STATE OF KANSAS

CAPITOL BUILDING, ROOM 241 SOUTH
TOPEKA, KS 66612

PHONE: (785) 296-3232
GOVERNOR.KANSAS.GOV

GOVERNOR LAURA KELLY

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Contact:
Lauren Fitzgerald, Press Secretary
785.581.4730
lauren.fitzgerald@ks.gov

Governor signs bipartisan transportation plan into law

Fulfilling promise to rebuild Kansas, signs two additional bills

Governor Laura Kelly today signed the bipartisan Senate Bill 173 creating the new 10-year Eisenhower Legacy Transportation Program.

"This fiscally responsible program provides a visionary approach so that Kansas has the flexibility to address immediate needs and secure more opportunities for our future," Kelly said. "Investing in Kansas' infrastructure means putting people to work. It means fixing our roads and bridges. It means safer transportation for our most precious cargo -- our children.

"I commend the bipartisan work of our legislators for the overwhelming support and approval of this legislation. Its swift passage is important to help the Kansas economy recover when this public health pandemic passes," the Governor said.

Key elements of the program include:

- **Promises kept**. All remaining T-WORKS projects will be let to construction by July 1, 2023.

- **Highway preservation is prioritized.** The legislation requires KDOT to establish metrics making sure highway preservation needs are fully funded before adding onto the highway system.

- **Rolling program ensures emerging needs can be met.** Instead of a once-a-decade, 10-year set list of projects, new modernization and expansion projects will be selected for the development pipeline every two years.

o **Every region of the state will see modernization and expansion work sooner rather than later**. The bill requires KDOT to develop minimum spending ranges for KDOT districts using a metric-driven process, and 40 percent of the minimum investments must occur within the first five years of the program. T-WORKS projects must be delivered and are not included in the minimums.

o **Every Kansas county** will receive at least $8 million in transportation improvements.

o **Broadband** and **new technology investments** are included to facilitate internet expansion and prepare Kansas infrastructure for improved safety and communication.

"Sincere thanks to legislators and Governor Kelly for quickly approving this legislation," KDOT Secretary Julie Lorenz said. "We have a lot of work to do. Beyond identifying projects for the development pipeline to garner potential federal stimulus funds, we need to deliver projects faster and at the highest value for Kansas taxpayer dollars."

Work began on this program in 2018 with the creation of the Joint Legislative Transportation Vision Task Force.

"Including the Task Force and KDOT's local consult discussions, 27 meetings were held across Kansas to gather input," Sen. Carolyn McGinn, co-chair of the Task Force, said. "I want to thank the more than 2,000 Kansans whose input shaped a program that will create jobs, improve safety and protect our investments."

KDOT is analyzing the bill, working on T-WORKS projects and will announce the addition of highway projects to the development pipeline soon.

In addition to Senate Bill 173, Kelly also signed House Bill 2595 and House Bill 2168 on Thursday.

HB 2595 removes the 30-day waiting period before offering surplus property for sale to the general public. Current law allows the Secretary of Administration, through the Kansas Surplus Property Program, to sell state surplus property to the general public only after the property has been offered to qualified individuals and entities for at least 30 days.

HB 2168 establishes a sunset date of July 1, 2030, for the Nursing Facility Quality Care Assessment and amends law concerning the hospital provider assessment known as the Healthcare Access Improvement Program (HCAIP).

Under the bill, the annual hospital provider assessment rate increases from 1.83 percent to 3 percent; taxable revenue expands to include outpatient net operating revenue; the hospital provider assessment is based on the net operating revenue for the hospital's fiscal year three fiscal years prior to the assessment year; and distributions of hospital provider assessment revenues generated from health maintenance organizations are no longer include in the assessment law.

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