

MINUTES
SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION, TECHNOLOGY, AND LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS
House Committee on Public Transportation
Meeting Jointly
Thursday, October 3, 2024
10:00 AM
ACHE Research Institute Health & Wellness Center
1000 Fianna Way, Fort Smith, Arkansas

Committee members present: Senators Mark Johnson, Chair, Justin Boyd, Vice-Chair, and Linda Chesterfield; Representatives Mike Holcomb, Chair, Rick McClure, Vice-Chair, Wade Andrews, Mark H. Berry, Denise Jones Ennett, Joy Springer, and David Whittaker

Other members present: Senators Fredrick J. Love, and Jim Petty; Representatives Cindy Crawford, Charlene Fite, Ron McNair, and Jay Richardson

Representative Holcomb called the meeting to order.

Consideration to Approve the December 6, 2023, Meeting Minutes [Exhibit B]

Discussion on I49

Lorie Tudor, Director, Arkansas Department of Transportation (ARDOT); Keith Gibson, Commissioner, ARDOT; and Jared Wiley, Chief Engineer, ARDOT, led a discussion on the department's proposed plan to complete U.S. I-49 from Fort Smith to Texarkana. Representative Berry motioned to have the committee send a letter of support to endorse the department receiving a Federal grant for \$250 million dollars to help complete the project.

Presentation on Trails

Lorie Tudor, Director, ARDOT, and Jared Wiley, Chief Engineer, ARDOT, gave a presentation on the Transportation Alternative Program which is a reimbursable grant program that provides Federal-aid funding to Local Public Agencies for transportation alternatives. These are typically sidewalks, trails, and pedestrian crossings.

RECESS

Discussion with U.S. Congressman Steve Womack

Steve Womack, U.S. Congressman, 3rd District of Arkansas, led a discussion on uniting Federal and State legislation.

Discussion and Update on Arkansas River [Exhibit E]

Cassandra Caldwell, Director, Arkansas Waterways Commission, discussed Arkansas navigable rivers and how the Arkansas Waterways Commission is using the rivers to economically benefit the people of Arkansas, including using the rivers and ports to boost jobs and sales in the state.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:30 p.m.