



BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL

Infrastructure Media Summary

September 17, 2013

Shutdown of Amtrak line threatens to derail business at repair facility

Post-Tribune

Matt Mikus

9/14/13

BEECH GROVE — As Indiana officials ponder whether to spend \$3 million a year to keep Amtrak's Hoosier State service alive, the railroad wants them to keep something in mind. That would be the workers at Amtrak's repair facility in Beech Grove, on the south side of Indianapolis. Congress in 2008 passed a law requiring states to provide financial support for Amtrak routes shorter than 750 miles. So now, the Indiana Department of Transportation must decide if it will chip in at least \$3 million annually, and it must decide by the end of September. Without that support, the Hoosier State, which runs four days a week between Indianapolis and Chicago, will be shut down. "Our position on this is that we've not been interested in investing in this solely, but if communities along the path are interested in investing in this, it's a possibility," said Will Wingfield, a spokesman for the Indiana Department of Transportation. INDOT officials have been meeting with communities along the Hoosier State corridor for the past week, and many in those areas have shown interest in contributing to keep the line, Wingfield said. The state transportation department will release a study on potential changes to improve the Hoosier State, but Wingfield was unsure when the study would be available. INDOT could also invest additional money in the railroad, possibly increasing frequency or adding amenities like food or wireless Internet. Magliari said the choice on how to find the money is up to the state. "We don't go to the states and tell them, find the money here or there," Magliari said. "We work with the states to craft the service they want." And this is a service the state should want, if it is serious about promoting economic growth, said U.S. Rep. Pete Visclosky, D-Ind., whose district is served by the line. The future of transit in Northwest Indiana must include more options like the Hoosier State. "I'm disappointed anytime there's a possibility of the loss of public transportation assets," Visclosky said Saturday. "In the future I believe we're going to see more intercity-interurban rail line instead of less." [Shutdown of Amtrak line threatens to derail business at repair facility - Post-Tribune](#)

Official: Bridge repair choices seem arbitrary, unfair

NWI Times

Dan Carden

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INDIANAPOLIS | A region state senator is questioning why Indiana seems willing to spend money on expensive bridge and road projects across the state, but wouldn't pay to replace the Cline Avenue Bridge in East Chicago. State Sen. Lonnie Randolph, D-East Chicago, said recently the 2011 decision by the Indiana Department of Transportation to have a private company rebuild Cline and turn it into a toll bridge smacks of Indianapolis-centered elitism. "We should not have to have them think twice about rebuilding Cline Avenue, because all the tax dollars that they collect

here go down to Indianapolis to help grow and build Indianapolis," Randolph said. Randolph said lawmakers have, for decades, redirected billions in tax revenue collected from large Northwest Indiana companies and their employees to pay for improvements in other parts of the state. That doesn't even count the higher tolls region residents will pay as part of the 2006 lease of the Indiana Toll Road to a private company for the next 75 years, he said. In the past five years, using mostly Toll Road lease funds, Indiana spent \$7.1 billion on road construction projects, including \$700 million to build 67 miles of Interstate 69 from Evansville to Crane; \$423 million to widen Interstate 465 around Indianapolis and \$187 million to widen the Borman Expressway. INDOT also has rehabilitated or replaced 615 of the 5,300 state-maintained bridges, or nearly 12 percent, since 2006, according to the agency — but not Cline Avenue. The projected cost to replace the Cline Avenue Bridge was \$150 million but federal funds would have covered most of that, leaving the state to pay just \$30 million. "Why can't you utilize the same tax dollars to do the same thing for Northwest Indiana?" Randolph asked. When the region needs a hand to rebuild a key connection to Chicago, it instead gets slapped down — even as the region is poised for tremendous growth in commerce, shipping and other industries, Randolph said. [Official: Bridge repair choices seem arbitrary, unfair : Elections](#)

Final Bridge Section Set For Demolition

Inside INdiana Business

9/13/13

Louisville, Kentucky -- The final 600-foot section of the 84-year-old Milton-Madison Bridge is scheduled to be demolished early next week. Project officials urge caution for spectators viewing the event, as well as for residents and businesses in downtown Milton. Weather permitting, the 600-foot-long section will be demolished at approximately 9:00 a.m. on Sept 17. Because of the span's proximity to downtown Milton, those in homes and businesses in the area are being asked to stay indoors starting at 8:45 a.m. until after the blast. Walsh Construction plans to distribute informational flyers to all impacted businesses and residents within the 1,000-foot safety perimeter. Spectators must remain outside the safety perimeter, which will be strictly enforced by law enforcement officials. The new bridge will close at approximately 9:00 a.m. and is expected to reopen to traffic at or before 11:00 a.m. River traffic will be closed starting at approximately 9:00 a.m. and will reopen shortly after the blast. Recreational boaters are required to stay 1,000 feet from the bridge during the blast. An FAA no-fly zone of 2,000 feet will be in effect prior to and during the blast. Once the safety perimeter is secured, sirens will sound at 10-, five- and one-minute intervals prior to the blast. Pieces of the truss will be retrieved from the river, dismantled and sold for scrap. Once the old truss is completely removed, the original piers will be widened to accommodate the new 40-foot-wide bridge which is currently on temporary piers. The final step comes later this year, when the new bridge will be slid onto the renovated original piers. [Final Bridge Section Set For Demolition - Newsroom - Inside INdiana Business with Gerry Dick](#)

U.S. 231 bypass open: 'Wow. We really did it'

Journal and Courier

Chris Morisse Vizza

9/13/13

After decades of planning and waiting for funding, and two years of construction, drivers have a four-lane, limited access road to avoid downtown congestion and get around the west side of West Lafayette. Roughly 100 people applauded as West Lafayette Mayor John Dennis, Purdue University President Mitch Daniels and many other state and local officials cut the ribbon on the new U.S. 231 segment from South River Road to U.S. 52. "Having this bypass allows us to have truck traffic move outside the city limits," Dennis said. "This artery will provide safe, efficient transportation, and will also bring economic development to our community." By relocating the traffic on U.S. 231 away from its former route on Northwestern Avenue, Daniels said the campus will become more vibrant and much safer.

"Lives will be saved," said Daniels. "We'll never know the names, and we'll never know when someone would have been lost under the old conditions. But it is statistically certain. ..." The five-mile section of the \$46 million road was financed in 2011 through Major Moves, then-Gov. Daniels' initiative to lease the Indiana Toll Road and use those revenues to fund big-ticket projects, such as the U.S. 231 bypass and the Hoosier Heartland Highway, due to be completed this fall between Lafayette and Fort Wayne.

<http://www.jconline.com/article/20130913/NEWS/309130015/U-S-231-bypass-open-Wow-We-really-did->

Toll Road to repair three ramp bridges

NWI Times

9/13/13

The Indiana Department of Transportation has approved Indiana Toll Road Concession Co. plans to rebuild three aging ramp bridges within the footprint of the Lake Station interchange, where the Indiana Toll Road, the Borman Expressway and Ind. 51 converge. That project calls for upgrading current bridge decks, according to Ryan Olsen, infrastructure program director with Indiana Toll Road Concession Co. This construction will cause traffic to be rerouted at the Borman's milepost 17, the Gary east interchange, Olsen said. ITRCC wants to start the project with bidding in 2013 and have most of the work done in 2014, he said. Olsen said he anticipates the work completed by early to mid-2015. State Toll Road money would fund this project, which doesn't add any traffic capacity, Olsen said, but allows the bridges to be used through their 100-year lifespan. The complex dual interchange first opened to traffic in 1965. Construction will remove or replace the bridges' steel beams, railings and crumbling concrete deck. Portions of the existing abutments and vertical piers will be replaced or rehabilitated. The three bridges being replaced are a bridge on the westbound entry ramp over the Indiana Toll Road, a bridge on the westbound exit ramp over the Indiana Toll Road and a bridge over the Borman Expressway for the road interconnecting to the Indiana Toll Road. ITRCC operates and collects tolls on the 157-mile Indiana Toll Road under a 75-year lease with the Indiana Finance Authority. [Toll Road to repair three ramp bridges](#)

Visclosky: Don't wait to expand South Shore

Post-Tribune

Matt Mikus

9/12/13

PORTAGE — U.S. Rep. Pete Visclosky, D-Ind., said expanding commuter train service into Northwest Indiana will help attract young families to Indiana. During an Indiana General Assembly infrastructure summer study committee on Thursday, Visclosky stressed the importance of transit-oriented development to draw young professionals to the region. Visclosky cited a report by U.S. Public Interest Research Group, released in May, that showed people between 16 and 34 drove 23 percent fewer miles in 2009 than in 2001. He said young professionals are looking for mass transit options when they decide where to live. "Today, Lake County is fewer, poorer and older," Visclosky said. "We need connection through a meaningful mass transportation system in Northwest Indiana. We need connection through the expansion of the South Shore Line." Northern Indiana Commuter Transportation District General Manager Gerald Hanas said rail services provide a pipeline for higher-income families who work in Chicago but spend money in Northwest Indiana. Jobs from the Chicago area pay 39 percent more than similar jobs in northern Indiana. The average annual household income of commuters on the South Shore is about \$82,000. Two proposed transit routes from NICTD were presented during the hearing. One would head south to Lowell, the other southwest to Valparaiso. [Visclosky: Don't wait to expand South Shore - Post-Tribune](#)

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