

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Association of Central Oklahoma Governments ★ February 23, 2017



Passage of HB 1449 will negatively impact the mission of ACOG's Central Oklahoma Clean Cities program.

There has been significant movement in HB 1449, since ACOG first reported on it in late January. At that time, lawmakers proposed a \$20 registration fee on Electric Vehicles (EVs). On February 13, the proposed fee increased to \$60 and before passage by the House Appropriations and Budget Subcommittee on Monday, it had increased to \$150. The bill nearly failed in committee, but passed 12-13. **It's been placed on the full House agenda for today (February 23).**

Also, HB 1449, proposes a \$30 annual registration fee for hybrid vehicles. If the gas tax is also increased this session, the result will be a double taxation on hybrid car drivers.

ACOG Clean Cities Coordinator **Eric Pollard** is working with Clean Cities stakeholders including the Tulsa Clean Cities program housed at the Indian Nations Council of Governments (INCOG); the Oklahoma Association of Electric Cooperatives (OAEC); Oklahoma Gas & Electric Company (OG&E Services and Public Service Company of Oklahoma to determine a fairer fee structure, which includes and \$80 annual fee for Electric Vehicles, \$70 less than the proposed \$150.

Over the next few weeks, they will educate lawmakers about the impact of what they believe is an onerous fee; one that unfairly penalizes motorists who have elected to drive environmentally-friendly and cost-efficient vehicles.

Moreover, the legislation runs counter to the goals of the ACOG Clean Cities program, which was started in the mid-1990s at the urging of Oklahoma's Congressional delegation. The program has enjoyed nonpartisan support from the state's last four governors. Although stakeholders understand the current budget crisis, they believe an annual fee of \$150 will disincentive motorists and essentially kill the growing EV market in Oklahoma.

Furthermore, if HB 1449 passes, Oklahoma will have the second highest EV road tax in the country and Oklahoma EV drivers will be paying 114 percent more in road taxes than gasoline vehicle drivers.

It is also worth noting that for decades, ACOG has been the leader in promoting and communicating solutions to regional ozone pollution reduction. Increased EV adoption in Central Oklahoma is critical to ACOG's mission to keep the region in attainment with EPA air quality standards.

Thus, Central Oklahoma Clean Cities stakeholders encourage the ACOG Board of Directors to contact lawmakers about the advantages of electric vehicles.

SPEAKER of the HOUSE

Speaker Charles McCall (R-Atoka)

(405) 557-7412

HOUSE FLOOR LEADER

Rep. Katie Henke (R-Tulsa)

(405) 557-7361

AUTHORS

Rep. Dustin Roberts (R-District 21)

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Sen. Stephanie Bice (R-District 22)

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HB 2274

HB 2274 would require that the 911 fee and Universal Service fee be collected on pre-paid wireless devices.

HB 1341: Open Records

If passed, HB 1341 will amend the Open Records Act by limiting how certain court records can be viewed. The specific records listed in the bill are only viewable internally and shall not be viewable on the Internet.

Rural Fire

With HB 1248 lawmakers propose creating the Rural Volunteer Fire Departments Act of 2017. Mike Sanders (R-District 59) is the author. If passed, the bill will allow up to 10 percent of the Rural Fire Protection Program Fund be distributed to participants based upon the number of fire runs or to pay for expenses associated with large fires.

Water, Water Rights

Thirteen water and/or water rights bills have been filed this session. The following have been assigned to the Rules Committee:

HB 2098 - Water Act of 2017

HB 2099 – Water Policy Act of 2017

HB 1739 – Water Rights Act of 2017

HB 2279 – Repealing 82 O.S. 2011, Section 1B, which relates to a moratorium on the sale or exportation of water.

HB 1407

HB 1407 is headed to the full House. The bill, which has generated some public interest, would allow public schools to offer high school students elective courses in the construction trades.

HB 1114: Teachers Pay

HB 1114 has passed out of committee. The bill would include a \$1,000 pay raise for teachers during the 2017-18 school year; another \$2,000 raise during the 2018-19 school year, and a final \$3,000 raise during the 2019-20 school year.

Congressional Update: Infrastructure Package

The National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) reports that the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman **Bill Shuster** (R-PA) has met with Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao and is working with Energy and Commerce Chairman **Greg Walden** (R-OR) on the much-discussed infrastructure package. Shuster indicated their proposal will include broadband, electric grid, pipeline, and transportation, but will not be released until the House has dispatched with Obamacare repeal and tax reform. He also indicated that tax code changes will be an important piece of future funding.

Amtrak's President and CEO **Wick Moorman** told the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee that an infrastructure package should include direct federal funding for Amtrak and other rail organizations. He also argued that federal funding would help maximize public private partnership investments and highlighted several key projects, such as the Hudson Tunnels, that need long-term investment.

Along with Amtrak, port executives are vying for funding in an infrastructure package. Heads of ports around the country spoke with House staff members this week on the backlog of projects that threaten the economic benefit of ports and the importance of including funding for port maintenance. This issue has also been a priority for House T&I Ranking Member **Peter DeFazio** (D-OR) who supports \$27 billion in harbor maintenance over the next decade. With so much talk about infrastructure during this election cycle and administration, there is no shortage of interest groups making their case for funding to lawmakers.

Public Affairs Updates

Chamber Updates

The Greater Oklahoma City Chamber of Commerce is actively pursuing a better business climate through its advocacy efforts at the state capitol this legislative session. [Sign up to receive alerts \(http://www.okcbusinessadvocate.com\)](http://www.okcbusinessadvocate.com) and you will receive updates throughout the session on how bills are progressing at the capitol. As needed, you will also receive critical advocacy alerts that will let you know when to contact your elected official.

Mick Cornett Announces He Will Not Seek A Fifth Term

Oklahoma City Mayor **Mick Cornett** has announced yesterday, that he will not seek a fifth term. Soonafter, Oklahoma County Commissioner **Brian Maughan** announced his mayoral bid, while Oklahoma City Ward 2 Councilman **Ed Shadid** told his Facebook supporters that he was actively considering his "role in leading the City towards the rewards of a stable and diversified future."

In addition, State Senator **David Holt** released the following statement earlier today: "I am actively exploring how I may personally work to bring about that outcome, and I will be making an announcement in the coming days."

Cornett's term ends in April 2018.

Lt. Governor Todd Lamb Resigns From Cabinet

In protest to Governor Fallin's proposed \$1.7 billion sales tax increase, **Lt. Governor Todd Lamb**, resigned from her cabinet. In addition, the following legislators cited their their fundamental disagreement with the proposed hike and publicly pledged to fight it. They include:

Rep. John Bennett (R-Sallisaw)
Rep. David Brumbaugh (R-Broken Arrow)
Rep. Kevin Calvey (R-Oklahoma City)
Rep. Bobby Cleveland (R-Slaughterville)
Rep. George Faught (R-Muskogee)
Rep. Kevin McDugle (R-Broken Arrow)
Rep. Lewis Moore (R-Edmond)
Rep. Mike Ritze (R-Broken Arrow)
Rep. Chuck Strohm (R-Jenks)
Sen. Mark Allen (R-Spiro)
Sen. Nathan Dahm (R-Broken Arrow)
Sen. James Leewright (R-Bristow)
Sen. Marty Quinn (R-Claremore)
Sen. Anthony Sykes (R-Moore)

Mike Hunt Named AG

Governor Fallin has named Oklahoma's Secretary of State **Mike Hunt** the new State Attorney General. Hunter succeeds **Scott Pruitt**, who resigned last week following his confirmation by the U.S. Senate. Pruitt was confirmed as head of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in a vote of 52 to 46.