



A LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY FROM THE ACEC/M POLITICAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Transportation and Infrastructure

In late 2015, the legislature passed a bill package (Public Acts 174-180 of 2015) that will eventually increase funding for transportation by \$1.2 billion. The key changes included:

- 1. Increasing gasoline tax from 19 to 26.3 cents per gallon effective January 1, 2017
2. Increasing diesel fuel tax from 15 to 26.3 cents per gallon effective January 1, 2017
3. Increasing registration fees by 20% effective January 1, 2017
4. Earmarking income tax revenue to the Michigan Transportation Fund as follows: \$150 million in FY 2018-2019 \$325 million in FY 2019-2020 \$600 million in FY 2010-2021 and beyond

Beginning January 1, 2022, taxes on motor fuels will generally will be adjusted by inflation on an annual basis.

The 21st Century Infrastructure Commission issued a report calling for the State of Michigan to spend an additional \$4 billion per year to address infrastructure deficiencies. The report calls for a rewrite of the PA 51 road funding formula and provides a menu of options to raise funding. The majority of spending, per the Commission's recommendation, would be focused on roads, water, and sewer improvements.

Governor Snyder's office made public-private partnerships a top priority in lame duck, pushing legislation (SB 627) allowing the state to contract with private entities to build roads, transit systems, public health care buildings and laboratories. Although the bill did not succeed in lame duck, it gained momentum and will be brought up in 2017.

Qualifications-Based Selection (QBS)

A package of bills (House Bills 5238-5245) was introduced in the House that would require local government agencies to use a Qualifications-Based Selection process for procuring design professional services. The bills received a hearing late in 2016 by the Local Government Committee, but time ran out before they could advance. Primary bill sponsor, Representative Robert Kosowski, is expected to re-introduce the bills in 2017.

Certificate of Merit

Senate Bill 149, which would require the submission of an Affidavit of Merit for negligence claims against design professionals, was introduced early in 2015 and was on the agenda for the April 28, 2015 meeting of the Senate Judiciary Committee. The bill received some opposition during the meeting and did not see any further action in the legislative session. ACEC has been working with various groups to draft a bill for introduction in 2017.



L to R: Ron Brenke (ACEC/M), John Hilltz (OHM Advisors), U.S. Senator Gary Peters, Pat Wingate (OHM Advisors), and Roland Alix (Hubbell, Roth & Clark)

## Flint Water Crisis

The issues in Flint dominated headlines in 2015-2016. The Michigan legislature ultimately passed four supplemental appropriation bills, in addition to the FY budget, to help provide aid. Total expenditures are nearly \$240 million.

## Article 20 – Occupational Code

Senate Bill 954 was passed and will make minor changes to Article 20 to allow engineers to sit for the Professional Engineering exam prior to obtaining the required professional experience. In order to be licensed as a PE, individuals would still need to pass both the engineering fundamentals and professional practice exams, obtain a degree in engineering from an accredited program, and provide documentation of at least 8 years of professional experience (including not more than 5 years of education). ACEC fought off other changes to Article 20 that encroached on the practice of engineering by others.



L to R: Jim Escamilla (Byce & Associates), Congressman Fred Upton, Chris Cook (Abonmarche)

## 2017 ACEC Legislative Events

*State:* **March 7, 2017**

Christman Building, Lansing, MI

*National:* **April 25-26, 2017**

Marriott Wardman Park  
Washington, D.C

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\*met or exceeded 2016 firm goal

## ACEC PAC Chairs

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**Jack Wheatley** | Rowe  
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