

KENTUCKY

Transportation News

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Not Too Late To Register For Transportation Conference!

There is still time and ample space for you to join friends, colleagues and other transportation advocates at the 32nd Annual Transportation Conference, sponsored by KBT, next week in Frankfort. There's an opening reception beginning Wednesday night, January 20 at 5:00 p.m. at the Capital Plaza Hotel, and the first general session of the 1½ day program begins at 8:30 a.m. on Thursday, January 21, at the adjoining Frankfort Convention Center. The Capital Plaza Hotel has extended its deadline for you to receive the discounted conference room rate (\$83 per night, single or double) **but you must contact the Capital Plaza Hotel directly at 502-227-5100, and mention that you are attending the Transportation Conference. Hotel rooms are available for Jan. 20 and Jan. 21.**



Gov. Beshear



Hancock



Calipari

The complete Transportation Conference agenda and registration information can be found at www.kbnet.org. Just click on Kentucky Transportation Conference. Program highlights include two national experts addressing the national needs for all modes of transportation, Governor Steve Beshear, Acting Transportation Cabinet Secretary Mike Hancock, Senate President David Williams, House Speaker Greg Stumbo, and other state legislative leaders and transportation decision-makers. Friday morning's General Session will kick-off with dynamic UK Head Basketball Coach John Calipari speaking on the topic "Winning Is Work."

Conference registration for KBT members is \$200; conference registration for non-KBT members is \$220. **New this year, you may register for the conference online, but only if you are paying your conference registration fee by credit card. You may also register by fax (502-491-5603), or you may simply phone the KBT office (502-491-5600) and register by speaking with Paula, Mary Ann or Sandy. We will see YOU in Frankfort, next week.**

2010 General Assembly Underway...

The 2010 Kentucky General Assembly officially convened on Tuesday, January 5, and while some observers of legislative process would criticize it as being slow, the 2010 Session seems to be progressing at a normal, routine speed.

Today, January 13, is the 7th legislative day, meaning that 53 legislative days remain to be used before adjournment in mid-April. The General Assembly in even-numbered years is 60 days in length, and

importantly, the 60 days are not calendar days, but *legislative days*, meaning days when the House and Senate actually meet in their chambers. Saturdays and Sundays are not counted as *legislative days*. It's confusing for those of you who aren't familiar with it!

The first weeks of any Session are dedicated to organizational activities. Legislators must attend mandatory ethics training sessions, and the Legislative Research Commission (LRC) offers similar sessions to legislative agents.

Next week, the pace will quicken. Monday, January 18, is a legislative holiday, honoring Dr. Martin Luther King, and state government will be closed. As a result, there likely will be no committee meetings on Tuesday morning, January 19, and the House and Senate will likely convene at 4:00 p.m. On Tuesday evening at 7:00 p.m. (Eastern Time), KET will broadcast Governor Steve Beshear's 2010 Budget Address, where he will outline his budget priorities for the 2011/2012 biennium before a joint Session of the House and Senate members.

The House Transportation Committee and Senate Transportation Committee have not met yet this Session, but it is not uncommon. Senate Transportation is likely to have its first meeting on Wednesday, Jan. 20, at 9:00 a.m. in Room 154 of the Capitol Annex Building, its normal weekly meeting time and location. The House Transportation Committee is likely to have its first meeting on Tuesday, January 26 at 12:00 noon in Room 149 of the Capitol Annex Building.

KBT members are encouraged to come to Frankfort during the Session, especially on Tuesday and Wednesdays to attend these important committee meetings. One note of caution: meetings can be cancelled or rescheduled, so if you are making a long drive to Frankfort, check with the KBT office (502-491-5600) to be sure the meeting hasn't been cancelled or the meeting time changed.

An important date and time for the individual legislators is Tuesday, January 26 at 4:00 p.m. That's the absolute deadline for any candidate to file their candidacy papers with the Secretary of State's office in Frankfort. The elections will be held this year in May and November, and all of the 100 members of the House of Representatives are up for re-election for two-year terms, and 19 of the 38 Senators are up for re-election for four-year terms. Obviously, current members of the General Assembly are watching closely to see if someone in their district will file their papers of candidacy to run against them.

“The Road Fund Is Coming Around...”

“The Road Fund is coming around,” was the key sound bite at a meeting of the Senate Appropriations & Revenue Committee held yesterday, Tuesday, January 12, in Frankfort.

Greg Harkenrider, Deputy Executive Director for Financial Analysis, Office of State Budget Director, made a lengthy presentation to the 17-member Senate committee to explain revenue forecast estimates for the coming years, based on the analysis of a group of 7 economists who comprise the Consensus Forecasting Group (CFG), a bi-partisan academic group who monitor state revenues and the economy on behalf of the Governor and legislature.

About the Road Fund, Harkenrider told the Committee, “It's starting to improve.”

This week, the Office of the State Budget Director reported that December receipts for the Road Fund rose 3.9%, but year-to-date were down 1.7%.

Nearly 80% of the revenues in the Road Fund are derived from only two sources: the motor vehicle usage tax, and motor fuel fees. Due to the fall off of vehicle sales, Harkenrider predicted that it may take until FY 2012 for revenue from the motor vehicle usage tax to exceed \$400 million a year, the peak amount recorded in FY 2008. Nationwide, he said that the number of vehicle units sold has dropped from 17.5 million to a low of 10 million per year.

The CFG met twice in December, and from those meetings they forecasted a \$99.9 million revenue shortfall for the General Fund in the current fiscal year which ends June 30, 2010. (Governor Beshear has already proposed closing this revenue shortfall gap with a series of actions.)

At the December 21 CFG meeting, the revenue forecasts adopted for the Road Fund were:
FY 10 - \$1,199.1 million, FY 11 - \$1,270.6 million, and FY 12 - \$1,341.7 million.