

THE FIRST WORD

May, 2017

It's All About the Budget as Legislature Enters Final Two Weeks (Unless there is a Special Session in June)

Even the oldest among us have heard Meagan Trainor's hit song, "All About That Bass" with the next line being "No Treble."

Well, around the Capitol this week, they are singing, ***"It's all about that Budget, All Trouble."***

With only two weeks left in the regular session, and only one week, per legislative rules, to introduce "revenue raising" bills, that light at the end of the tunnel is a very BIG \$1 BILLION TRAIN, and it's coming fast!

Almost daily, a new plan is floated out of the Appropriations and Budget Committees, only to be met with concern, disdain, and opposition from some Legislators from both sides of the aisles along with special interest groups, ACEC OKLAHOMA included, who are trying to protect their members and member's interests.

Sometimes the Republican majority and Democrat minority are on the same page, but sometimes not, which leads to dueling press conferences and finger pointing. Add to that, disagreement between the House and Senate on what should be done, plus the Governor with her "veto" power, and well, you can see the problem.

So, what's going to happen! That folks is the \$64,000, or should be say \$1 billion, question!

In all fairness, there's a lot of hard work being done by the House and Senate Republican and Democratic Leadership and by the Appropriations & Budget Committees in both houses. They do not have an easy job, and they are to be commended for their efforts in trying to fix a problem which didn't just appear overnight.

Sure, it's easy to throw stones and to make jokes, but the reality is that they face a VERY difficult task and are being tasked with making VERY difficult decisions. For that, they deserve our support and our thanks!

Of course, the piece of this large pie in which ACEC OKLAHOMA is most interested is transportation funding. Keeping the 8-Year Plan fully funded is our primary goal, but at this point, there are no certainties to report.

Bonding has been discussed, but as you know from our recent "Legislative Alerts," ACEC OKLAHOMA and the other transportation group oppose this since the bonds

would have to be repaid, and ODOT doesn't have the necessary revenue streams to do so. Additionally, floating more bonds would put Oklahoma in jeopardy of not meeting federal regulations to allow for continued use of the "soft match" dollars for federal matching fund projects.

From what we understand, increasing the motor fuel "USER FEE" is still on the table, but to do so would require "yes" votes from 75% of the members of the House and 75% of the Senate. Republicans have the necessary "super majority" in the Senate, but not in the House. So, to reach the 75% threshold in the House, some Democrats support will be necessary.

Next week is the critical week. If agreements on both revenue and spending are not reached by next Friday, May 19th, then in all likelihood the Legislature will have to come back in early June for a Special Session.

Two last things:

First, THANKS FOR YOUR RESPONSES TO OUR LEGISLATIVE ALERTS! Your contacts with your Senators and Representatives have been GREAT, and are making an impact. Keep up the good work! Continue to call and email your Senators and Representative daily to keep the pressure on to DO THE RIGHT THING, EVEN IF IT'S HARD!

Secondly, House Bill 1282, making changes to the State Board of Licensure's authorizing statutes, passed both the House and Senate and is awaiting action by the Governor. While there was token opposition to the bill, it passed both houses with huge majorities (90%+ in the House and 80%+ in the Senate), so chances are very good that the Governor will sign the bill in the next few days.

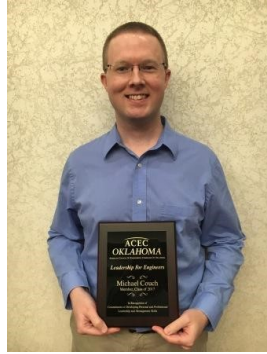
ACEC OKLAHOMA will keep a close eye on activities next week, so watch your e-mail for Updates and/or Alerts!

**ACEC OKLAHOMA
ANNUAL MEETING NOTICE
Friday, June 2, 1027
1:30pm
Buccaneer Resort, St. Croix, USVI**

2017 Leadership For Engineers Graduates



Josh Black
CEC



Michael Couch
Meshek & Associates



Jeffrey Dixon
Huitt-Zollers



Scott Donwerth
Poe & Associates



Sean Fairbairn
Cowen Group



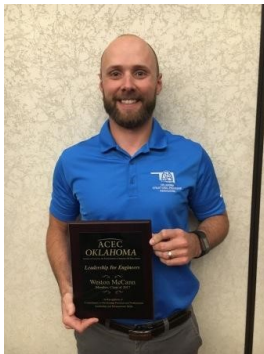
Clay Herndon
Freese & Nichols



Mary Elizabeth Mach
Garver



Ryan Mahaffey
P E C



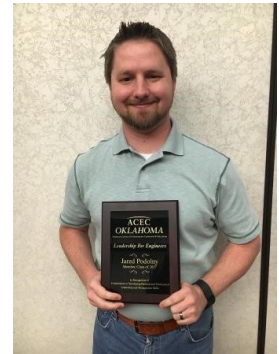
Weston McCann
Guernsey



Stevfen Miller
Guy Engineering



Brett Moran
Cabbiness Engineering



Jared Podolny
Benham Design



Janak Pokharel
Red Rock Consulting



Robert Rose
Aguirre & Fields



Vaughn Rupnow
Terracon

President's Monthly Update

May, 2017

David Raymond, President & CEO

Great to see you all at our record-breaking Annual Convention in Washington, D.C. with 1,600 attendees! Our Capitol Hill visits on infrastructure and tax reform were well-received by Representatives and Senators working on legislation that will affect our industry for years to come. Kevin Nealon was a big hit at our 50th Anniversary Engineering Awards Gala (where HDR won the Grand Conceptor Award for the world's longest and largest floating bridge). We recognized outgoing chair Peter Strub and his executive committee members for their impressive service to the Council, and welcomed our new chair Satch Pecori and his ExCom members for 2017-18. We also thanked retiring Connecticut executive director Paul Brady for his many years of service, and welcomed his successor Bob Gonyeau. I, too, will be retiring a year from now after 20 years with ACEC, and Satch Pecori has named a Search Committee to find a successor. In the meantime, we have a big legislative and business agenda ahead of us this year, and we are gunning for major achievements.

General

- The ACEC Annual Convention last week focused on business issues of importance to our industry; attendees lobbied on Capitol Hill and heard prominent speakers including former White House Communications Director Nicolle Wallace; Fortune Magazine editor Geoff Colvin; a panel of Representatives Jeff Denham (R-CA), Pat Meehan (R-PA), and John Delaney (D-MD) moderated by Cook Political Report editor Amy Walter; and transportation experts including the PennDOT secretary, Amtrak director and BART manager.
- ACEC's new national leadership took office with Satch Pecori succeeding Peter Strub as Chair; Manish Kothari becoming Chair-elect; Charlie Gozdziwski, Mike McMeekin, Gayle Roberts and Dave Bender succeeding Gregg Spagnolo, Lee Cammack, Phil Houser, and Abbie Goodman; and joining Joel Goodmonson, Mary Erchul, Tom Masure, John Nelson and Dave Raymond on the 2017-18 Executive Committee.
- The Engineering Excellence Awards Gala – with a record 700 attendees – recognized the finest engineering achievements of the year, 162 projects, including Grand Conceptor Award winner HDR for Seattle's new floating bridge.
- CNN, Politico and Reuters prominently quoted ACEC President and CEO Dave Raymond in stories on the Trump border wall and other infrastructure issues; Raymond noted that proposed legislation in several states that would blacklist wall bidders was having a "chilling effect" on firms that would otherwise have participated in this federal project.
- Senate Environment and Public Works Committee Chairman John Barrasso (R-WY) thanked Convention attendees for their help in promoting infrastructure investment and regulatory reforms to move projects forward more efficiently.
- Joined 33 other stakeholder groups, including the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, National Association of Manufacturers, and AASHTO, in a letter to the House and Senate Budget Committees urging them to prioritize increased infrastructure investment and a permanent Highway Trust Fund fix in the Fiscal Year 2018 budget.
- Congressmen Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) and John Duncan (R-TN) have reintroduced ACEC-backed legislation to create a dedicated trust fund to support water infrastructure projects.
- Senators Rob Portman (R-OH) and Mazie Hirono (D-HI) reintroduced legislation to curtail the use of one-step design-build and reverse-auctions on federal projects.
- Lobbied House and Senate appropriators to fully fund U.S. foreign aid agencies in the 2018 budget and to increase use of U.S. firms in USAID work.
- Joined with coalition allies in urging the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to revamp its rules on Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI) so they align with other federal agency requirements.
- FIDIC and ACEC's International Committee lobbied the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank to increase their use of QBS in their procurements.

Government Advocacy

- Lobbied for \$1 trillion infrastructure package, tax reform, and government funding to prevent a shut-down.
- ACEC/PAC activities at the Convention raised a record \$278,910; overall ACEC/PAC surpassed \$440,000 in YTD receipts, well ahead of last year's pace; ACEC/Hawaii, ACEC/Tennessee and ACEC/Massachusetts made their 2017 ACEC/PAC fundraising goals, bringing the total number of states at goal early this year to five.
- ACEC's Federal Agencies Committee met with GSA political appointees to press for the exclusion of engineering services on the Federal Supply Schedule and increased use of engineering focused procurements.
- Urged Congress to support the S Corporation Modernization Act of 2017, which would update rules that govern the day-to-day management of S corporations.