

KENTUCKY

# Transportation News

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## Stan Lampe Named President-Elect of KBT

Stan Lampe has been named president-elect of Kentuckians for Better Transportation. He will succeed Jack Fish who will retire Dec. 31. Fish has served as president of the organization since 1978.

Lampe has an extensive background in government and public relations having served as director of corporate media relations for Ashland Oil Inc. and vice president of government relations for Alcan Aluminum Corp. After retiring from Ashland in 2004, he served as executive director of the Office of Communication for the Kentucky Education Cabinet and was most recently vice president of Business and Community Advocacy for the Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce.



**Welcome Aboard Stan!** KBT Chair Skip Miller, third from left, welcomes KBT President-Elect Stan Lampe, fourth from left, to his new job. From left are past KBT Chairmen Charles Bucklew, David Beck, Ben Fister, Gene Snowden Jr., Barry Barker, and Bill McCreary.

Lampe was graduated, *cum laude*, from Ohio State University with a major in political science.

KBT works with opinion leaders on the local, regional, state and national levels to encourage the development and maintenance of a safe, interconnecting

transportation system with adequate highway, airport, rail, riverport, and public transit interface to enhance future economic growth. The alliance includes in its membership industry, business, chambers of commerce, local governments and development agencies, and representatives of all modes of transportation -- air, highway, public transit, rail and waterway.

KBT Chair Skip Miller expressed KBT's appreciation to members of the Presidential Search Committee for their work that started last year. Members of the committee are Greg Hensley, Chair; Barry Barker; Jack Fish; Ben Fister; Hugh Gabbard; Sylvia Lovely; Skip Miller; Gary Moore; Gene Snowden, Jr.; and Mark Willis.

## With Time Running Out Oberstar Preparing Three-Month Extension

With only two weeks until authority for federal surface transportation programs is set to lapse, House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chair James Oberstar (D-MN) is expected to have his committee mark up a bill next week to extend current programs and funding levels until the end of this

calendar year. The proposal was advanced last week by House Highways and Transit Subcommittee Chair Peter DeFazio (D-OR).

House leadership is said to support a six-year, \$500 billion authorization measure, but as yet no clear plan to fund the program has been proposed.

In a column recently in the Washington newspaper *Politico*, Oberstar wrote that a long-term bill is critical to not only pump more money into the nation's transportation infrastructure but also to enact vital reforms of how that money is allocated to and spent by state transportation departments.

“These objectives,” wrote Oberstar, “can be reached only through the passage of a robust and transformational long-term surface transportation authorization that charts a bold new path for the future of the nation's transportation network, a bill such as the one now pending in the committee.

“Our bill builds upon the job opportunities created by the recovery act. By enacting it now, we can continue to build ourselves out of this recession. And, once the nation's economy has emerged from this downturn, it will rest on an infrastructure foundation that is safer, stronger, more efficient, and more environmentally sustainable for all Americans. Any delay would risk losing the momentum and the progress made under the recovery act.”

## **Senate Expected to Go with 18-Month Extension**

The three Senate committees with jurisdiction over the surface transportation program have marked up versions of an 18-month extension. Current Highway Trust Fund revenue is inadequate to support continuing existing spending levels. The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee bill would continue current funding levels adjusted slightly for inflation by including some \$19.8 billion from the government's General Fund into the Highway Trust Fund to cover the deficit. The money represents reimbursements to the trust fund of \$12.5 billion in interest payments not made since 1999 and \$7.3 billion for emergency spending taken out of the trust fund in recent years and not replenished.

## **Rescission Still Hanging**

There has still been no action to repeal the impending \$8.7 billion rescission of federal highway funds. While key congressional leaders have said the problem would be resolved, transportation advocates are concerned. Failure to repeal the Sept. 30 scheduled rescission -- part of the original SAFETEA-LU bill -- would mean Kentucky will give up \$150.7 million in federal funding authority.

## **Senate Approves FY 10 Funds for Transportation**

The U.S. Senate, yesterday, by a vote of 73 to 25, approved H.R. 3288, the FY 10 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies appropriations bill totaling \$122 billion.

The bill provides \$75.8 billion for transportation including \$42.5 billion for highways and \$11.1 billion for transit. The highway spending level is \$1.8 billion more than the FY 09 level and \$1.4 billion higher than that proposed in the House bill.

The bill includes an obligation limitation of \$41.107 billion for highways and bridges. It includes funding of \$900 million from the General Fund to boost highway formula spending as well as \$500 million from the General Fund to expand the TIFIA program, which loans money to states for development of toll projects and other transportation infrastructure. General Fund money is included to cover some \$165 million in highway earmarks.

Transit funding is \$800 million more than in FY 09 and \$600 million over the House level of \$10.5 billion. It includes \$8.343 billion for formula and bus grants, \$2.307 billion for New Starts and Small Starts capital grants, and \$100 million to assist transit agencies in reducing greenhouse-gas emissions.

Funding for the Airport Improvement program is continued at \$3.5 billion in the Senate measure, the same level as provided by the House.

The Senate bill includes a new category of funding for "Significant Transportation Projects" at \$1.1 billion. This money is intended to support competitive grants for highways, bridges, public transportation, passenger and freight rail, and port infrastructure. The bill requires the Secretary to allocate no less than \$250 million for projects in rural communities.

Funding for highway traffic safety grants is funded at the House level of \$619.5 million. Federal motor carrier safety grants are funded at \$310 million.

With the Oct. 1 start of the 2010 budget year looming, not one of the 12 appropriations bills required to keep government running has become law. A stopgap measure will be necessary to make sure the government doesn't shut down.

### **Panel Recommends Interstate Authority for Louisville Bridges**

A group of Kentucky and Indiana negotiators, in a meeting last week that lasted less than an hour, unanimously recommended the creation of an interstate authority to oversee the financing, construction and operations of the Louisville Ohio River Bridges Project.

The bi-state authority will be made up of seven representatives each from Indiana and Kentucky. Four of Kentucky's members will be appointed by Mayor Abramson and three by Gov. Beshear. Beshear must also name a statewide panel to oversee large mega transportation projects. The statewide panel must hold its first meeting by Nov. 1, according to the provisions of the infrastructure authority law enacted in June.

### **\$28.7 Million I-65 Project Partially Funded with Stimulus**

Gov. Steve Beshear, last week, announced a \$28.7 million project to rehab a 3-mile, 10-lane wide section of I-65 between Fern Valley Road and I-264. Eighteen million dollars of the cost is being funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

Erosion caused the current concrete pavement, which was placed in 1988, to subside. It will be replaced with asphalt. Work on the mainline I-65 must be completed no later than Nov. 15, and ramp work must be completed by Dec. 15. The work will be 24 hours a day for 16 days in each direction. The project was awarded to the tri-venture of Louisville Paving, Hall Contracting and Hinkle Construction. Hinkle is a charter member of KBT.

### **Motor Fuels User Fee Will Increase .7 Cents**

The Kentucky motor fuels user fee will rise from the current 22.5 cents per gallon to 23.2 cpg effective October 1. (The fee includes 1.4 cpg diverted to the UST program.) The new rate is based on the average wholesale price of motor fuel rising from the \$1.786 floor during July to \$1.864. The new rate is effective for the October-December quarter. The January-March rate will be determined by the average wholesale price of fuel in October. On an annual basis, a .7 cent increase will generate some \$21 million.