



# **BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL**

## **Infrastructure Media Summary**

### **January 12, 2016**

#### **Senate committees approve Pence road funding plan**

NWI Times  
Dan Carden  
1/12/16

INDIANAPOLIS — Gov. Mike Pence's plan to spend \$1.4 billion on improving state highways and local roads over the next four years easily cleared its first hurdle Tuesday. The Senate's transportation committee voted 7-0 for Senate Bill 333, which takes \$241 million in surplus state revenue that would otherwise go toward automatic taxpayer refunds and instead earmarks it for roads. It also lifts a 2007 prohibition on new state debt for transportation construction projects and spends \$50 million remaining from the 2006 lease of the Indiana Toll Road. The Republican's plan calls for borrowing \$240 million and increasing future transportation appropriations by \$450 million to pay for state road and bridge repair through 2021. Chris Kiefer, chief of staff at the Indiana Department of Transportation, said the money is needed since more than half of Interstate highway bridges in Indiana are at the 45-to-50-year age where major repair or rebuilding is required. Separately, the Senate Tax and Fiscal Policy Committee voted 11-0 Tuesday for Pence-endorsed legislation returning \$430 million in local income tax revenue held in reserve by the state to the counties and municipalities where the money was collected for spending mainly on local road projects. [http://www.nwitimes.com/news/local/govt-and-politics/senate-committees-approve-pence-road-funding-plan/article\\_dd736b87-3e95-59b7-b1c9-156b4f6197a6.html](http://www.nwitimes.com/news/local/govt-and-politics/senate-committees-approve-pence-road-funding-plan/article_dd736b87-3e95-59b7-b1c9-156b4f6197a6.html)

#### **Truckers may pay more to haul in Indiana**

The Lebanon Reporter  
Maureen Hayden  
1/12/16

INDIANAPOLIS - In a state known as the "Crossroads of America," the number of overweight trucks has tripled in less than a decade, accelerating damage to aging roads and bridges. More than 380,000 trucks that exceed federal weight and size standards were permitted to travel in Indiana last year, up from about 135,000 in 2007. Those numbers are part of the reason why some lawmakers want the trucking industry to pay more for infrastructure. Under a plan proposed Monday by House Republican leaders, private carriers would pay about 7 percent more for diesel fuel - in taxes and a surcharge - than what they pay now. The measure is getting surprising support from the Indiana Motor Truck Association, which represents truckers who carry goods from about 80 percent of Indiana manufacturers. "We've been saying at the federal and state level that we need to raise taxes on fuel and fix the roads," said Gary Langston, association president. "We've been saying that for a long time. "Bad roads and congested highways cost us money," he said. The House Republican plan would automatically adjust the state's fuel tax for inflation, resulting this year in a 4-cent hike on a gallon of gasoline for all motorists, including

truckers who use diesel fuel. It also raises the motor-carrier surcharge, paid quarterly by trucking companies, by another 3 cents per gallon. Those increases combined are expected to raise \$60 million a year for road and bridge repair. It's just a fraction of the \$1 billion needed in for infrastructure, but supporters say it will make a dent.

[http://www.reporter.net/news/state\\_news/truckers-may-pay-more-to-haul-in-indiana/article\\_e340817f-0038-56cc-9474-c2204e64dc06.html](http://www.reporter.net/news/state_news/truckers-may-pay-more-to-haul-in-indiana/article_e340817f-0038-56cc-9474-c2204e64dc06.html)

### **INDOT: 'Baby boom' generation of roads need fixing**

Indianapolis Star

John Tuohy

1/12/16

A "baby boom generation" of aging roads and bridges are reaching the need for critical repair all at the same time, driving up the cost of yearly maintenance, a top transportation official said Tuesday. Indiana Department of Transportation Chief of Staff Chris Kiefer told an Indiana Senate committee that much of the interstate system and half of its bridges are 40 to 50 years old and badly in need of fortification. "All are reaching their rebuild cycle at the same time," Kiefer said. As a result, the state needs an extra \$250 million each year just to keep up with the needs. The testimony came at the introduction of a bill proposed by Gov. Mike Pence to spend an additional \$1 billion on road and bridge repairs over the next four years. Senate Bill 333 would not require any new taxes, unlike a Republican proposal in the Indiana House to attack the yearly funding shortfall. An administration official said Pence's plan will allow the state to improve the conditions of hundreds of roads and bridges while the state seeks a long-term funding fix. "This plan allows us over four years to look at the broad landscape, while we are improving the conditions of roads and bridges," Office of Management and Budget Director Micah Vincent told the Homeland Security and Transportation Committee. Vincent said the funding would help bring 97 percent of bridges and 93 percent of roads up to a rating of fair or better. Kiefer said 800 roads and bridges have been identified that need to be fixed over four years, including resurfacings on I-65, I-74 and I-69. <http://www.indystar.com/story/news/2016/01/12/indot-baby-boom-generation-roads-need-fixing/78682720/>

### **House GOP propose raising state's gas tax as part of long-term transportation funding plan**

CBS 4Indy

Kylee Wierks and Matt Smith

1/11/16

INDIANAPOLIS (Jan. 11, 2016) – Top Republican leaders in the House called for an increase in the state's gas tax Monday as part of a long-term funding solution to fix, maintain and upgrade Indiana roads. Under the proposal, which will move through the legislature as House Bill 1001, the state's gas tax would increase for the first time in more than a decade to 22 cents per gallon, a four cent increase. Diesel fuel would increase seven cents per gallon. Beyond that, more of the money collected from the gas tax would go directly to road repairs and maintenance. "Hoosiers are ready to invest in their roads and understand the needs for this for our economy," House Speaker Brian Bosma (R-Indianapolis) said. Bosma said the average Hoosier driver would pay an additional \$25 a year, noting unlike the state's sales tax, the gas tax doesn't change with inflation. "A revenue enhancement or a tax increase, we consider the two things the same," Justin Stevens said the Indiana state director for Americans for Prosperity, which plans a campaign against the measure. "So it is a tax increase." The proposal was met with quick resistance from some fellow Republicans. Perhaps the toughest sell will be Indiana Gov. Mike Pence.

<http://cbs4indy.com/2016/01/11/house-gop-unveils-roads-funding-plan-will-cost-hoosiers-at-the-gas-pump/> Also, <http://wane.com/2016/01/11/house-gop-unveils-roads-funding-plan-with-tax-increases/> Also, <http://www.indystar.com/story/news/2016/01/11/house-republicans-outline-tax-plan-additional-road-funding/78624592/>

## **The battle of bridge and road repairs**

Journal & Courier

Ron Wilkins

1/9/16

The Clinton County Road 580 West bridge over the South Fork of the Wildcat Creek has seen better days. "It's pretty well shot. It was built in the 1920s," Clinton County Highway Superintendent Kevin Myer said. The county now is in the process of replacing the bridge. That means a detour on Mulberry Jefferson Road to Indiana 38 until the bridge reopens in May, Myer said. In a larger sense, Clinton County's ramshackle span epitomizes Indiana counties' struggle to keep up with road and bridge repairs. Myer said the county often relies on federal aid to fund projects like the Wildcat Creek bridge, which cost \$937,040 to replace. In federal aid projects, the local government pays 20 percent of the cost and federal highway funds pay for the other 80 percent. Too often, however, replacement costs are prohibitive — even with federal assistance — which often leads to repairing bridges and downgrading their load capacities, Myer said. "We're like any other county," Myer said. "We got some bridges and roads that need some attention." Help might be in the works in Senate Bill 67, which state Sen. Brandt Hershman, R-Buck Creek, authored. The bill, which is reported to be fast-tracked, would distribute local income taxes held in reserve by the state. If approved, the one-time windfall would refund \$418 million to Indiana counties, cities and towns. <http://www.jconline.com/story/news/local/2016/01/08/battle-bridge-and-road-repairs/78428776/>

## **Old bridges gain new life with state marketing program**

FOX59

Bill Remeika

1/8/16

INDIANAPOLIS, Ind. (January 8, 2016) — Old bridges set for replacing or bypassing are gaining new life in the Hoosier state. With nearly three dozen bridges on the state's list to be "taken out of service," INDOT and the Federal Highway Administration are now offering those bridges to groups or individuals that want to take on ownership of the bridge and manage it or relocate it to another site. There is no listed price tag to "buy" an old bridge, but according to INDOT spokesperson Will Wingfield, the costs to either maintain it at its current site or move it to another location usually comes at a pretty hefty price tag. Fees for consultations from state engineering officials, to surveyors and land and structure engineers plus legal documentation and several other things can easily run new ownership costs into hundreds of thousands of dollars according to Wingfield. "But the benefit is that the old bridge is saved and is still a part of that community or takes on a new life in a new location as centerpiece for that area." All bridges that are "decommissioned" for vehicle traffic can never be re-instated to that status again according to Wingfield, but can be used for pedestrian foot traffic at either their current location or elsewhere. <http://fox59.com/2016/01/08/old-bridges-gain-new-life-with-state-marketing-program/>

## **Speaker says House roads plan in GOP's 'best interest'**

The Elkhart Truth

Brian Slodysko

1/7/16

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — Indiana House Speaker Brian Bosma said Thursday that it is "politically in everyone's best interest" for lawmakers to embrace his long-term proposal to fix Indiana's roads, a move that would force Gov. Mike Pence to go against his word by raising taxes. The condition of Indiana's crumbling roads has emerged as a major issue not only for lawmakers, but also on the campaign trail. However, a major division exists among majority Republicans over

how to do so, with Pence and the Senate leaders signaling they are at odds with the House, which would like add increase the cigarette tax by \$1 a pack while allowing the gas tax to increase with inflation. The gas tax has not been increased in more than a decade, but Pence, who is facing a tough re-election, has frequently touted the fact that his own roads funding plan would not raise taxes — a statement he has reiterated in email blasts to campaign donors. Instead, he proposed borrowing \$240 million while drawing \$241million from the state's budget reserves to boost short-term roads spending in 2017. That would not address the long-term needs of the state, which has seen gas tax collections plummet as people have shifted to more fuel-efficient cars. And Bosma said he was "serious" about acting now rather than later.  
<http://www.elkhartruth.com/news/indiana/2016/01/07/Indiana-House-Speaker-to-reveal-GOP-session-agenda.html>

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