

Regional Growth Committee -- Legislative Preview

January 17, 2013

Federal Issues

1. The Congress avoided the so-called fiscal cliff by agreeing on the tax issue and putting off a decision on possible spending cuts (“sequester”) until March. We will be closely following the transportation portion of any spending reduction negotiations.

State Issues

1. There has been considerable discussion regarding gasoline tax revenues over the past six months. Interest now seems focused on the indexing of the state gasoline tax to inflation. State gasoline tax revenue has lost approximately 40% of its purchasing power since it was last raised in 1997. At present, however, there is no bill and no sponsor.
2. There will be an effort to re-instate, to some degree, cities’ power of eminent domain for active transportation facilities. There is a draft bill circulating among interested parties. As yet, there is not a sponsor.
3. HB 11—Rep. Brad Last, R-St. George, has proposed a bill that would allow locally collected corridor preservation funds to be used for transportation master planning in areas of a county not covered by a metropolitan planning organization.
4. SB 29—Sen. Kevin Van Tassell, R-Vernal, is sponsoring an annual housekeeping bill to adjust the state highway network. This particular bill will add the Mountain View Corridor as State Road 85.
5. SB 121—Sen. Karen Mayne, D-Kearns, is sponsoring a bill that “requires the operator of a vehicle to yield the right-of-way to a public transit vehicle traveling in the same direction that has signaled and is reentering the traffic flow...”
6. It is anticipated that there will be other transportation related issues coming up during the session. Newly introduced legislation will be monitored on a daily basis for possible impacts on transportation.