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HOUSE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE ROLLS LEGISLATION INTO OMNIBUS BILLS; PASSES THEM OUT OF COMMITTEE: A number of transportation-related bills were rolled into two omnibus bills and voted out of committee during a House Transportation Committee hearing Jan. 22.

House Bill 946, sponsored by Rep. Larry Crawford, R-Centertown, includes “clean up” language that would clarify legislation (House Bill 668) passed last year that addresses how the chairman and vice-chairman of the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission are selected.

The bill now also includes the following legislative proposals:

- **MoDOT’s chief counsel:** The bill would change the way MoDOT’s chief counsel is selected. The director of MoDOT, instead of the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission, would chose the department’s chief counsel. The original bill is House Bill 1106, sponsored by Crawford. MoDOT is neutral on this legislation.
- **Property management:** The bill would require MoDOT to include an inventory of its property as well as information about real estate purchases and sales in the department’s annual accountability report. The original proposal is House Bill 952, sponsored by Rep. Jason Crowell, R-Cape Girardeau. MoDOT currently is providing information on this issue to the sponsor of the bill.
- **Eminent domain:** The bill would require MoDOT to consider restricted or lost highway access when assessing damages in eminent domain cases. MoDOT’s Right of Way Director Terry Sampson testified against the bill. The original proposal is House Bill 803, sponsored by Rep. Scott Lipke, R-Jackson. MoDOT opposes this proposal.
- **Sign removal:** The bill would prohibit local governments from removing signs along highways. This proposal was added as an amendment offered by Rep. Kevin Engler, R-Farmington. MoDOT is presently neutral on this proposal.
- **Veterans Highway:** The bill would name a portion of Highway J in Lincoln County the Veterans Highway. This proposal was added as an amendment offered by Rep. Wayne Henke, D-Troy. MoDOT is neutral on this issue.
- **Log trucks:** The bill would exempt local log trucks from certain licensing provisions that would restrict them from operating beyond a 50-mile radius and from operating on the national system of interstates and defense highways. This was added as an

amendment offered by Rep. J.C. Kuessner, D-Eminence. MoDOT is currently reviewing this proposal.

- **Transportation Development Districts (TDD):** The bill would revise state law regarding TDD's and require MoDOT to follow the TDD's timeline when submitting a proposal or bid. This proposal was added as an amendment offered by Rep. Brad Lager, R-Maryville. MoDOT is reviewing this proposal.

The bill now awaits floor debate.

House Bill 1105, sponsored by Crawford, would prohibit issuing drivers' permits and licenses, including commercial drivers' licenses, to people who are not citizens of the United States for any amount of time exceeding the applicants' legal presence in the United States as authorized by the Immigration and Naturalization Services. The bill also addresses the use of fraud and deception to obtain a permit or license. MoDOT is neutral on the issue.

The bill also now includes the following issues:

- **Weigh stations:** The bill would establish penalties for drivers evading weigh stations. This proposal was added as an amendment offered by Rep. Ryan McKenna, D-Barnhart. MoDOT supports the measure.
- **Abandoned motor vehicles:** The bill would change laws governing the transfer, towing and abandonment of motor vehicles. The original proposal was House Bill 1111, sponsored by Crawford. MoDOT is neutral on the issue.
- **Child safety seats:** The bill would change the law regarding the use of child safety seats. This proposal was added as an amendment offered by Rep. Gary Dusenberg, R-Blue Springs. MoDOT supports the measure.
- **Drivers' license photos:** The bill would require drivers to have their photographs on their drivers' license. The original proposal was House Bill 1119, sponsored by Rep. Charles Schlottach, R-Owensville. MoDOT is neutral on this issue.

The bill now awaits floor debate.

HOUSE COMMITTEE HEARS REVENUE SHARING BILL: The House Transportation Committee held a hearing Jan. 22 on a bill proposing a change in the state constitution that would prohibit the transfer of state highway funds to state agencies other than MoDOT and the Missouri State Highway Patrol. The proposal, House Joint Resolution 45, is being sponsored by Rep. Brian Yates, R-Lee's Summit.

MoDOT Chief Operating Officer Pat Goff and Robert Boone, representing the Missouri Treasurer's Office, provided information about the impact the bill would have on MoDOT and the state. Ray McCarty from the Missouri Chamber of Commerce testified in favor of the bill.

The bill was debated at length and will be the focus of further discussion on Monday, Jan. 26.

If the General Assembly approves the bill, Missouri voters also would have to vote in favor of the measure.

The Transportation Committee also heard House Bill 1107, sponsored by Rep. Larry Crawford, R-Centertown. The bill would allow property adjacent to transportation development districts (TDD) to become a part of the district if approved unanimously by property owners in both the TDD and the area to be included. Several people, including representatives for real estate developers and companies testified in favor of the bill.

PRIMARY SEAT BELT LEGISLATION FILED: Legislation establishing a primary seat belt law in Missouri was filed in the House this week. House Bill 1200, sponsored by Rep. Robert Schaaf, R-St. Joseph, would allow law enforcement officers to stop a driver for a seat belt violation as long as the violation is clearly visible before the officer stops the car.

Current state law allows officers to issue citations to drivers for failing to wear a seat belt only if they are stopped for some other violation.

A primary seat belt law is part of the MHTC's legislative agenda this year.

MoDOT DIRECTOR TO GIVE STATE OF TRANSPORTATION ADDRESS

WEDNESDAY: MoDOT Director Henry Hungerbeeler will present a State of Transportation address before a joint session of the Missouri General Assembly at 10:30 a.m. Wednesday, Jan. 28, in the House of Representatives chamber at the state capitol.

The annual speech was established by legislation approved by lawmakers in 2003 to increase MoDOT's accountability. According to the new law, the director of MoDOT must present a State of Transportation Address by Feb. 15 each year. The law also requires the members of the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission to attend the event to answer questions.

In conjunction with Hungerbeeler's speech, officials from MoDOT General Headquarters and district offices will be in the third floor rotunda at the state capitol from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. to provide information about the department and its programs.

A search of House of Representatives journals extending back 70 years indicates that no other state agency leader has been given the opportunity to deliver a speech to a joint session of the House and Senate.

For more information about the State of Transportation Address, contact Jay Wunderlich, Governmental Affairs director, at 573-751-8273.

Federal Update

CONGRESS APPROVES APPROPRIATIONS BILL FOR TRANSPORTATION AND OTHER PROGRAMS: The long overdue 2004 federal appropriations legislation was approved this week when the Senate passed a \$373 billion bill that provides funds for many government services including transportation. The legislation includes increased for transportation projects. The House passed the bill a month ago.

Appropriations bill are usually approved by September before the federal budget year begins Oct. 1. Congress had passed a continuing resolution to keep funding the federal programs until a bill could be passed.

The bill provides funds for agriculture, veterans and most other domestic programs.

The president is expected to sign the bill into law.

HEARINGS SCHEDULED:

Monday

Committee: Senate Financial/ Government Organization/Veterans/Elections

Time: 12:30 p.m.

Location: Senate Lounge

Bills to be heard:

SB 860 – Cauthorn – Relating to state employees and state officials

Committee: Senate Government Accountability & Fiscal Oversight

Time: 1 p.m.

Location: Senate Committee Room 1

Bills to be heard:

SB 980 – Bartle – Repeals certain statutory provisions

SB 1028 – Cauthorn – Relating to state purchasing

*Executive Session May Follow

Committee: House Transportation & Motor Vehicles

Time: 2 p.m.

Location: Hearing Room 7

Bills to be heard:

HJR 45 – Yates – Transportation Revenue

Committee: Senate Judiciary, Civil & Criminal Jurisprudence

Time: 7 p.m.

Location: Senate Lounge

Bills to be heard:

SB 1094 – Scott – Enacts various tort reform measures
SB 727 – Steelman – Relating to civil liability reform
SB 706 – Mathewson – Tort Reform
SB 957 – Scott – Tort Reform

*Executive Session May Follow

Committee: Senate Appropriations
Time: 7:30 p.m.
Location: Senate Committee Room 2

Dept. of Transportation

*Executive Session May Follow

Tuesday

Committee: House Appropriations Transportation & Economic Development
Time: 8:15 a.m.
Location: Hearing Room 5

Testimony from:

Department of Insurance
Department of Labor
Department of Transportation
Department of Economic Development

Committee: Senate Commerce and the Environment
Time: 8:30 a.m.
Location: Senate Lounge
Bills to be heard:

SB 949 – Steelman – Relating to environmental hearings
SB 1020– Steelman – Relating to public records
SB 889 – Goode – Relating to the Sunshine Law
SB 1016 – Champion – Electronic public meetings & records
SB 869 – Shields – Relating to authorization for closing meetings

Committee: House Tax Policy

Time: Noon

Location: Hearing Room 7

Bills to be heard:

HB 973 – Cooper – Environmental Regulation Fees

HB 774 – Sander – Waste Tire Fees

Committee: House Communications, Energy & Technology

Time: Upon Adjournment

Location: Hearing Room 3

Bill to be heard:

HB 1083 – Rector – Utility right of way

Committee: House Crime Prevention and Public Safety

Time: 5 p.m.

Location: Hearing Room 3

Bills to be heard:

HB 1060 – Goodman – Device to change traffic lights

HB 1052 – Engler – Device to change traffic lights