

# THE FIRST WORD

April, 2014

## April Legislative Report

### Transportation Funding Under Attack; Call your Senator Today!!!!

As we reported in the Thursday, April 3rd "LEGISLATIVE ALERT," the Senate Committee on Appropriations stripped ODOT of almost \$30 Million in funding for the coming fiscal year.

By re-allocating 50% of the ROADS fund's \$59.7 million annual allocation to a newly created "Securing Educational Excellence Fund" within the State Department of Education, the Committee's action creates a \$414 Million deficit in ODOT's Eight-Year Plan.

Opposition to House Bill 2642 by Rep. Lee Denney, R-Cushing, and Sen. Jim Halligan, R-Stillwater, came swiftly from the Transportation community.

TRUST, of which ACECOKLAHOMA is a member, sent a letter to all members of the State Senate opposing the bill by highlighting the sustained progress which has been made in rebuilding highways and remediating deficient bridges, which leads to greater economic expansion and saves lives.

The Association of Oklahoma General Contractors placed ads in both *The Oklahoman* and *Tulsa World* strongly opposing the reduction in highway funding.

Many ACECOKLAHOMA members have made calls and/or have made personal visits to their State Senators and Representatives.

And, most importantly, opposition within the Legislature is starting to take shape.

Both President Pro Tem Brian Bingman, R-Sapulpa, and House Minority Leader Scott Inman, D-Oklaoma City have expressed concern over the bill. Bingman said he was opposed to the plan to tap into funds earmarked for road and bridges, adding, "I think the road program has been one of our better pieces of legislation since I've been in the Legislature.

Inman said he had issues with the plan stating that intentionally or unintentionally, that move has taken, "some very powerful and wealthy allies of public education funding and now made the opponents."

Both voiced strong support for education, but a reluctance to interfere with the road and bridge program.

And, Speaker of the House Jeff Hickman, R-Fairview, when asked about the amended bill's chances of passage added, "I don't get a sense that our members are interested in going backwards on what we finally were able to do on roads and bridges."

While it looks like the bill is facing strong opposition, when it comes time for the Senate to vote, one never knows what is going to happen.

**CALL YOUR SENATOR TODAY EXPRESSING YOUR OPPOSITION TO THE DIVERSION OF FUNDS FROM ODOT! Don't know your Senator? Go to [www.oksenate.gov](http://www.oksenate.gov), and click on the "Find My Senator."**



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## 13<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL ODOT / ACEC OKLAHOMA PARTNERING CONFERENCE

Marriott Southern Hills, Tulsa  
Thursday, April 24, 2014

The 13th Annual ODOT/ACEC OKLAHOMA Partnering Conference will be held in Tulsa on April 24th. This year's Conference will be at the Marriott Southern Hills, just west of 71st and Lewis.

A great program has been put together, and we're expecting a large crowd. Registration will open at 8:00am, and the program will begin at 9:00am.

For the morning session, we will focus on: **Generations in the Workplace: Understanding the Gap & Winning the Game!** Kevin Veit, Director of Human Resources, Blueknight Energy, L.P, Tulsa will be our featured speaker.

The current workplace includes individuals spanning at least four generations...from Baby Boomers to Millennials, with the Gen X and Gen Y group in between. There is even some of the "Greatest Generation" still in the workplace. The mixing of these groups creates many opportunities as well as challenges to managers and employers. Baby Boomers may think the "young kids" in the workplace are lazy, while Millennials think that the Boomers are too rigid. However, if all of the generations are open-minded, they can learn much from each other, and together can be a very effective and formidable team.

Kevin Veit will explore each of these groups; the strengths and weaknesses each bring to your organization along with the challenges; innovations in the workplace to capitalize on these groups learning and growing together; and, the outlook for the future as older generations retire and a new generation comes along.

Following lunch, featuring Director of Transportation Mike Patterson, we will offer three breakout sessions: **Solicitations via the ODOT Website; State and Federal Transportation Funding; and, ODOT Reorganization and the Contracting Process.**

Registration is \$70 per person. Registration information has been sent to all ACEC OKLAHOMA members, and can also be found on the ACEC OKLAHOMA website: [www.acecok.org](http://www.acecok.org)

We look forward to seeing you on April 24th!!!!

### April Board of Directors & General Membership Meeting April 17th, Tulsa

The April meeting will be at the new offices of the **Terracon, Inc in Tulsa**. The new Terracon office is in southeast Tulsa, one-half block west of S. Mingo Road on 47<sup>th</sup> Place. The General Membership Meeting will begin at 5:00pm, and will be preceded by the Board meeting at 2:00pm.

Clint Robinson, Vice Chairman of ACEC, will be our guest speaker for the April General Membership Meeting. Clint is Associate Vice President of Black & Veatch in Kansas City. Clint will discuss recent and on-going activities at ACEC including current legislative efforts.

Look forward to seeing you on Thursday, April 17th!!!!



Cong. James Lankford (center) met with ACEC OKLAHOMA on March 31st, where we presented him with a \$3,000 check from ACECPAC for his Senate campaign. Pictured are: (l-r) Steve Ford, Joe Davis, Alan Soltani, Jim Benson, David Streb, and Todd Cochran,



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## "Leadership For Engineers" Graduates Class #5

Chairman of the Board Chuck Mitchell presents the graduates of with their plaques and, on behalf of ACEC OKLAHOMA, congratulates them on their commitment to developing their personal and professional leadership and management skills.



Rusty Akerman, Poe & Associates



Rebecca Alvarez, Guy Engineering



Brent Bolerjack, H.W. Lochner



Joe Farmer, CEC



Robel Gibbe, Red Rock Consulting



David Henke, Crafton Tull



Sharri Hiller, Triad Design Group



Steve Hollabaugh, Keystone



Michael Knapik, CP & Y



Shannon Koening, Leidos



Evan Ludwig, CP & Y



Kevin Moore, Garver



Michael Renes, Wallace



Ryan Smith, Tetra Tech



# President's Report

## April, 2014

### David Raymond, ACEC President

Dear Colleagues – As we head into April and the Annual Convention, now less than four weeks away, Council performance is strong – with membership up in both number of firms and employee count; Minuteman Fund grants to West Virginia and Idaho to protect inspection services and lien laws; engagement on President Obama’s directive for new DOL overtime rules; legislation introduced to raise funds in the bond market for water projects; a new ACEC director for energy, industrial and private client practice; and PAC 2014 fundraising at a record pace. The Convention will give us an opportunity to lobby Congress on key infrastructure and tax reform initiatives and participate in a wide range of business activities.

#### **General**

\* 3rd Q FY 14 Membership recruitment/retention results are strong with most MOs showing increases in firm and/or employee counts, and membership firm growth up 2.5% overall, the highest rate of growth experienced since the Strategic Plan goal of 2% annual firm growth was originally set in 2002.

\* Chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, Rep. Bill Shuster (R-PA), and the Committee’s ranking Democrat, Rep. Nick Rahall (D-WV), will discuss WRDA, MAP-21 reauthorization and related issues at the ACEC Convention on Tuesday, April 29.

\* Other notable speakers at the convention will include: former NSA and CIA director General (Ret.) Michael Hayden; veteran CBS news analyst Bob Schieffer; former IRS Chairman Mark Everson; and U.S. Chamber of Commerce economist Marty Regalia.

\* ACEC/PAC raised \$250,000 the first quarter of 2014, a record start and on pace to raise \$875,000 for the calendar year.

\* Former HDR executive Don Sherman has joined the ACEC staff to enhance Council programs in the energy, industrial and commercial sectors.

#### **Government Advocacy**

\* Representatives John Duncan (R-TN) and Bill Pascrell (D-NJ) have reintroduced ACEC-backed bill giving states greater flexibility to raise funds in the bond market to support water projects.

\* In response to an ACEC question on the Labor Department’s plans to review overtime rules under the Fair Labor Standards Act, Labor Secretary Perez said that the Department would review both the salary threshold below which workers must be paid overtime and the rules regarding time spent on management duties.

\* Joined with other business organizations in voicing strong opposition to a provision in House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Dave Camp’s tax reform proposal that would raise payroll taxes on S corporation owners; the Council has successfully fought similar proposals in the Senate in recent years.

\* House of Representatives passed ACEC-backed legislation – the Energy Efficiency Improvement Act of 2014 – which seeks to encourage energy savings in commercial buildings.

\* Awarded a Minuteman grant to ACEC/West Virginia to help defray the cost of legislative action to require the state to have a qualified licensed engineer oversee the inspection and monitoring of above-ground storage tanks and source water protection programs in the wake of last year’s chemical spill that threatened the local water supply.

\* Awarded a Minuteman grant to ACEC/Idaho to help defray the cost of an amicus brief in a state supreme court case urging protection of the precedence of engineering firms’ liens over liens filed later by mortgage companies.

\* Submitted comments to the Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board (MSRB) on its proposed rule that would establish a fiduciary duty for municipal advisors, thus raising concerns that prioritizing the client’s financial interests could conflict with the professional engineer’s ethical duty to public safety, health, and welfare.

\* ACEC/PAC co-hosted fundraising events this month for House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee members Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC), Bob Gibbs (R-OH), Reid Ribble (R-WI), House Appropriations Committee Member Mike Simpson (R-ID), Small Business Committee Chairman Sam Graves (R-MO), Ways and Means Committee members John Larson (D-CT) and Charles Boustany (R-LA), House Assistant Democratic Leader James Clyburn (D-SC), and House Appropriations Committee member Henry Cuellar (D-TX).



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