

# TRANSPORTATION

## Transportation Financing

**SB 14-055** (*Enacted*)

Vehicles Subject to Daily Rental Fee

**HB 14-1259** (*Postponed Indefinitely*)

General Fund Transfer  
to State Highway Fund

**HB 14-1326** (*Enacted*)

Tax Incentive for Alternative Fuel  
Trucks

## Transportation Planning

**SB 14-028** (*Enacted*)

Expand Electric Vehicle Charging  
Station Grants

**SB 14-197** (*Vetoed*)

Transportation Enterprise  
Transparency Act

**HB 14-1161** (*Enacted*)

Preserve & Expand Amtrak  
Interstate Rail Service

## Colorado Department of Transportation

**SB 14-020** (*Postponed Indefinitely*)

Motorcycle Operator Safety Training

**SB 14-060** (*Enacted*)

CDOT Training for Flagpersons

**SB 14-146** (*Enacted*)

Use Local Traffic Information for  
CDOT Speed Limit Study

**HB 14-1188** (*Enacted*)

Use of Outdoor Advertising  
Revenues

**HB 14-1301** (*Enacted*)

Safe Routes to School Program  
State Funding

The General Assembly considered a handful of transportation-related legislation during the 2014 session. Topics addressed include transportation financing, transportation planning, and the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT).

## Transportation Financing

The General Assembly considered three bills during the 2014 session pertaining to transportation financing. Two bills were enacted and one bill was postponed indefinitely.

Current law imposes a \$2 daily vehicle rental fee on a vehicle registered as a rental and owned by a person whose primary business is renting vehicles to other people for periods of less than 45 days. At present, these vehicles are exempted from the road and bridge safety charges imposed at the time of registration. **Senate Bill 14-055** clarifies the type of vehicle that is subject to the \$2 daily vehicle rental fee and amends current law to apply the fee to all short-term vehicle rentals in the state, for vehicles with a gross vehicle weight rating of 26,000 pounds or less, regardless of the primary business of the vehicle owner. Subsequent renewals that extend the rental period beyond 30 days are exempt from the fee. The bill defines short-term vehicle rental as consisting of 30 days or less.

CDOT has five distinct engineering regions in Colorado, with a center in each one for staff and equipment, to more efficiently and effectively serve each region. **House Bill 14-1259**, which was postponed indefinitely, would have transferred \$100 million from the General Fund to the State Highway Fund (SHF) and required CDOT to allocate the money to the department's engineering regions in proportion to the number of state highway system lane miles in each engineering region; and use the money only for the maintenance, repair, reconstruction, and replacement of existing state highways and bridges.

**House Bill 14-1326** makes changes to three areas of tax policy affecting low-emission and alternative fuel vehicles. It reduces the number of vehicles eligible to claim an existing sales and use tax exemption, and reduces the taxable value of certain vehicles for the purpose of calculating the specific ownership tax. It also creates an income tax credit for the purchase or conversion of an electric or plug-in electric truck with a gross vehicle weight rating of over 8,500 pounds at a percentage of the actual cost incurred and caps the total amount a taxpayer may claim in a tax year; expands the income tax credit for the purchase or conversion of a truck equipped to operate on compressed natural gas and liquefied petroleum gas to include liquefied natural gas and hydrogen; and allows the credit for heavy duty trucks.

## Transportation Planning

The General Assembly considered three bills during the 2014 session pertaining to transportation planning. All three bills were enacted.

Under current law, the Electric Vehicle (EV) Grant Fund is used to provide grants to local governments, landlords of multi-family apartment buildings, and unit owners' associations of common interest communities for the installation of EV recharging stations. **Senate Bill 14-028** expands the list of eligible entities that may receive grants to include private nonprofit and for-profit corporations, state agencies, public universities, and public transit agencies. The bill requires the Colorado Energy Office (CEO) to prioritize grant applications based on how proposed charging stations would serve existing EVs and encourage the acquisition of additional EVs. The CEO must also consider the extent to which, without the grant, one or more charging stations might not be able to be installed. The CEO is authorized to grant the full cost of an installation in certain locations.

**Senate Bill 14-197**, which was vetoed by the Governor, would have required the board of the High-Performance Transportation Enterprise (HPTE) in CDOT to increase public notice of and participation in, and legislative oversight of, any public-private partnership (PPP) involving the HPTE. In coordination with local governments, the board would have been required to hold public meetings throughout the PPP process and provide full and timely notice to state legislators, county and municipal governments, and the general public.

After entering into a PPP, the board would have had to provide the terms of the agreement to the Senate Transportation Committee and House Transportation & Energy Committee and post the terms of the agreement on the CDOT website. Additionally, the bill would have prohibited the HPTE from entering into PPPs that contain certain provisions until the General Assembly specifically approved such provisions through the enactment of a Joint Resolution. The HPTE would have been required to provide public notice of any change in the status of a high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane, and when considering a project related to HOV, high-occupancy toll (HOT) lanes, or managed lanes, the HPTE would have needed to evaluate the sustainability of express bus service or bus rapid transit service.

**House Bill 14-1161** creates the Southwest Chief Rail Line Economic Development, Rural Tourism, and Infrastructure Repair and Maintenance Commission within CDOT to oversee efforts by state and local governments, and cooperate with Kansas and New Mexico, Amtrak, and the Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway to ensure continuation of existing Amtrak Southwest Chief rail line service in the state. The commission is comprised of five voting members including representatives from the rail industry, tourist industry, and citizens of southeast Colorado. In addition, the commission has two appointed representatives of CDOT and Amtrak who advise the commission but are not voting members. The bill also creates the Southwest Chief Rail Line Economic Development, Rural Tourism, and Infrastructure Repair and Maintenance Fund. The commission and fund are repealed July 1, 2017.

## Colorado Department of Transportation

The General Assembly considered five bills during the 2014 session pertaining to CDOT. Four bills were enacted; one was postponed indefinitely.

**Senate Bill 14-020**, which was postponed indefinitely, would have directed the Office of Transportation Safety within CDOT to cap spending on the administration of the Motorcycle Operator Safety Training (MOST) program at 20 percent of the total cost of the program, with no more than 10 percent spent on the promotion of motorcycle safety. It would have required CDOT to use 70 percent of the total cost of the program to subsidize tuition for MOST-approved courses.

Current law allows state and local road authorities to train adult personnel as flag persons to work within their respective jurisdictions and requires drivers to obey the directions of flagpersons. **Senate Bill 14-060** authorizes CDOT to certify public and private entities in flagperson training and requires flagpersons to wear high-visibility clothing, use a prescribed device while directing traffic, and abide by CDOT's manuals for traffic control. The bill also clarifies that law enforcement personnel are exempt from these requirements.

Under current law, CDOT must approve any change to a speed limit on portions of a state highway that are located within a city, city and county, or incorporated town. In incorporated cities and towns with 5,000 residents or fewer, the municipality may request that the CDOT conduct a traffic investigation to determine a safe and reasonable speed limit. CDOT is required to perform an investigation if the department deems it necessary for determining the speed limit. **Senate Bill 14-146** authorizes CDOT to also perform a traffic investigation for any requesting incorporated city or town, at the department's discretion, and allows CDOT to receive and consider traffic and engineering data provided by the city or county engineer of the requesting local government.

**House Bill 14-1188** establishes a cost recovery center within the SHF and requires CDOT to deposit all program permit fees charged for billboard revenues in the center to pay the costs of administering the signs. In addition, the bill requires the CDOT to credit revenues from specific information signs, business signs installed on specific information signs, and tourist-oriented directional signs to the SHF.

CDOT currently administers the Safe Routes to School program and distributes federal funds to state subdivisions for projects that improve the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists in school areas. Beginning in FY 2014-15, the CDOT will no longer receive federal funds for distribution. **House Bill 14-1301** appropriates \$700,000 from the General Fund to CDOT in FY 2014-15 for the continuation of the Safe Routes to School program, and specifies that at least 20 percent but not more than 30 percent of state funds must be used for non-infrastructure projects. The bill also adds a criterion that the CDOT must consider when evaluating grant applications. Finally, the bill requires that General Fund appropriations made to the program be reduced in any year that the CDOT receives federal moneys for the program by the amount of federal moneys received.