

Legislative Update

January 31, 2025

FROM WASHINGTON, D.C.

The full Senate voted on January 28, 2025, to confirm Sean Duffy as Secretary of the Department of Transportation. The vote was 77-22, representing wide bipartisan support for his confirmation.

Appropriations

Congress is rapidly approaching an important deadline: March 14, the day when the recently passed continuing resolution expires, ending temporary government funding at current levels. House Speaker Johnson has set a goal to have a budget ready for a floor vote by the end of February. If Congress fails to pass appropriations bills and properly fund the government by April 30, the Fiscal Responsibility Act (FRA) requires a 1% across-the-board spending cut to every department, a process known as "sequestration."

Rescinding Greenhouse Gas Measurement Rule

AGENCY: Department of Transportation (DOT)

ACTION: Submission of a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking

SUMMARY: The Secretary approved submission of a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking to rescind the previous Administration's rule requiring state transportation departments to measure and establish declining targets for carbon dioxide emissions on federally supported highways.

FROM AUSTIN

On January 23, 2025, the House approved on new rules for the 89th legislative session that would prohibit minority party members from chairing committees, achieving a key goal for conservative Republicans but also upending a power-sharing tradition dating back to the 1970s. The newly adopted rules also eliminate six committees, form two new committees, expand the size of ten committees, and establish new Permanent Standing Subcommittees for ten committees. The size of the House Natural Resources Committee was increased, and a Transportation Funding Subcommittee was created for the House Transportation Committee. House members are now awaiting committee assignments after the rules were adopted. The House speaker is expected to announce assignments in the coming weeks.

The Lt. Governor has shared the first half of his 40 priorities for the session. The first 25 priorities did not include Transportation and Air Quality initiatives. The second half of this list will be published soon.

January Texas Transportation Commission (TTC) Hearing

The TTC held their regular monthly meeting on Thursday, January 30, 2025. Development of the 2026 Unified Transportation Program (UTP) planning targets were presented. TxDOT will distribute draft planning targets to districts and metropolitan planning partners in February. They will hold public meetings in July 2025 and request Commission approval in August 2025.

HIGHLIGHTED BILLS

Electric Vehicles

HB 2099 Plesa – Relating to the imposition of a tax on commercial electric vehicle charging services based on the amount of electricity transferred. Would create a tax on EV charging per kilowatt hour, modeled after the current gas tax but specifically for EV charging.

UPCOMING COMMITTEE HEARINGS

TEXAS SENATE

- Senate Finance will meet on February 11 to consider SB 1, General Appropriations Bill - Article VI - Natural Resources. This includes The Commission of Environmental Quality.
- Senate Finance will meet on February 12 to consider SB 1, General Appropriations Bill - Article VII - Business and Economic Development. This includes the Department of Transportation and the Department of Motor Vehicles.

TEXAS HOUSE

- Committee assignments are expected soon; hearings should begin in the next few weeks.