

Legislative Bulletin



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SESSION UPDATE

There are a couple of weeks to go before legislative Spring Break. This year Spring Break also incorporates Easter Break, so the General Assembly will break from March 17 through March 29. The pace of the 2016 legislative session continues to be a rapid one. This rapidity on the budget and other issues continues to signal that the budget and other key issues will be sent to the Governor in late April, in order to attempt to override any vetoes during the 2016 regular legislative session.

The Missouri Senate has already pulled the first all-nighter of the session. Lobbyists generally hope that it will be the last. February all-nighters are not a good sign of things to come in terms of late nights in the General Assembly.

Fuel Tax increase: As of this writing, we are still awaiting debate on SB 623 from Sen Doug Libla (R-Poplar Bluff) which would increase the gas tax 1.5 cents and the diesel fuel tax 3.5 cents per gallon. We anticipate the debate on this bill to occur the first week in March.

Reallocation of General Revenue to Transportation: Earlier this session we saw press conferences from House and Senate leaders indicating a plan to devote some resources from tightening of public assistance programs to transportation. Early reports were that the number for transportation would be in the \$50 million range. Later reports have scaled that number back to \$30 million and even lower in the most recent estimates. Just this week, Senate Appropriations Chairman Kurt Schaeffer (R-Columbia) announced his support for keeping the Highway Patrol funded largely in part through the State Road Fund. Expect this issue to continue to develop as the session progresses.

Truck Platooning: HB 2345 (Rep. Glen Kolkmeyer R-Odessa) and SB 923 (Sen Dan Hageman R-Cosby) would allow trucks in a Platooning Pilot Program to follow closer than 300 feet. Currently state law prohibits trucks from following another truck closer than 300 feet. Both bills are progressing through the legislative process, and while this is a new concept and technology for legislators, so far the bills have received a favorable response. Stay tuned as we work to get this opportunity for truck platooning available in Missouri.

REAL ID: SB 902 is an effort by Senator Ryan Silvey (House companion is HB 2235 by Rep Kevin Corlew R-Kansas City) to resolve a problem for Missourians who need REAL ID compliant drivers licenses and still allow those with privacy concerns to continue to not receive a REAL ID compliant Missouri driver's license.

Many Missourians believe this issue has been resolved as the news portrayal of the issue is that the federal government (DHS and airports) has been announcing that Missourians (and other non-compliant states) will have until 2018 to comply with this directive. In reality, CDL holders are feeling the impact of this issue on a potential daily basis. As is the case with many credentialing issues, it turns into a case-by-case scenario.

Regardless of the solution that ultimately gets decided by the legislature and Administration, Missouri Trucking Association support for the issue is an effort to remind the legislature that CDL holders have the need to continue to gain access to federal facilities, and having a "valid" and compliant state drivers license as the basic form of identification was necessary for them to obtain further credentials for access.

Total Bills Filed

2,038 total bills filed this session – MoTA is tracking 281 of those bills so far.