

Date: May 9, 2024

To: The I-35W Solutions Alliance Board of Directors

From: Rob Vanasek

Re: Legislative Report

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Regular session is coming to an end, with just under two weeks left. Legislators have until midnight on Sunday May 19<sup>th</sup> to pass any bills. After today they only have 5 legislative days to pass remaining bills and Conference Committee Reports. There are still Omnibus bills and several significant stand-alone bills that have still not seen floor action and most conference committees have not gotten underway.

Following the arrest of Senator Mitchell, great uncertainty has surrounded the proceedings of the legislature, particularly in the Senate given the slim 34-33 majority of which she is a member. In mid-April there was a thought the legislature would be wrapped up by Mother's Day, but nearly a week of first inaction followed by another week or two now of very long floor sessions have many wondering if they will get all of the major omnibus bills completed.

It's supposed to be a bonding year and two Sunday evenings ago the Capital Investment Committees released very similar spreadsheets – see below. All the supplemental budget and tax bills, including transportation, are optional. The global legislative spending targets provide a total of \$477M in one-time spending and a relatively small \$62M in ongoing spending. Transportation's General Fund budget target for ongoing spending was actually zero and only \$2M in one-time spending.

**HF 5242 – Transportation, Labor and Housing Omnibus**

The House and Senate combined the Transportation, Labor and Housing bills into a single supplemental omnibus package. It passed the House last Wednesday 69-60 and the Senate in the early morning Tuesday 36-31.

Conference committee members:

Senators are not yet named.

Representatives Hornstein; Nelson, M.; Howard; Tabke; Petersburg

Despite the bi-partisan vote in the Senate (and the adoption of over two dozen minority amendments over the 8.5 hours of debate very late into the night) the Transportation portion of the omnibus has a controversial provision (HF 4988, Kraft, which builds on Kraft's similar

provisions enacted into law last year) that aims to address greenhouse gas emissions and reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled. Amendment efforts to remove or allow safety considerations overrule the greenhouse gas mitigation plans by the members of the minority were not successful and proponents stated that it was not an either/or situation created by the new provisions.

In addition to the \$2M in GF funds, the bill spends an additional almost \$79M in trunk highway funds with half of that going to priority bridges and additional funds going toward truck parking facilities and improvements.

Millions in one-time dollars in both the Senate and House versions of the bill would go to small cities (under population of \$5,000) for their streets by reappropriating some of the 2023 federal discretionary grants.

### **HF 3436 – Transportation Policy Omnibus**

The House and Senate have already passed their policy bill with large bi-partisan majority votes and awaits the Governor's signature. The Towards Zero Deaths program was modified, State Fair transportation planning was instituted and other policy provisions were included in the legislation.

### **Bonding**

The Capital Investment Committees have released their base bills with large line items (~\$300M) reserved for the four legislative caucuses to insert their local project priorities. The House bill has been advanced to its floor yesterday to await agreement between the majority and minority parties. The Senate bonding bill is not yet to the floor but Chair Pappas is in talks with many of her colleagues.

Both chambers versions of the bill contain \$980M in General Obligation bonds.

The House include significant (almost \$40M) funding for large local bridges (\$7M and above).