



# **BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL**

## **Infrastructure Media Summary**

### **February 21, 2012**

#### **Coats Calls for More Equity and Flexibility in Highway Bill**

Political News

2/17/11

“Once again the Majority Leader is trying to block members from amending and improving legislation that greatly impacts our state,” said Coats. “For years, Indiana has drawn the short end of the stick when it comes to transportation funding. Despite Indiana’s strong record of fiscal management, we’ve long been a ‘donor’ state and sent more taxpayer dollars to Washington than we get in return for highway funding. My amendment would ensure that Indiana and other donor states receive their fair share rather than continue to subsidize the needs of other states.” The Coats amendment would allow Indiana to receive the same percentage of available highway funding as Hoosiers contribute to the gas tax. The current highway bill locks in the precedent that so-called “winner states” will continue to receive more than their fair share of highway funding while traditional “donor” states like Indiana will continue to receive a reduced share. “The flawed funding formula in the highway bill actually rewards states that previously loaded up on earmarks by including this funding in the state’s historical average,” said Coats. “Indiana makes no apologies for being more self-reliant and fiscally responsible than other states.” [New Coats Calls for More Equity and Flexibility in Highway Bill](#)

#### **IDEM cites I-69 project for erosion issues**

Post-Tribune

2/18/12

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — A state inspector has cited the Indiana Department of Transportation and a contractor on the Interstate 69 expansion project for inadequate erosion controls that critics say could damage the environment. Workers for contractor Fred Weber Inc. built several erosion control structures that weren’t properly constructed to filter discharge or prevent sediment from flowing into streams, an inspector with the state Department of Environmental Management determined in December. Indianapolis Business Journal reports that no financial penalties were assessed. “Adequate storm water quality measures are not implemented throughout the project to effectively prevent sediment discharges from this project,” the inspection report stated. “It is imperative that actions be implemented immediately to correct the deficiencies.” [IDEM cites I-69 project for erosion issues - Post-Tribune](#)

#### **GUEST COMMENTARY: INDOT is going extra mile to serve NWI**

NWI Times

2/19/12

The Indiana Department of Transportation set record levels for investment in transportation and preservation in 2011, and we're gearing up for another great year in 2012. In the 13 Northwest Indiana counties, INDOT's LaPorte District awarded contracts for \$199.6 million in new projects in 2011. Among the major milestones, we saw completion of the Borman reconstruction project near Interstate 65 in Gary and improvements along the busy Ind. 53 (Broadway) corridor in Crown Point. Across the state, INDOT is expected to award 269 construction contracts worth \$1.3 billion in 2012. More than \$350 million of those will be in Northwest Indiana. INDOT will begin a project to improve the safety at a busy intersection along Ind. 49 in Valparaiso by replacing it with an interchange. Work will take place to rehabilitate 4th and 5th Avenues in downtown Gary, and projects also will improve the U.S. 421 corridor in LaPorte County. [GUEST COMMENTARY: INDOT is going extra mile to serve NWI](#)

### **Federal highway aid to Indiana could drop**

The Star Press  
2/19/12

"The money that Indiana does get is going to be stretched further because we're going to get projects completed on a more timely basis," said Rep. Larry Buchson, the Newburgh Republican who sits on the House committee that wrote the bill. "Overall, I think we're going to be in pretty good shape." Rep. Todd Rokita, R-Indianapolis, also backs the bill, saying it gives states and local communities the flexibility they need to make transportation decisions for themselves. Other members of the delegation, including GOP Rep. Mike Pence who is running for governor, say they haven't decided whether they will vote for it. Will Wingfield, spokesman for the Indiana Department of Transportation, said INDOT supports many of the principles in the House bill, such as the fact that it would not raise the federal gas tax. [Federal highway aid to Indiana could drop | The Star Press | thestarpress.com](#)

### **Reopening of I-64 span brings cheer to businesses**

Chicago Tribune  
2/20/12

NEW ALBANY, Ind.— The reopening of the Sherman Minton Bridge has business returning to normal and people cheering more than five months after a steel crack prompted its closing. The shutdown slowed southern Indiana commerce near the bridge, affecting hotel bookings, restaurant meals and other business. Traffic congestion and delays became so bad that universities in both states reported enrollment declines. Horseshoe Southern Indiana Casino's performance also showed a marked decline after the bridge's closure. The News and Tribune reported New Albany businesses are planning a bridge-opening celebration for the first weekend in March. Local wineries and breweries will offer samplings, and there will be live music. Some stores in New Albany already have begun offering bridge-opening discounts. [Reopening of I-64 span brings cheer to businesses - chicagotribune.com](#)

### **INDOT expects to resolve I-69 issues with Bloomington group**

Evansville Courier & Press  
2/20/12

INDIANAPOLIS — As Congress considers a measure to help Indiana work around Bloomington-based opposition to the 142-mile Interstate 69 extension, state transportation officials say they don't think such a law will be necessary. The Bloomington transportation group has scheduled a Friday meeting. On its agenda: Action on whether to continue to place a legal roadblock in front of the Indianapolis-to-Evansville road-construction project. The meeting comes after U.S. Rep. Larry Buchson, a Newburgh Republican from Indiana's 8th District, succeeded in tucking language into

a \$260 billion, five-year transportation funding bill that would give the state a way to ignore the objections of a Bloomington group. [INDOT expects to resolve I-69 issues with Bloomington group » Evansville Courier & Press](#)

### **Financial return? Councilman looking to reverse allocation of \$1.1 million**

Pharos-Tribune

2/21/12

INDIANAPOLIS — A new Logansport city administration may mean new plans for \$1.1 million the previous mayor and City Council earmarked for 18th Street. Councilman Bob Bishop is leading the charge to find out whether the federal highway dollars left over from a \$4 million bond issue to build roads for the new Ivy Tech Community College campus can, in fact, be used for the replacement of two culverts and construction of a roundabout on 18th Street. The money had been allocated by Indiana Department of Transportation. He said he believes that using that money to repay the bond will help prevent the city from having to dip into its reserves, which it has had to do to make four of the last six payments. “If there’s surplus money, my interpretation is that it must be paid back,” he said. “You move it into the same fund that’s used to pay back that bond, that \$4 million bond, and if we can get that done, which I believe we will, that relieves the taxpayers of \$1.1 million in what they’re liable for.”

[Financial return? Councilman looking to reverse allocation of \\$1.1 million » Local News » Pharos-Tribune](#)

---

[www.buildindianacouncil.org](http://www.buildindianacouncil.org)