

Legislative Update

May 2, 2025

FROM WASHINGTON, D.C.

On Wednesday, April 30, the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure met to review the Committee's budget reconciliation proposal, which includes more than \$10 billion cuts in spending and other deficit reducing provisions. The committee's revised proposal rescinds nearly \$4.6 billion in unobligated funds by eliminating seven Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) programs they deemed duplicative or outside the federal government's core responsibilities, such as grants for low-carbon materials and sustainable aviation fuel. It also introduces new user fees for electric and hybrid vehicles to ensure all drivers contribute to the Highway Trust Fund, aiming to raise an estimated \$50 billion over ten years and reduce reliance on general fund bailouts.

FROM AUSTIN

There are about five weeks left in the 89th legislative session. By this point in the session, if a bill has yet to be heard in a committee hearing in its originating chamber, there is not much chance of a bill going any further in the legislative process. The first significant legislative deadline is May 12, the deadline for House bills to be filed with the Committee Coordinator and reported from a committee.

The House Transportation Funding Subcommittee met on April 28 at 10 am to review several bills of interest. HB 483 (Bucy) would repeal the ban that blocks state investment in high-speed rail projects and direct TxDOT to partner with a private entity for high-speed rail projects. HB 3345 (Lopez) would authorize counties with populations under 700,000 to increase the optional vehicle registration fee to a maximum of \$20, contingent upon voter approval through a referendum election. HB 4523 (Martinez) would clarify requirements for grants/loans with TxDOT and set that local matches would not be required when aviation facilities receive funds from the legislature. HB 4524 (Martinez) would create the Texas Airport Investment Partnership Program, establishing a revolving loan program to provide an additional funding source to help aviation facilities. HB 5346 (Metcalf) would require toll projects to be transferred to the State Highway system and be maintained by the TTC when the project has been paid off. HB 5347 (Metcalf) would require the construction of nontolled frontage roads adjacent to newly contracted toll projects along routes previously served by nontolled highways. HB 5376 (Romero) would allow municipalities to restrict the use of managed toll roads by class of vehicles during certain weather conditions. All bills were left pending.

The House Transportation Committee met on April 29 at 8 am to review and approve several bills. HB 341 (Morales) would direct TxDOT and Texas A&M Transportation Institute to study the data of when/where bike collisions happen and if protected bike lanes can protect lives. HB 971 (Toth) would permit motorists to use HOV lanes despite how many passengers in the event of needing to pass a slow vehicle or in the case of an accident and give TxDOT deference in case this causes any funding issues. HB 1624 (Vasut) would give local municipalities the authority to place stop signs on state highways when traffic lights are out. HB 4348 (Capriglione) would prohibit a local government entity from implementing certain roadway projects that narrow existing vehicular roadway space on a roadway maintained by the entity unless they meet clear public review standards, requiring notification to TxDOT of any planned lanes, and require public participation. HB 4402 (Gamez) would regulate the operation of automated motor vehicles by specifying the roles of human operators, requiring licenses for them, and differentiating between commercial and non-commercial vehicle operations, while repealing a related section of the existing code. All bills heard on April 29 were left pending.

Additionally, the House Transportation Committee met again on May 1 at 8 am to review other bills of interest. HB 283 (Guillen), which would allow a 15% axle weight tolerance for vehicles transporting aggregate materials, was left pending. HB 2999 (Harris Davila), which would allow hydrogen-fueled vehicles to exceed state weight limitations by the difference in weight between their hydrogen and diesel fueling systems, up to a maximum of 82,000 pounds, was left pending. HB 3208 (Anchia, which would direct TxDOT to install highway signs for Koreatown Dallas and Chinatown Richardson, was approved. HB 3389 (Paul), which would permit TxDOT to approve surety bonds for a contract authorizing an oversize or overweight vehicle to cross a road or highway, was left pending. HB 3974 (Richardson), which would establish a toll-free telephone hotline managed by the TxDOT for the public to report dangerous road conditions on state highways, was left pending. HB 5332 (Kerwin), which would limit permits to a 10% tolerance on axle weight and remove the previous allowance for exceeding gross weight, was left pending. HB 5453 (Craddick), which would change how Texas picks and funds transportation projects by prioritizing maintenance and improvements, was approved. Additionally, the Committee voted on bills heard in previous hearings. HB 1772 (Bhojani) would strengthen railroad crossing safety by increasing penalty of intentional violation, requires intentional disregard of warning to go to trial, and targets vehicle operators. SB 1841 (Johnson) would enhance privacy protections for personal data collected by municipal and airport entities to prevent public disclosure of travel and transaction information. SB 305 (Perry) would expand the vehicles protected from being passed on the highway to include animal control and parking citation vehicles with proper signals. HB 4473 (Canales) would direct TxDOT, in partnership with Texas A&M Transportation Institute, to study five types of county road administration systems to determine cost-efficiency and effectiveness over the past 25 years. HB 3539 (Harris Davila) would allow pregnant drivers to count as two passengers in a HOV lane. HB 3726 (Perez) would apply the Move Over or Slow Down Law to all vehicles stopped in the breakdown lane or shoulder with their hazard lights flashing. HB 4164 (Guillen) would require TxDOT to put in effort to track property owners, 60 days after the initial notice (without response). HB 4706 (Paul) would require cars/vehicles to give all sidewalk users (scooters, mobility scooters, etc.) right of way, just like pedestrians. SB 2039 (Hancock) would extend pedestrian right-of-way laws to small vehicles such as bicycles, electric bicycles, and electric personal assistive mobility devices for safety. All of these bills were voted favorably out of committee.

HIGHLIGHTED BILLS WITH ACTION

- HB 2003, Relating to provision to the Texas Department of Transportation of information regarding certain high-speed rail projects. Passed in the House on April 25. Received in the Senate.
- SB 1964, Relating to the regulation and use of artificial intelligence systems and the management of data by governmental entities. Passed in the Senate on April 28. Received in the House.
- HB 205, Relating to the eligibility for grants for alternative fueling facilities. Passed in the House on April 29. Received in the Senate.
- HB 3826, Relating to the creation of the Texas Energy Efficiency Council. Passed in the House on April 29. Received in the Senate.
- SB 1197, Relating to the operation of an unmanned aircraft over a spaceport. Passed in the Senate on April 29. Set on Senate Items Eligible Calendar.
- SB 2351, Relating to the construction, expansion, or modification of certain concrete plants under a standard permit. Passed in the Senate on April 29. Received in the House.
- HJR 7, Proposing a constitutional amendment to dedicate a portion of the revenue derived from state sales and use taxes to the Texas water fund. Passed in the House on April 29. Received in the Senate.

- HB 3511, Relating to the interconnection of electric vehicles to the ERCOT power grid. Passed the House on April 30. Received in the Senate.
- HB 3309, Relating to the use of automated traffic control systems by local authorities and law enforcement agencies. Passed in the House on April 30. Received in the Senate.

UPCOMING COMMITTEE HEARINGS

TEXAS SENATE

- The Senate Transportation Committee will meet on Wednesday, May 7, at 8 am. The Committee will meet to consider the following bill of interest:
 - SB 2799 Relating to increasing the criminal penalty for the offense of reckless driving

TEXAS HOUSE

- The House County and Regional Government Subcommittee will meet on Monday, May 5 at 10 am. The Subcommittee will meet to consider the following bill of interest:
 - HB 3310 Relating to the authority of certain counties to adopt noise regulations
- The House Ways and Means Committee will meet on Monday, May 5 at 9 am. The Committee will meet to consider the following bill of interest:
 - HB 3830 Relating to a franchise tax credit for certain watershed protection activities
- The House Transportation Committee will meet on Thursday, May 8 at 8 am. The Committee will meet to consider the following bills of interest:
 - HB 535 Relating to the operation of a motor vehicle passing a pedestrian or a person operating a bicycle in certain municipalities; creating a criminal offense
 - HB 2822 Relating to the stopping, standing, or parking of a vehicle in a parking space designated as an electric vehicle charging station
 - HB 3544 Relating to flood control measures for Texas Department of Transportation highway projects
 - HB 4089 Relating to the regulation and operation of electric bicycles
 - HB 4192 Relating to the registration and inspection of vehicles
 - HB 4868 Relating to allowing a bicyclist to treat certain traffic-control devices as a yield sign
 - HB 4955 Relating to lighting equipment requirements for motor vehicles
 - HB 5253 Relating to the authority of a municipality to alter speed limits
 - SB 1919 Relating to the authority of the Texas Department of Transportation to settle certain claims
- The House Environmental Regulation Committee will meet on Thursday, May 8 at 10:30 am. The Committee will meet to consider the following bill of interest:
 - SB 2321 Relating to the regulation of emissions by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality during an event affecting electric demand or grid reliability

US HOUSE

- The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee will meet on May 6 for a hearing titled, "America Builds: Improving the Efficiency and Effectiveness of Federal Rail Assistance."
- The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee will meet on May 7 for a hearing titled, "Cleaning up the Past, Building the Future: The Brownfields Program."

RECENT COMMITTEE HEARINGS

TEXAS HOUSE

- Transportation Funding Subcommittee (April 28)

- HB 483 Relating to the use of state money for high-speed rail operated by a private entity and to the construction of certain high-speed rail (Pending)
 - HB 3345 Relating to authorizing an increase in an optional county fee on vehicle registration in certain counties (Pending)
 - HB 4523 Relating to requirements for certain funding of aviation facilities and projects (Pending)
 - HB 4524 Relating to the establishment of the Texas airport investment partnership program (Pending)
 - HB 5346 Relating to the cessation of tolls by toll project entities in certain circumstances (Pending)
 - HB 5347 Relating to the construction of nontolled frontage roads adjacent to certain toll projects (Pending)
 - HB 5376 Relating to the authority of a municipality to restrict the use of toll roads by certain vehicles (Pending)
- County Government Subcommittee (April 28)
 - HB 4114 Relating to the salary schedules for regional planning commissions (Pending)
- Ways and Means (April 28)
 - HB 1483 Relating to an exemption from ad valorem taxation of the amount of the appraised value of certain residential real property that arises from the installation of energy efficiency-related improvements (Pending)
 - HB 3746 Relating to the exemption of certain gas and electricity from sales and use taxes (Pending)
 - HJR 102 Proposing a constitutional amendment to authorize the legislature to provide for an exemption from ad valorem taxation related to the installation of energy efficiency-related improvements (Pending)
- Appropriations (April 29)
 - HB 188 Relating to the allocation of certain constitutional transfers of money to certain funds and accounts, including the Texas severance tax revenue and oil and natural gas (Texas STRONG) defense fund (Pending)
 - HB 265 Relating to the allocation of certain constitutional transfers of money to the economic stabilization fund, the state highway fund, and the Grow Texas fund and to the permissible uses of money deposited to the Grow Texas fund (Pending)
 - HJR 35 Proposing a constitutional amendment providing for the creation of and use of money in the Grow Texas fund and allocating certain general revenues to that fund (Pending)
 - HJR 47 Proposing a constitutional amendment providing for the creation of the Texas severance tax revenue and oil and natural gas (Texas STRONG) defense fund (Pending)
- Transportation (April 29)
 - HB 341 Relating to a study by the Texas Department of Transportation on traffic collisions involving persons operating bicycles, electric bicycles, or motor-assisted scooters (Pending)
 - HB 971 Relating to the use of a high occupancy vehicle lane to pass certain vehicles (Pending)
 - HB 1624 Relating to the authority of a local authority to install a temporary traffic-control device on certain highways (Pending)
 - HB 4348 Relating to a prohibition on certain roadway projects and to the distribution of affordable housing funds to local governmental entities that violate that prohibition (Pending)

- HB 4402 Relating to human operators of certain automated motor vehicles (Pending)
- Intergovernmental Affairs (April 29)
 - HB 769 Relating to a grant program for neighborhood organization pedestrian infrastructure administered by the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (Pending)
 - HB 3383 Relating to the authority of a local government to enter into an interlocal contract with certain governmental entities to participate in water research or planning activities (Pending)
- Judiciary and Civil Jurisprudence (April 30)
 - SB 441 Relating to civil liability for the production, solicitation, disclosure, or promotion of artificial intimate visual material (Pending)
- Natural Resources (April 30)
 - HB 2078 Relating to the joint planning of desired future conditions in groundwater management areas (Pending)
- Delivery of Government Efficiency (April 30)
 - HB 3837 Relating to the regulation of autonomous vehicles (Pending)
 - SB 2425 Relating to the regulation of automated motor vehicles (Pending)
- Criminal Jurisprudence (May 1)
 - HB 689 Relating to increasing the criminal penalty for certain offenses committed in a vehicle operated by a public transportation system (Pending)
- Land and Resource Management (May 1)
 - HB 407 Relating to municipal and county requirements for solar energy device compatibility for certain residential construction (Pending)
 - HB 871 Relating to the residential and commercial building codes of municipalities (Pending)
 - HB 882 Relating to building codes applicable in the unincorporated areas of a county (Pending)
 - HB 2011 Relating to the right to repurchase from a condemning entity certain real property for which ad valorem taxes are delinquent (Pending)
 - HB 3572 Relating to municipal zoning regulations and district boundaries (Pending)
 - HB 4866 Relating to the review, adoption, and modification of land development regulations by certain counties and municipalities (Pending)
 - HB 4897 Relating to the time period for a municipality to approve subdivision plans or plats (Pending)
 - SB 673 Relating to regulation of accessory dwelling units by political subdivisions (Pending)
- Environmental Regulation (May 1)
 - HB 1463 Relating to the manufacture, transportation, storage, and disposal of new and scrap tires (Pending)
 - SB 763 Relating to the renewal and review of standard permits for certain concrete plants (Approved)
- Transportation (May 1)
 - HB 283 Relating to axle weight limitations for certain vehicles transporting aggregates (Pending)
 - HB 2999 Relating to weight limitations for hydrogen-fueled motor vehicles (Pending)
 - HB 3208 Relating to the installation by the Texas Department of Transportation of highway signs for certain cultural attractions (Approved)

- HB 3389 Relating to the approval of a surety bond for a contract authorizing an oversize or overweight vehicle to cross a road or highway (Pending)
- HB 3974 Relating to a toll-free telephone hotline established by the Texas Department of Transportation for reporting dangerous road conditions (Pending)
- HB 5332 Relating to the issuance of excess axle or gross weight permits (Pending)
- HB 5453 Relating to the selection, prioritization, and funding of transportation projects (Approved)
- Telecommunications and Broadband Subcommittee (May 2)
 - HB 2964 Relating to the provision of broadband service in certain rural counties (Pending)

TEXAS SENATE

- Local Government (April 28)
 - SB 2522 Relating to municipal and county regulation of platting and subdivisions of land (Pending)
- Business and Commerce (May 1)
 - HB 149 Relating to the regulation of the use of artificial intelligence systems in this state (Pending)

US HOUSE

- The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee – Subcommittee on Highways and Transit met on April 29 for a hearing titled, “America Builds: The Need for a Long-Term Solution for the Highway Trust Fund.” The committee heard invited testimony from the Utah Department of Transportation Director on behalf of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), the president of the National Asphalt Pavement Association, the Eno Center for Transportation, the Vice President and Global Principal for Advanced Mobility and the Brookings Institute. The committee discussed the importance of long-term certainty and stability for the Highway Trust Fund as it has faced an insolvency crisis dating back to at least 2008. The testimony highlighted how current user fees are no longer sufficient to sustain necessary investment in our surface infrastructure needs.
- On Wednesday, April 30, the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure met to review the Committee’s budget reconciliation proposal, which includes more than \$10 billion cuts in spending and other deficit reducing provisions. The summary is discussed above.