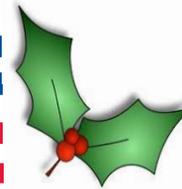




INTERCHANGE



A Monthly Publication of the CDOT Office of Policy & Government Relations

Issue 75, December, 2011

Get to Know U.S. Congressman Cory Gardner



Cory Gardner is a fifth-generation Coloradoan with family roots dating back to 1886. Cory graduated summa cum laude from Colorado State University with a Bachelor's degree in Political Science. He then went on to earn his Juris Doctor from the University of Colorado Law School.

Cory began his political life in Washington D.C. as General Counsel and Legislative Director for U.S. Senator Wayne Allard. He also worked for the National Corn Growers Association. In 2006 he was elected to the Colorado House of Representatives where he served on the House Transportation and Energy Committee and was chosen by his colleagues as House Minority Whip.

Elected to Congress in 2010, Cory represents the 4th Congressional District encompassing the eastern plains of Colorado. Cory serves on the House Committee on Energy and Commerce.

Cory lives with his wife, Jamie, and their two children in Yuma, in a house that once belonged to his great-grandparents.

Debt Debate Hits Highway Trust Fund

Transportation will see a reduction in funding resulting from the failure of the debt negotiations in Washington. The Select Committee (also known as the Super Committee) was unable to agree upon a set of budget reduction recommendations by the late November deadline. As a result, \$1.2 trillion in savings over fiscal 2013 to 2021 will result in automatic budget cuts by a process known as sequestration. Sequestration is a budget action on the federal level that triggers automatic spending cuts. Some human service programs (such as, Social Security, Medicaid.....) are exempt from cuts however the Highway Trust Fund is not exempt. Beginning in January, 2012 all non-exempt programs – including transportation will see a 7.5% reduction for FY 2012. For Colorado this will result in an approximate reduction in federal funds of \$40 million for 2012.

For more information on Federal issues contact CDOT Federal Liaison, Mickey Ferrell at 303-757-9755.

New Legislative Liaison

Kurt Morrison has joined the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) as the agency's new Legislative Liaison. Kurt previously worked for the Legislative Council and served as the lead committee staff for the Colorado House of Representatives Transportation Committee. Prior to coming to Colorado he worked for Baker & Daniels LLP, in Washington, D.C. as a Policy Specialist working with municipal and public transit clients on federal transportation issues. Before his time as a Policy Specialist Kurt served as Senior Aide to U.S. Senator E. Benjamin Nelson from Nebraska.

Kurt grew up in Littleton and Aurora. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Political Science from Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska and a Master's degree in Politics from George Washington University in Washington, D.C. Kurt and his wife Rachel live in Denver. He brings a wealth of knowledge about transportation and the legislative process to CDOT. Kurt replaces Melissa Nelson-Osse who left CDOT and is now working as a lobbyist for Axiom Strategies in Denver.



Kurt Morrison

For legislative questions or matters please feel free to contact Kurt at 303-757-9703 or stop by Room 275 at Headquarters and say hello.

CDOT Tweets Take Prize



The Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) Public Relations Office has been recognized by Westword magazine for their outstanding public outreach efforts. Westword is a long standing Denver based weekly magazine with a loyal local following. The publication is most known for their “Best of Denver” awards.

CDOT received the Best Twitter Award at the magazine’s annual Web Awards: CDOT was up against local tweeters, Frontier Airlines, The Denver Police Department and the Denver Museum of Nature and Science in the competition. Twitter is one of the most popular social media tools in the world allowing organizations and individuals to keep interested parties (followers) informed and engaged in breaking news and information.

Only two years after CDOT first began tweeting about things like construction updates, travel conditions and transportation news the agency has over 10,000 followers. CDOT ranks as one of the most “followed” among other state Departments of Transportation (DOTs) that tweet. You can follow CDOT on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/#!/ColoradoDOT>.

In addition to CDOT’s award winning Twitter account local officials and elected civic leaders can also keep up with the latest transportation news and developments by visiting www.cotrip.org and subscribing to the CDOT GovDelivery service.

Process Improvement: The Magnificent 7

Each day the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) engages in a myriad of steps in the conduct of business. In an effort to improve and streamline the way the agency accomplishes our mission to provide the best transportation systems for Colorado, an ongoing program has begun to improve CDOT’s core functions. Led by Process Improvement Director Gary Vansuch the agency will be taking a closer look at crucial processes, beginning with seven. Collectively known as the “Magnificent 7”, each process improvement project will have a Sponsor (a CDOT executive), a Team Leader and a team of stakeholders tasked with analyzing the process and identifying ways to significantly improve each process.

The various ways CDOT conducts business have been broken into three general categories: Customer facing, Partner Facing and Internal Processes. Within this framework the Senior Management Team has identified CDOT business processes which will be the first ones to be improved. As processes are addressed and streamlined they will be removed from the list and new ones will be added. The current Magnificent 7 processes being addressed are:

1. Transit Grants Process
2. Local Agency Project Delivery
3. Maintenance Work Order Process
4. Access Permits
5. Oversize/Overweight Truck Permits
6. Developing and Managing Consultant Contracts
7. Hiring Improvements

Process improvement is CDOT’s systematic approach to optimize our work processes to achieve better results for our CDOT customers: the citizens of Colorado. If you have questions, ideas or comments on Process Improvement or the Magnificent 7, please contact Gary Vansuch, Process Improvement Director at 303-757-9017.

All Aboard the “Minibus”

In November the House and Senate approved a “minibus” spending bill that includes authorization for transportation spending for next year. Normally Congress would have passed an Omnibus spending bill that includes a large number of departments but in this case the “minibus” only included Agriculture, Commerce/Justice/State, and Transportation/Housing and Urban Development spending for 2012. The bill also included a continuing resolution allowing the government to continue operating through December 16th, 2011. Without approval of that stopgap provision, the federal government would have lost its authority to spend money. The bill has been signed into law by President Obama. Highlights for transportation include:

- In accordance with the 6 month Authorization Extension, the obligation limitation on the federal-aid highways program is \$39.144 billion, down from \$41.107 billion in 2011. (representing a 5% reduction).
- Federal Transit Authority is provided an obligation limitation of \$8.361 billion on the Formula and Bus Grants account, equal to the baseline, a new starts/small starts appropriation of \$1.955 billion, \$98.7 million for FTA administrative overhead, and \$150 million for Washington Metro.
- Funding for Federal Aviation Administration includes \$9.653 billion
- No funding for high-speed and intercity passenger rail grants, Amtrak is provided \$1.439 billion, down about \$64 million from 2011.
- There is also \$500 million for the Transportation Improvements Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grants program. (A possible TIGER IV or most likely money will be added to the TIGER III program).

Drilling Proposal

In an effort to address the longer term issue of the eventual passage of a new transportation authorization to replace SAFETEA-LU: House Speaker John Boehner and his House Republican colleagues have announced they will introduce legislation to expand energy production to fund infrastructure jobs. The proposal would expand U.S. domestic energy production on public lands and devote the increased federal royalties to pay for House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman John Mica’s surface transportation proposal. The proposed legislation would open up more offshore drilling for oil and natural gas and open up a portion of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to exploratory drilling. Since the proposal depends on opening the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge for part of its fund, it is likely to be met by strong Democratic opposition.

Upcoming Events

Colorado Transportation Commission Workshops/Meeting

December 14-15, 2011

CDOT Headquarters in Denver, CO

E-Mail: Toni.Kelly@dot.state.co.us

State of the State Address

January 12, 2012

Colorado State Capitol in Denver, CO

website: www.colorado.gov/governor

Opening 68th General Assembly-2nd Session

January 11, 2012

Colorado State Capitol in Denver, CO

website: www.leg.state.co.us

Colorado Transportation Commission Workshops/Meeting

January 18-19, 2012

CDOT Headquarters in Denver, CO

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