

Scott, Rider

From: Amanda Wilson [AWilson@nctcog.org]
Sent: Wednesday, October 20, 2010 4:06 PM
To: Vic Suhm; Scott, Rider
Subject: Report for November RTC Meeting

Vic/Rider,

I believe both of you were at the RTC meeting last week and heard members' requests to have DRMC and TRTC prepare brief reports on what you have heard from legislators (that you can publicly report) related to transportation legislation in the upcoming session. I would say the focus would be on items in the RTC's draft actively pursue legislative program (funding, PPPs, protecting RTR funds, Proposition 12).

I would like to include this in the mail out, rather than as a handout, if possible. Is there any way you could provide brief written reports by Monday, November 1? Let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks,
Amanda

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82ND SESSION OBSERVATIONS DALLAS REGIONAL MOBILITY COALITION

The 82nd Session of the Texas Legislature will convene on Tuesday, January 11, 2011. The Legislature will adjourn 140 days later on Monday, May 30, 2011. The first day of pre-filing of legislation for the 82nd Session begins on Monday, November 8, 2010. We anticipate that somewhere around 400 bills will be filed in the first week of pre-filing.

The State of Texas will be faced with a budget shortfall at the end of the current biennium. Only the amount of the deficit is uncertain. House Appropriation, Ways and Means and Senate Finance have been meeting regularly during the last month and will continue those meetings through the end of 2010 seeking options for legislative consideration during the regular Session. All state agencies have been required to submit LARs (Legislative Appropriation Requests) reflecting a 10% budget reduction.

House Bill 1, to be filed shortly after the convening of the Session, will have even greater agency cuts, than the 10% LAR submittals.

Interim charges on transportation, both in the House and Senate have focused on the declining viability of user fees funding the transportation system. The House Select Interim Transportation Committee draft reports are scheduled to be submitted to the Speaker's office December 1, 2010. Interim reports will be available in December outlining the consequences of not adequately funding transportation.

Opportunities to address sustainable revenue generation mechanisms will be limited. A Constitutional amendment to end diversion from Fund 6 in a gradual stair stepped fashion is a possibility. At the state level, emphasis will be placed on significant regional state thoroughfares, with quantifiable congestion or mobility issues. Only a select few of those will be authorized to proceed with a private equity component. The projects selected will require a local request, support and involvement.

The scope of the legislation to implement the Sunset Review Commission recommendations will depend in large part on the actions taken by the TxDOT three member Restructure Council. The agency practice of using of discretionary allocation of bond revenue will be examined as a possible reorientation to formula allocation. Debt repayment obligations will be reviewed as a cash flow issue for state general revenue and the continuing obligation of revenues in Fund 6.

Most bills that have a significant fiscal note attached to them will not be well received by the 82nd Session of the Texas Legislature. 140 days may not be enough time.

Scott, Rider

From: Amanda Wilson [AWilson@nctcog.org]
Sent: Wednesday, November 03, 2010 3:48 PM
To: Scott, Rider
Subject: RTC report

Rider,

Here is what Vic provided.

What I hear from legislators is that transportation revenue will be hard to come by in the 82nd session due to other competing issues such as the budget shortfall, redistricting, TxDOT Sunset and continuing legislative distrust of the agency, voter ID and immigration. All believe that Texas has a transportation revenue need to fund needed transportation improvements but that support for addressing the issue is lacking from the state elected leaders, from constituents and from business. I believe they are looking to us to generate or demonstrate such support from these groups.

Thanks,
Amanda

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DRMC

Proposed 82nd Session Legislative Agenda*

1. Recommend revision of specific state statutory language to clarify that Regional Toll Revenue received from local tolls as a concession fee or excess toll revenue, when obligated by a written agreement between local political subdivisions and TxDOT is no longer state revenue, but becomes obligated local funds subject to appropriation by signator entities.
2. Support a constitutional amendment to restrict appropriations from Fund 6 to TxDOT only from funding allocations for expenditure for roads, rail and other intermodal purposes.
3. Support reauthorization of public-private partnerships ("PPP") as a financing option where the transportation project cannot be fully funded by public revenue; in particular, support specific authorization to fully fund I-35E.
4. Preserve those gains that have been made to provide flexibility and innovation for transportation funding.
5. Support the development and implementation of a state rail plan that reasonably funds and improves passenger and freight rail without excessive regulation.
6. Support the review of financing enhancements for transportation including a vehicle miles traveled fee; an annual vehicle registration fee that more accurately reflects road impact; and corridor incremental value added contributions.
7. Support rule making or legislation that requires allocation of TxDOT discretionary funds, not otherwise categorized, to be distributed by formula or equalized to formula allocation amounts each fiscal year.

*Approved by DRMC Legislative Committee 10/1; Pending approval by DRMC Board