

2021 CAPITOL UPDATE

YEAR IN REVIEW



After an unprecedented 2020 due to COVID-19, it is safe to say most people were anxious to welcome in 2021. Key items for the Michigan Legislature included State budget approval and appropriating billions of dollars in Federal COVID relief funds. Although the State budget was finally approved in late September and included \$198 million for local bridges, the majority of Federal COVID relief funds have yet to be assigned and await action by the Legislature.

Congress took most of 2021 to finally pass an infrastructure bill (IIJA), but unfortunately it did not include a fix to the PPP loan forgiveness/FAR credit clause issue that is affecting engineering firms who have state and federal contracts. Passing a fix for the PPP issue will be a key priority for ACEC in 2022.

Qualifications-Based Selection (QBS)

Senate Bill 642 was introduced September 15 by Senator Jim Ananich and would require all State agencies in Michigan to use a Qualifications-Based Selection process when procuring professional engineering, architectural or surveying services. The bill was passed favorably (8-0) out of the Senate Economic & Small Business Development Committee

on December 9 and is waiting approval by the full Senate. ACEC/Michigan President Chris Cook and Executive Director Ron Brenke testified in support of the bill on December 9 and have participated in meetings with the DTMB to address minor concerns. We will be seeking passage of the Bill in 2022 to solidify QBS in statute and to better align with other states.

Water Infrastructure Funding

Improving Michigan's water infrastructure has been a priority of the Governor and has gotten attention by the Legislature as well. In early December, the Senate unanimously passed Senate Bill 565 (S-2), a supplemental appropriations bill totaling \$3.34 billion in new funds to address water infrastructure issues including: dams, lead, PFAS, wastewater, drinking water, and wetlands.

The Bill would add funding for FY 2021-22 using \$2.37 billion in Federal funds: \$970 million from the Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund (SFRF) and \$1.4 billion intended from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). The remaining \$970 million would be State Funds: \$680 million General Fund/General Purpose and \$290 million Restricted from the Great Lakes Water Quality Bond. ACEC will be pressing the House to act in early 2022.

Michigan-Indiana Boundary Survey

Senate Bill 627 would create a new act, the Michigan-Indiana State Line Remonumentation Act, which would also create the Michigan-Indiana State Line Commission within LARA. This commission would administer a survey of the Michigan-Indiana state line and would recover monuments along the boundary. Senate Bill 628 would amend the State Survey and Remonumentation Act to allow the *(cont'd on page 2)*



L to R: Christopher Cook, PE, Abonmarche; Ronald Brenke, PE, ACEC/Michigan; Jayson Nault, PE, Tetra Tech; Governor Gretchen Whitmer; Sean Kelley, PE, The Mannik & Smith Group; Jon Kramer, PE, OHM Advisors

Boundary Survey (cont'd)

legislature to appropriate up to \$500K from the State Survey and Remonumentation Fund to pay the state's equitable share of costs for the monumentation of the Michigan-Indiana state boundary. The bills have passed the full Senate and are on third reading in the House. It is expected that Governor Whitmer will sign the bill.

2022 ACEC Legislative Events

Reception with Legislators

March 9

Kelley Cawthorne Office
Lansing

State Legislative Day

March 11

Virtual

National Legislative Summit

May 22-25

Grand Hyatt Washington
Washington, D.C.

ACEC/M PAC Chair

Robert Rayl, PE
RS Engineering, LLC



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**met or exceeded 2021 firm goal*