



BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL

Infrastructure Media Summary

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EDITORIAL: Senate must not stall long-term road funding

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Editorial Board
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Hoosiers are all-too familiar with the figurative sound of clinking as legislators annually kick the can of long-term infrastructure funding down our pothole-ridden state highways. The Indiana House recently made an effort to stop the futile game by passing a long-term revenue plan for improving and maintaining our vital state road infrastructure. Now it's in the hands of the Indiana Senate, and they would do well to remember the bumpy road traveled to get this far and the cost of not completing the journey. In particular, Indiana Senate President David Long said last week that the House-approved gas tax and other hikes to pay for highway infrastructure likely will face a bumpier road in the Senate. Long acknowledged he agrees the state must raise about \$1 billion annually to meet the needs of long-term highway and road bridge funding. But he said the Senate is not yet committed to House Bill 1002's plan, sponsored by Valparaiso Republican Rep. Ed Soliday, to raise fuel taxes by 10 cents per gallon, pave the way for possible tolling on interstate highways and shift all gasoline sales tax revenue to roads. "How we pay for this is still very fluid," Long said. "We really haven't had much of a chance to weigh in on the actual specifics." Long also said he's skeptical of a bill that would hike the cigarette tax by \$1 per pack to cover \$300 million in revenue that would be shifted from the gas tax to roads.

http://www.nwitimes.com/news/opinion/editorial/editorial-senate-must-not-stall-long-term-road-funding/article_9f72aac5-efec-5747-8687-4d753bed3d62.html

Road funding, pre-K remain legislative puzzles

Indianapolis Star
Kaitlin L. Lange
3/4/17

The marquee issues of road funding, pre-kindergarten expansion and vaping regulation will remain center stage as the Indiana General Assembly heads into the second half of this year's legislative session, but not all the major actors are on the same page. Differences between Republican leaders in the GOP-dominated House and Senate will need to be resolved before the session ends in late April if any of these issues are to result in key legislation this year. Senate Republican leaders have indicated they have concerns about the House's plan to fund roads. GOP House leaders plan to rely on a number of methods to generate the estimated \$1.2 billion needed to pay for road upkeep and new construction. In addition to raising gasoline taxes by 10 cents a gallon, the House plan also would immediately direct all gas tax funding toward roads instead of allowing some of it to continue to go to the general fund. This move leaves a hole in the general fund, which lawmakers say needs to be filled. House Republicans proposed a \$1-per-pack cigarette tax increase to cover the loss.

<http://www.indystar.com/story/news/politics/2017/03/04/road-funding-pre-k-remain-legislative-puzzles/98697146/>

State, Local Split Of Road Money Unlikely To Change

WBOI

Brandon Smith

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Nearly 90 percent of Indiana's roads are maintained by counties, cities and towns, yet those local units get less than half of the state's primary road funding dollars. And that's unlikely to change in this session's road funding plan. All fuel tax dollars go into the state's Motor Vehicle Highway Fund, as does a percentage of the sales tax on fuel. And under the House GOP road funding plan, money from a new \$150 electric car registration fee would also flow into that fund. From there, the fund splits in two – 53 percent going to state roads, 47 percent going to local roads. House Roads Committee Chair Rep. Ed Soliday (R-Valparaiso) says, while locals manage a much larger number of lane miles, the state has bigger costs. "The heaviest expense is I-65, 80-94 and 70 just because of the wear," Soliday says. Senate Appropriations Committee Chair Sen. Luke Kenley (R-Noblesville) says he's not inclined to change the split. He says local units may use those dollars for things other than road maintenance. "I would be concerned about putting a heavy percentage of that in there when it's not going to go into the roads," Kenley says. The Senate now has control of the road funding plan as the second half of session begins.

<http://wboi.org/post/state-local-split-road-money-unlikely-change#stream/0>

Swarens: Fishers' forward-thinking transit skeptic

Indianapolis Star

Tim Swarens

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Scott Fadness talks a lot about the future. About the future of Fishers, the city he leads as mayor. About the future of Central Indiana. About the future of economic development on the cusp of what likely are to be revolutionary changes in manufacturing, logistics and retail. So the forward-thinking chief executive of a fast-growing, traffic-choked suburb must be on board with building the region's future transportation network around mass transit. Right? Wrong. Fadness is a full-fledged transit skeptic — at least when it comes to meeting the needs of suburban communities such as Fishers. He argues instead that self-driving vehicles, along with shared ride services such as Uber and Lyft, will deliver transformative changes in how Americans get from Point A to X. And do so at far less expense to taxpayers than costly rail or bus lines. "I don't want to be the guy who bought the billion-dollar VCR right before DVDs came out," he said over root beer and Pepsi this past week at Four Day Ray in downtown Fishers. Fadness' hesitancy to sink tax dollars into transit lines fits with his city's two-step approach to economic and community development. The first step centers on helping entrepreneurs launch startup businesses. ("New companies create the most jobs," Fadness said). And the second is to foster a high quality of life — by investing in strong neighborhoods, parks, trails and other amenities — that keeps those new business owners and their employees living and playing in Fishers. That strategy of self-containment makes sense for those who can work near home. But by foregoing transit is Fadness sending an unintended message to workers whose offices are in Indy that Fishers isn't for them? "No, not necessarily," he said. "If we can reduce traffic on I-69 from Fishers to Indy by 20 percent because more people are staying here to work, then everybody wins."

<http://www.indystar.com/story/opinion/columnists/tim-swarens/2017/03/03/swarens-fishers-forward-thinking-transit-skeptic/98653500/>

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