



BUILD INDIANA COUNCIL

Infrastructure Media Summary

March 15, 2012

Senate OKs transportation overhaul

The Journal Gazette
3/14/12

WASHINGTON – The Senate voted Wednesday to overhaul transportation programs and keep aid flowing to thousands of construction projects while strengthening highway and auto safety. The 74-22 vote stepped up pressure for quick action by House because the government's power to collect about \$110 million a day in federal gasoline and diesel taxes, the main source of revenue for highway and transit programs, is set to expire March 31. If a final bill isn't on the president's desk by then, Congress would have to approve a temporary extension to avoid a shutdown of the programs, including the furlough of Federal Highway Administration employees and the layoff of construction workers.

Efforts by House Republican leaders to pass their own, five-year bill without concessions to Democrats have fallen apart in recent weeks. The House returns next week from a weeklong recess.

"The plan as it stands right now is to let the Senate pass a bill, and take up something that looks like it unless the House coalesces around a better alternative, which we are actively pursuing," said Michael Steel, a spokesman for House Speaker John Boehner, R-Ohio. [Senate OKs transportation overhaul | The Journal Gazette](#) Also, [Senate Passes, Sends the \\$109 Billion Transportation Bill to the House - ABC News](#), [Senate passes bipartisan highway bill, moves to the House - Political Hotsheet - CBS News](#)

Senate defeats Coats' transportation bill amendment to add \$284M for Indiana

Indianapolis Star
3/14/12

WASHINGTON -- The Senate easily rejected Tuesday an effort by Sen. Dan Coats, R-Ind., to boost highway funding for Indiana and some other states while lowering it for others. The Senate voted 70-28 to reject Coats' amendment to a highway funding bill, which would have meant an additional \$284 million for Indiana roads. Sen. Richard Lugar, R-Ind., voted for the amendment. Coats said the highway bill the Senate is considering is unfair to Indiana, which has historically received less in federal funding than residents have paid in federal gas taxes. "A majority of states, like Indiana and many, many others, do not receive a fair share of the distribution of highway funds," Coats said. California Sen. Barbara Boxer, the Democrat who chairs the committee that wrote the bill, said Coats' amendment would kill it. Boxer said the bill's distribution of funds is "very, very fair" and continues the tradition of awarding funds based on factors such as the amount of use a state's roads get and maintenance costs. [Senate defeats Coats' transportation bill amendment to add \\$284M for Indiana | Indianapolis Star | indystar.com](#)

Also, [Coats Opposes Highway Bill, Says Indiana Will Be Unfairly Penalized | Press Releases | United States Senator Dan Coats of Indiana](#)

Indiana bills target perishable loads, local road funds

Land Line Magazine

3/14/12

An Indiana bill on its way to the governor is intended to help ensure food safety in commercial vehicles. Another bill on the same path would provide another funding source for local road work. Also headed to the governor's desk is a bill to permit counties to use property taxes to pay for local road projects.

Indiana law now mandates that property taxes be used for county highway maintenance only in an emergency. Unanimous approval from county councils also is required. That could soon change. If so, counties would be authorized to spend property tax revenue to maintain county highways. The affected roads typically are funded through a combination of fuel taxes, vehicle and county fees. "We wanted to allow county officials the flexibility to use revenue from their general fund for road maintenance when needed," stated Rep. Jeff Espich, R-Uniondale. SB98 would allow counties to spend property tax or other miscellaneous general fund revenue on highway maintenance. [Indiana bills target perishable loads, local road funds: Land Line Magazine](#)

Dan McFeely: Endure the construction; it'll be better later

The Indianapolis Star

3/15/12

When it comes to summer construction, I've always had a soft spot for road projects. Even the most horrible cone zones have a silver lining -- better traffic flow when completed. Not sure about this year. No way to sugarcoat it: This will be a pain. Usually, I point to two major projects that turned out positively for local commuters. Remember what Keystone Parkway was like before the roundabout interchanges? Stop, go. Stop, go. Congestion. If you think the traffic signals at 96th Street and Keystone cause huge backups today, remember those backups used to be at every intersection along the way. And do you remember what it was like for afternoon commuters on eastbound I-70 from Downtown as they approached I-465? [Dan McFeely: Endure the construction; it'll be better later | Indianapolis Star | indystar.com](#)

www.buildindianacouncil.org