



# **BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL**

## **Infrastructure Media Summary**

### **January 14, 2016**

#### **Lawmaker suggests tolls for I-65 and I-70**

Indianapolis Star  
John Tuohy  
1/14/16

An influential state lawmaker said Wednesday that charging tolls on the state's busiest freeways could be the long-term solution to Indiana's road funding needs. "If we toll I-65 and I-70, that would free up \$365 million a year that would allow us to pave and maintain six lanes from border to border," said Rep. Ed Soliday, R-Valparaiso. A fiscal study of tolling highways is included in a House Republican bill for funding repairs to the state's highway system. House Bill 1001 was introduced Wednesday during a hearing of the House Roads and Transportation Committee, where Soliday is chairman. Although the bill contains \$400 million per year in new fuel and sales taxes for highways, lawmakers from both parties and transportation experts generally agree that such fuel revenues won't be enough to sustain necessary funding in the future. Gas tax collections have been on a downward slide the past several years. Americans are driving less, and cars get better mileage. Soliday said polls show that smooth roads and sturdy bridges are increasingly important to Americans, so much so that half of all Hoosiers say they support a gas tax hike to pay for them. He said that is evidence that they might be open to paying tolls, as well. "Suddenly we have seen a major shift in how the public sees our roads," he said. <http://www.indystar.com/story/news/2016/01/14/lawmaker-tolling-freeways-fix-roads/78743210/>

#### **Local Officials Skeptical Of Increase In Federal Highway Funding**

WBAA  
Sarah Fentem  
1/13/16

An 11th-hour federal transportation bill the president signed last month adds \$50 million in annual federal funds each year to Indiana's transportation budget, but some people say that money might not make much of a difference in solving the state's maintenance needs. The bill, called the FAST Act, gives Indiana a billion dollars annually through 2020. INDOT spokesman Will Wingfield says it's the first long-term transportation bill the federal government has released in years. "It's typically been short extensions or extensions of the previous bill," he says. "So what had happened that over time the amount of state funds that have been used for state highways has increased." Some states have eschewed large plans while waiting on federal funding security, but Indiana has done the opposite. Projects such as Hoosier Heartland Highway and I-69 are at or nearing completion, and now focus turns to shovel-ready maintenance on the state's crumbling infrastructure. "We're now moving toward taking care of our existing roads and bridges," Wingfield says. <http://wbaa.org/post/local-officials-skeptical-increase-federal-highway-funding>

## **EDITORIAL: A plan that works for road work**

NWI Times

1/13/16

The state that calls itself the Crossroads of America needs to spend more money on roads to protect that reputation. There are competing plans to do just that floating around the Statehouse in Indianapolis. Gov. Mike Pence is promoting his four-year plan. State Rep. Ed Soliday's plan is more sustainable for a longer term. We like Soliday's plan. Soliday, chairman of the House Roads and Transportation Committee, proposes a spending increase for maintenance of existing roads, money that Indiana needs. In 2014, the Indiana Department of Transportation said Indiana needs \$300 million more a year just to keep up with existing roads. That doesn't even count making headway on the deferred maintenance. What makes Soliday's plan solid is that it not only spends more money on roads, but also generates the money to do so. It also boosts spending on local roads, not just state highways and bridges. House Bill 1001, authored by Soliday, spends an additional \$787 million for state road work and \$240 million for local roads. To say the means of doing so is complicated is an understatement. When we talk about the gas tax, we sometimes forget there are really two taxes — the tax per gallon, plus the sales tax on each gallon. The sales tax revenue fluctuates along with the price per gallon. Revenue from the tax per gallon — the actual fuel tax — has been dropping as the fuel efficiency of vehicles increases. Come 2021, when the new corporate average fuel economy standards take effect for cars and trucks, the revenue will plunge. [http://www.nwitimes.com/news/opinion/editorial/editorial-a-plan-that-works-for-road-work/article\\_119630ee-bb11-55a8-be2c-35bec047b7c2.html](http://www.nwitimes.com/news/opinion/editorial/editorial-a-plan-that-works-for-road-work/article_119630ee-bb11-55a8-be2c-35bec047b7c2.html)

## **Interactive map lets Hoosiers track road, bridge projects**

Tribune Star

1/13/16

The Indiana Department of Transportation announced today that the agency launched an online, interactive tool that allows Hoosier taxpayers to find quickly what road and bridge projects are planned where they live and all across Indiana with just a couple clicks of a mouse. INDOT's interactive investment map provides a summary of the State's investment in road, bridge, and trail projects, including projects on interstates and other INDOT-maintained roadways as well as City, Town and County projects funded by INDOT at [www.in.gov/indot/div/investment](http://www.in.gov/indot/div/investment). "This online, interactive investment map gives Hoosiers an opportunity to follow INDOT's continuous work on roads and bridges throughout Indiana," said Governor Mike Pence. "Over the next 5 years, my administration proposes to invest an estimated \$4.6 billion on projects aimed at modernizing our transportation network for the future, and I am thrilled that Hoosiers can follow along as we move forward. I encourage all Hoosiers to follow INDOT's progress through the investment map as we preserve and enhance Indiana's reputation as the Crossroads of America." By clicking on one of Indiana's 92 counties, taxpayers can see a summary of county-specific investment and a project list for the county. Information on each project is integrated into the online tool, including the route affected, anticipated date contractor bids will be opened, cost, and the type of work being completed. Links to Google Maps will allow drivers to pinpoint the area where construction is expected to occur on a given roadways. The financial summaries and project information on the INDOT investment map provide a rolling 18-month outlook. The data is updated on a monthly basis by INDOT staff and the financial data, anticipated projects and estimated bid dates are subject to change. [http://www.tribstar.com/news/indiana\\_news/interactive-map-lets-hoosiers-track-road-bridge-projects/article\\_05381170-ba3b-11e5-8c6d-8fc6ed1d6179.html](http://www.tribstar.com/news/indiana_news/interactive-map-lets-hoosiers-track-road-bridge-projects/article_05381170-ba3b-11e5-8c6d-8fc6ed1d6179.html)

## **Indiana counties could see road funding windfall in 2016**

WNDU-TV

Mark Peterson

1/12/16

Finding funding to repair Indiana's state highways remains a top priority at the Statehouse. But on Tuesday, legislators also took a step to improve local roads. "County Commissioners from around the state have been worried about being left out of this picture and we have lobbied very, very hard for local road funding to be considered," said Elkhart County Commissioner Michael Yoder. An Indiana Senate committee on Tuesday unanimously passed SB 67 which would send \$432 million to Indiana counties, cities and towns by June first of this year. The payment would carry a mandate that at least 75 percent of the cash be spent on road projects. "It sounds like a pretty immediate infusion of capital that we could use to fix our roads," said St. Joseph County Commissioner Andrew Kostielney. The bill would bring \$13.1 million additional dollars to St. Joseph County to be divided by local governments. The City of South Bend would receive \$5.5 million, while Mishawaka would collect \$1.8 million, and St. Joseph County would receive \$5.8 million. "It's estimated about \$5.8 million or so is what we've been told the county's share could be," said Commissioner Kostielney. "That's a pretty good chunk of what we spend, just from paving and chip and seal and those kinds of things, kind of annual maintenance so that would be roughly a year's allocation of funding." <http://www.wndu.com/home/headlines/Locals-could-see-road-funding-windfall-in-2016-365062411.html>

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