



BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL

Infrastructure Media Summary

May 4, 2017

Frye: new law to fund road, bridge work for 20 years

Daily News
Brent Brown
5/3/17

GREENSBURG - The path to road funding for the next two decades in the Hoosier State was set during the recently-concluded legislative session, and a Greensburg representative who co-authored the bill signed into law last week believes the plan will help fix the state's infrastructure issues, drive the economy and resolve transportation problems. District 67 State Rep. Randy Frye (R-Greensburg) described the 2017 legislative session as "historic" as it led to a \$32 billion balanced state budget alongside road funding legislation that lawmakers believe will improve and maintain Hoosier roads for a full 20 years. Frye said the state's budget (House Enrolled Act 1001) includes a proposed amendment to the state constitution that would require lawmakers to submit a balanced budget every two years. Voters will have their say on that amendment on the November 2018 ballot. Already decided, however, is the transportation funding legislation (House Enrolled Act 1002) which will take effect July 1 and will "provide immediate and substantial funding increases for state and local roads and bridges," Frye said in a recent press release. Speaking with the Daily News by phone Tuesday morning, Frye said the new law places the burden of funding roads on those who use them the most, and consequently, those who cause the most damage. It's the "largest investment in state and local infrastructure in Indiana's history," Frye said, and will dedicate about \$1.2 billion each year to fixing the state's roads and bridges. Studies have shown that at least \$1 billion each year is needed for road and bridge upkeep across the state, the District 67 representative has said previously. That money, of course, has to come from somewhere. Lawmakers have said the maintenance and roadwork will be accomplished through funds generated by an increase of user fees on gasoline, special fuel and motor carrier surcharge taxes, which would not increase by more than a cent annually. http://www.greensburgdailynews.com/news/local_news/frye-new-law-to-fund-road-bridge-work-for-years/article_4239b48f-5a00-5d43-bc7a-136f62014022.html

Federal spending plan opens path for South Shore expansion funding

NWI Times
Dan Carden
5/3/17

INDIANAPOLIS - South Shore Line expansion supporters consider the five-month federal spending plan approved Wednesday by the U.S. House to be a win for their cause, even though the West Lake and double-tracking projects weren't yet eligible to be funded. The Consolidated Appropriations Act, expected to be signed into law Friday, includes \$2.5 billion in grants for transit system capital projects across the country, including \$100 million to modernize the Red and Purple "L" lines in Chicago and \$50 million for an Indianapolis bus rapid transit system. Perhaps

more importantly, the measure signals that the Republican-controlled Congress remains committed to promoting economic development through new and improved transit connections, despite Republican President Donald Trump's desire to slash federal transportation spending. U.S. Rep. Pete Visclosky, D-Merrillville, said he's pleased his colleagues once again recognized the transit grant program "represents an economic investment in communities across the nation." Funding for this program is testament to the fact that it has the ability to fundamentally transform the economy of Northwest Indiana," Visclosky said. http://www.nwitimes.com/news/local/govt-and-politics/federal-spending-plan-opens-path-for-south-shore-expansion-funding/article_5a421569-2f69-5a71-bd6a-ced959e72344.html

Road funding legislation paves the way for local work

Jon Gard
The Michigan City News-Dispatch
5/2/17

La PORTE - A package of road-funding legislation approved by the Indiana General Assembly will help cities like La Porte pay for much-needed street improvements for years to come, La Porte Mayor Blair Milo said. Milo shared her thoughts with the City Council on Monday following the end of the legislative session on April 22. Gov. Eric Holcomb signed the bills into law on Friday. "This is very good news for local government," Milo said. "The more tools cities and towns have to help pay for infrastructure, the better." One key part of the package raises the price of gasoline by 10 cents starting in July. One-penny increases are scheduled for the next several years to offset inflation. Another compromise involved phasing in a shift in sales tax revenue on gas from the state's general fund to a dedicated infrastructure fund. The shift will occur over five years beginning in 2020 with every penny in state tax collected at the pump going toward roads by 2025. Milo said that by 2019, local roads in Indiana will receive a projected \$264 million in additional funding. The amount goes up to \$340 million by 2024. Altogether, the bill will raise \$1.2 billion a year in new road funding beginning in 2024 - \$900 million a year for state infrastructure and \$300 million a year for local governments. The bill also provides additional authority for local governments to adopt a wheel tax, lowering the population threshold for communities to consider such a tax from 10,000 to 5,000 and extending the deadline to Sept. 1. Milo said La Porte is at an advantage because it already adopted a wheel tax last year and will have funds in place as leverage in applying for new state funding as soon as it's available. http://www.thenewsdispatch.com/news/article_13964b17-a8b5-5f4b-904c-8e52b904e7ee.html

New law could open way for additional southern interstate

Daily News
Mike Grant CNHI News Indiana
5/2/17

A unique bill for new road funding could open the way for construction of a new interstate highway in southern Indiana. Late last week, Governor Eric Holcomb signed Senate Enrolled Act 128, also known as the Regional Infrastructure bill, into law. The measure was authored by State Rep. Mike Braun and State Senator Mark Messmer, both Republicans from Jasper. The bill will allow counties, or municipalities, to establish a Regional Development Authority to raise funds specifically for infrastructure projects like highways, bridges, rail lines, airports, public transportation and other infrastructure improvements. "I was really pleased that it went through," said Representative Braun. "We started working on this bill last session, but didn't put it together until this one." Braun points out that Indiana has been struggling to come up with funding for road projects. Right now it has money to fund the major ones on the books like the completion of I-69 between Indianapolis and Martinsville, and the new bridge over the Ohio between Evansville and Henderson, Kentucky. "The problem is there was not enough money to get any other major projects past the talking stage," he said. "This is a long-term funding bill that will allow for the

establishment of Regional Development Authorities that can pay for some of the road funding." Under the bill cities and counties could take money from any number of sources, including general funds, rainy day funds and other funds to put together money for a major project. The project would go to the Indiana Department of Transportation where it would be vetted, and if acceptable, the local funding could be used to help cover the state matching funds on a major project. "Most big projects in Indiana are built with federal highway funds," explained Braun. http://www.greensburgdailynews.com/news/new-law-could-open-way-for-additional-southern-interstate/article_e6516a81-4bbb-520c-8814-f87eb3d24d2b.html

\$4 million for new, historic bridges

The Star Press
Seth Slabaugh
May 2, 2017

MUNCIE, Ind. - The Indiana Department of Transportation has awarded \$4 million in contracts for two bridge projects over the White River on the east side of town. One will replace the bridge carrying East Jackson Street (Ind. 32-E) motor-vehicle traffic over the river near Bunch Boulevard. The bridge will be replaced in phases, one for each half of the bridge, with a middle phase for relocation of a major AT&T line, according to INDOT spokesman Nathan Riggs. "Each of these phases are expected to take up to a year," he told The Star Press. "The new bridge is expected to be fully open to traffic in 2020. A temporary traffic signal will be used to maintain two different directions of traffic across one open lane on the bridge during construction." The other will construct bridge supports, ramps and trail connections for a historic metal bridge to carry pedestrians over the river and link the Cardinal and White River greenways. The two projects are unrelated except for their proximity. The pedestrian bridge is being installed a short distance upstream from the Jackson Street Bridge. INDOT awarded a contract for \$2,938,000 to Illinois Constructors Corp., Elburn, Ill., for the Jackson Street Bridge replacement that will take three years to finish. That was the lowest of three bids submitted. The bridge will be replaced in phases, one for each half of the bridge, with a middle phase for relocation of a major AT&T line, according to INDOT spokesman Nathan Riggs. "Each of these phases are expected to take up to a year," he told The Star Press. "The new bridge is expected to be fully open to traffic in 2020. A temporary traffic signal will be used to maintain two different directions of traffic across one open lane on the bridge during construction."

<http://www.thestarpress.com/story/news/local/2017/05/02/4-million-new-historic-bridges/101066550/>

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