$50 supplemental registration fee for hybrid vehicles. Senator Karen Tallian (D-4) says the bill has some good points, but doesn't go far enough to address local road funding needs, which she says we need "right now." Tallian did laud the idea of removing the tax cuts and pointed to additional tax breaks not included in this bill that she feels should be nixed. The bill's author is Representative Ed Soliday (R-4). He also chairs the House Transportation Committee and calls the amended bill a "solid building block" for what will be a highly scrutinized piece of legislation. Soliday says he never imagined a catch-all bill could be crafted in one session. He adds that he believes more discussion on road and bridge funding will go on beyond the next two years. The bulk of the funding will come from state budgetary reserves. A bump in the state's cigarette tax to nearly \$2 would also be used to pay for improvements. <http://www.insideindianabusiness.com/story/31304245/lechleiter-talent-is-everything> Also, <http://www.journalgazette.net/news/local/indiana/Senate-GOP-offers-road-funding-compromise-11695400>