

**Governor, legislators praised  
for passage of transportation bill**  
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*Oklahoma Department of Transportation*

## Information Release



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Bridge and highway construction should remain on track and motorists will see improved roads following action by Gov. Brad Henry and House and Senate leaders, transportation leaders said Tuesday, May 27.

Leaders praised officials for passing visionary legislation that provides much-needed funding for the Oklahoma Department of Transportation's Eight-year Construction Work Plan in the final hours of the 2008 legislative session.

"Many, many people worked for passage of this legislation, including the governor, the Legislature and transportation advocacy groups," Transportation Secretary Phil Tomlinson said. "Without the help of these groups, we would not be where we are today."

Tomlinson said passage of the legislation is great news for Oklahoma drivers. He noted that good highways and bridges are important not only for the safety of the driving public but also for the economy of the state by allowing the efficient transportation of goods.

House Bill 2272, by Rep. Ken Miller, R-Edmond, and Sen. Mike Johnson, R-Kingfisher:

- Includes \$300 million in bond funding for transportation that will allow construction projects in ODOT's Eight-Year Construction Work Plan to proceed as planned and additionally will allow ODOT to provide \$25 million for the county Emergency and Transportation Revolving Fund;
- Removes a 3 percent trigger mechanism included in earlier legislation, which will make construction planning much more certain;
- Increases bridge and highway funding by \$30 million each year until fiscal year 2017;
- Increases by \$100 million to \$370 million from \$270 million a funding cap included the earlier legislation that ultimately will allow for the replacement of more substandard bridges and the improvement of more highways.

"Although the focus has been on the funds provided in the bond portion of the legislation, other provisions in House Bill 2272 were equally important," Oklahoma Department of Transportation Director Gary Ridley said. "Removing the 3 percent trigger removes funding uncertainty and allows us to more accurately plan for construction. This will be invaluable in helping us reach our long-term goal of significantly improved bridges and highways."

Legislation approved in 2006 provided for additional transportation funding with the amount based on expected increases in state revenue of at least 3 percent. Under HB 2272, funding will be increased by \$30 million each year without the 3 percent trigger mechanism. The bond funding ensures \$275 million will stay in tact for projects in the Eight-Year Construction Work Plan that leaders feared would be in jeopardy because of a lack of anticipated funding due to a continuing failure of meeting of the 3 percent trigger.

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