

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Gary Hayzlett at 1:30 p.m. on March 12, 2003 in Room 519-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Rep. John Ballou  
Rep. Jerry Henry  
Rep. Jeff Jack  
Rep. Kenny Wilks  
Rep. Valdenia Winn  
Rep. Jim Yonally

Committee staff present:

Bruce Kenzie, Revisor  
Hank Avila, Legislative Research Dept.  
Mary Galligan, Legislative Research Dept.  
Betty Boaz, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Deb Miller, Secretary, KDOT  
Mary Turkington, T-2000 Commission  
Carol Meyer, Garden City Chamber of Commerce  
Jim DeHoff, Kansas AFL-CIO  
Mary Sullivan, Amino Brothers Construction and KS Contractors Ass'n.  
Ed Sexe, MO-KS Concrete Pipe Ass'n.  
Bill Korkowski, Lone Star Industries  
Randall Allen, Representing the Kansas Association of Counties

Others attending:

See attached list

Chairman Hayzlett called the meeting to order. The meeting was made up of conferees from Economic Lifelines there to discuss the importance of maintaining the Comprehensive Transportation Plan previously passed by the 1999 Legislature.

The Chairman introduced Deb Miller, Secretary of the Department of Transportation. According to Secretary Miller, even with the cuts that have been suffered to date, they can and will keep their promises to the communities of this state to complete all the announced projects and to complete them on time. (Attachment 1) She asked the Committee to carefully consider the funding for the CTP. She concluded by reaffirming her commitment to preserving the core of the CTP.

The next conferee was Mary Turkington, Chairman of the T-2000 Study Group. (Attachment 2) She said the study group was initially created by Governor Bill Graves to assess the transportation needs of Kansas. The work was completed in 1998 and enacted by Legislature in 1999. According to Ms. Turkington,

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Governor Graves reconvened the study group because he was concerned about the adequacy of funding for the CTP. The Governor wrote the study group that he believed it was important for the public to understand how much the transportation program would be impacted if the funding for the CTP continued to be used to make up the State General Fund deficit. She concluded that they believe the completion of the Comprehensive Transportation Program is vital to the well being of the state. The cost effectiveness of business growth and a higher degree of safety for those who use the system of streets and highways is a direct benefit of the program and the public clearly expects its completion.

The next conferee was Carol Meyer, Finney County Economic Development President. (Attachment 3) According to Ms. Meyer the economy of southwest Kansas, specifically Garden City and Finney County hinges on the vitality of its transportation system. She said now the dependability of the plan is in question despite the overwhelmingly positive return on investment to the state's economy, the integrity and viability of the plan is in jeopardy of being sacrificed for a perceived short-term budget savings. She concluded by saying, "With the completion of the last comprehensive plan, our State has shown the discipline to, and reaped the benefits from, "staying the course." We are fortunate that the lessons we have to learn from are positive ones. The 1999 Comprehensive Transportation Plan is a worth course that leads us to more rapid economic recovery."

Jim DeHoff, Executive Secretary of the Kansas AFL CIO spoke next saying, "The comprehensive Transportation Plan that was passed by the Kansas Legislature in 1999 has been one of the best economic development job programs ever implemented. Several thousand jobs that pay a fair wage, health benefits and pension plans have continued to be created." (Attachment 4) He concluded by asking the Committee to remember that the CTP has been a very positive job program in the Kansas economy.

The next conferee was Mary Sullivan, Chief Executive Officer and Chairman of the board for Amino Brothers Company, Inc. (Attachment 5) She said she was representing not only her own company but also the Kansas Contractors Association. She said they were greatly concerned because when the Legislature passed the CTP they were under the impression that there would be adequate funding for the next ten years for a highway program. She said they based their business plans on that fact and took out loans to buy equipment and brought in out of state employees expecting a certain amount of construction to take place. She said they were distressed and displeased to see the transportation program being used as a bank. She concluded by saying the loss of this program means even less taxes will be collected and Kansas will continue in a downward spiral.

Ed Sexe, representing Kansas City Concrete Pipe Company was the next speaker. He said his association wanted to express support for fully funding the transportation program and express even stronger opposition to any reduction in funding to this program. (Attachment 6) He said last year the Legislature took the entire demand transfer of \$147 million and borrowed another \$95 million from the Highway Fund with an additional \$265 million being proposed for FY 04. Mr. Sexe concluded that the Highway Fund cannot continue to be used as a bank because if you continue to raid the fund, it will only delay the inevitable higher costs and higher taxes and you can't continue to "Rob Peter to Pay Paul."

The next speaker was Bill Korkowski appearing on behalf of Lone Star Industries. (Attachment 7) Mr. Korkowski said he was there to express strong support for fully funding the transportation program and

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even stronger opposition to any reduction in funding to the CTP which would result in the elimination of any projects. He said they recognize the unprecedented dire economic conditions of the state but urged the Committee to keep in mind that the CTP is the single largest economic development program occurring in the state of Kansas at this time.

The final speaker was Randall Allen, Executive Director of the Kansas Association of Counties. He said he was there to speak about the importance of the CTP to counties. (Attachment 8) He urged the Committee to remember the following: 1) The continued funding of the Special City-County Highway Fund is absolutely vital for counties; 2) Counties support continued funding for the various System Enhancement and Major Modification projects on the state highway system as evidenced by their willingness to match local monies with state funds to bring these projects to completion; and 3) The relatively small percentage of the entire CTP funds earmarked for the modes (aviation, short-line rail, etc.) are indispensable to the economic viability of Kansas communities. He concluded that the 1999 CTP is an investment in our future and county leaders want to support the efforts to keep it on track and delivered as promised.

There being no other conferees the Chairman adjourned the meeting. The next meeting will be on Thursday, March 13, 2003.