



Missouri Concrete Association



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2007 Final Legislative Report

The First Regular Session of the 94th General Assembly drew to a close on Friday, May 18th. During this session a total of 134 bills were Truly Agreed and Finally Passed; included in this total are 76 House Bills, 57 Senate Bills, and 1 House Joint Resolution.

There were a number of different bills passed that are of interest to the concrete industry.

One major bill that passed was Senate Bill 22. This bill authorizes a sales tax exemption for purchases of materials used on highway commission projects.

Another bill of interest is Senate Bill 322. This bill expands commercial zones in St. Louis to 25 miles around its border and expands the current commercial zone in St. Charles to cover the entire county. This bill also creates a commercial zone

east of Missouri City along Highway 210 and northwest from the intersection of Highway 210 and Highway 10 to include the boundaries of Excelsior Springs.

This year marks the passage of the much anticipated Missouri Blasting Safety Act, House Bill 298. This legislation creates a statewide blasting standard that pre-emptly all local statutes except those already in place in St. Charles County and St. Louis County.

This bill mandates that anyone using explosives must have a blasting license or be in the presence and supervision of someone who has a blasting license. These licenses will be issued by the Division of Fire Safety within the Department of Public Safety. The Division of Fire Safety will be responsible for creating licensing requirements, developing continuing education standards and establishing seismo-

graphic vibration levels that must be maintained.

Finally, a major bill of interest to the concrete and cement industry is Senate Bill 30.

This bill authorizes a sales tax exemption for all the cost of utilities, chemicals, machinery, equipment, and materials used in the manufacturing, processing, compounding, mining, or production of a product.

For more information on these bills you can contact MCA or you can go to www.house.mo.gov and type in the bill number in the upper left corner.



Welcome New Members!

Continental Equipment Company—Fenton, MO

Lowe North—Spring Hill, KS

Ankem, Inc.—Coppell, TX

SAVE THE DATE

Mark your calendars for the 48th Annual Meeting to be held at the InterContinental at the Plaza in Kansas City, MO on February 17—19, 2008. Also, our next summer meeting is already set for July 25-27, 2008 at Hilton Branson Convention Center in Branson, MO.



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The Future of Transportation in Missouri

Missouri's interstate highways are two of the oldest in the country. I-70 and I-44 were originally designed to last twenty years but have been in service for over 50 years.

We are currently enjoying the benefits of Amendment 3 money which was passed in November 2004 to end the redirecting of MoDOT money and put it back into our transportation department. Most of Missouri's major roads have been repaired in the last few years because of the influx on money from Amendment 3 and it would seem that Missouri has finally gotten back on track in terms of road infrastructure and safety.

This is not the case, however. Missouri will soon find itself in what MoDOT Director, Pete Rahn, is calling the "Perfect Storm". This perfect storm consists of three different elements. First, Amendment 3 money that has funded all the road construction over the last two years will be tied up repaying bonds for the next twenty years. Second, money from our Federal Highway Trust Fund is expected to dry up by October 2009 and lastly, the cost of inputs continue to rise.

In just two years the funding bubble that Mis-

souri is currently riding will burst and MoDOT's construction budget will drop from \$1.23 billion in 2008 to \$569 million in 2010.

There are a number of different solutions being presented but none have garnered wide-spread support and all are currently being vetted in different venues throughout the state.

Sen. Bill Stouffer, Chairman of the Senate Transportation Committee, has proposed an across the board one cent sales tax for 10 years. This would raise approximately \$8 billion and would be used to completely rebuild I-70 and I-44 and include dedicated lanes for trucks and cars in each direction.

Rep. Neal St. Onge, Chairman of the House Transportation Committee, has proposed a plan to raise money from a number of different sources. St. Onge's plan calls for an increase in license fees, gas and diesel tax increase, and a half-cent sales tax. This money would be used to rebuild I-70 with dedicated truck lanes, improve Missouri's public transportation system, infrastructure development for Missouri ports, and money for Missouri's lettered and numbered highways.

Another plan brought forward by Sen. Matt Bartle proposes the creation of toll roads along these interstates. Bartle has not presented a specific payment plan but believes the tolls are the best option because it will only affect the people that use these roads.

The one thing these plans all have in common is the desire to make Missouri a transportation hub for the rest of the country. With the creation of dedicated truck lanes, truckers will be able to run two and three trailers at a time thereby cutting down on their expenses and also keeping the roads safe for passenger traffic.

The proposed improvements for our surface transportation system and ports will allow Missouri to take full advantage of our central location and the fact that more and more of what we rely on everyday is not made in America but it is shipped to America.

The options that have presented so far are just a few of slough of different options available to fix the oncoming crisis. The only thing that is for certain at this point is that Missouri legislators want to have something on the ballot for the November 2008 election.