



BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL

Infrastructure Media Summary

October 30, 2014

State not panicking on toll road

Fort Wayne Journal Gazette
Associated Press
10/29/2014

A state official says no effort will be made at this time to reclaim the Indiana Toll Road from its private operator that filed for bankruptcy protection last month, despite calls from some Democratic lawmakers for such action. Indiana Public Finance Director Kendra York said in an Oct. 21 letter that the state didn't want to take over responsibility for running and maintaining the 157-mile road, the Times of Munster reported. York was responding to a request from Democratic U.S. Sen. Joe Donnelly that the Indiana Finance Authority should try to take the highway from Chicago-based ITR Concession Co. The finance authority, which owns the toll road, is controlled by appointees of Republican Gov. Mike Pence. York wrote that the state would now face spending far more than the \$68 million it did over the last two years when it ran the toll road. "In 2005, the year before the road was leased, the state of Indiana did not collect sufficient tolls to support basic road treatments, or repair the deteriorating conditions of the highway and bridges," she wrote. "These improvements could not have been undertaken within INDOT's budget without neglecting other parts of the state highway system."

<http://www.journalgazette.net/article/20141029/LOCAL06/310299938/1002/LOCAL>

Also <http://www.elkharttruth.com/news/indiana/2014/10/28/State-won-t-try-to-reclaim-Indiana-Toll-Road.html>

Also http://www.nwitimes.com/business/transportation/bankruptcy-judge-oks-toll-road-reorganization/article_94aea030-adb2-51d6-940e-976d9f1b8346.html

I-69 Private Developer Holds Open House To Answer Questions

Indiana Public Media
Casey Kuhn
10/29/2014

Monroe County residents still have plenty of questions about the construction and maintenance of Interstate 69, and last night they were able to get some of those questions answered. It was a packed house as Bloomington residents came to look at maps of what the interstate will look like when it's complete and ask questions about how it will be designed and managed. Right now the road is supposed to be open to Bloomington by the end of 2014 and to Martinsville by 2015. Gary Vandegriff is the operations and maintenance manager for the private developer I-69

Development Partners. He says in addition to actually building the road, his company is working with the Indiana Department of Transportation to coordinate everyday maintenance such as how to remove snow and fill potholes in a way that meets INDOT's standards. During the open house, I-69 DP employees also explained details about how Section 5 will be designed and landscaped.

<http://indianapublicmedia.org/news/i69-private-developer-holds-open-house-answer-questions->

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Indiana Chamber's agenda priorities include energy, water, preschool funding

The Elkhart Truth

Jeff Parrott

10/29/2014

Ensuring an adequate future water supply, funding preschool, protecting coal and eliminating the requirement that some small businesses file personal property tax returns will top the Indiana Chamber's priority list in next year's General Assembly, the group's leaders said Wednesday, Oct. 29, in Elkhart. Legalizing Sunday alcohol sales and allowing employers to screen applicants for tobacco use also will be key initiatives, Kevin Brinegar, president of the state business interest group, told chamber members from Elkhart and surrounding counties gathered in The Lerner Theatre's Crystal Ballroom. This will be a longer biennial budget session, running from early January through late April, with education issues expected to draw heavy debate, Brinegar said. The chamber's 2015 legislative priorities also include identifying ways to replace road construction dollars that have declined because of more fuel-efficient and alternative fuel vehicles on the road over the past decade. The Indiana Department of Transportation has projected a \$750 million maintenance and preservation shortfall over the next two years. Possibilities include dedicating more of sales tax from gasoline to the state highway fund rather than the general fund, increasing fuel taxes and levying a tax on the annual registration of alternative fuel vehicles. North Carolina last year implemented a new \$50 fee for hybrid vehicles and a \$100 fee for electric vehicles.

<http://www.elkharttruth.com/news/business/2014/10/29/Indiana-Chamber-s-agenda-priorities-include-energy-water-preschool-funding.html>

Session on public transportation brings call for regional cooperation

Merrillville Post-Tribune

Christin Nance Lazerus

10/29/2014

Frustration often bubbled to the surface during a public transportation hearing held by the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission on Wednesday afternoon, but the message was clear: the patchwork bus service currently available does not adequately meet the needs of residents, particularly for the disabled. NIRPC held the hearing — on the performance of current services and how future service could take shape — as part of a settlement agreement with disability advocacy group Everybody Counts. The settlement ended years of litigation in federal court. More than 50 people gathered at Wicker Park Social Center to discuss the issue. Currently, 10 transit agencies offer a mix of fixed route, complementary paratransit, and demand response services. NIRPC serves as a pass-through for seven transit agencies in Northwest Indiana, while three others receive federal money directly. Ridership is up in Lake, Porter and LaPorte counties, from 1,340,481 in 2012 to 1,442,632 in 2013. There have been several attempts to develop a regional transportation system, but the most prominent effort — the Regional Bus Authority — ran out of \$12.3 million in seed money from the RDA on June 30, 2012, after failing to find a permanent funding source. It ceased bus service, including operation of the Hammond Transit system.

<http://posttrib.suntimes.com/news/porter/30719494-418/session-on-public-transportation-brings-call-for-regional-cooperation.html#.VFKUMjTF8bs>

Also, http://www.nwitimes.com/business/transportation/mass-transit-needs-remain-pressing-in-region/article_50ae2c60-6d01-51ec-a2b9-66cd2b3de8e5.html

