

# CCIA HIGHLIGHTS *of the week*

A weekly information bulletin for members of the Connecticut Construction Industries Association

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**CCIA AND ITS DIVISIONS** thank all members who responded to our Legislative Alerts this week asking members to contact their legislators to oppose an [amendment](#) that was attached to numerous bills at the end of the session. The legislative session ended at midnight on Wednesday without the measure being called. The amendment, sponsored by Sen. Michael McLachlan (R - Danbury), would have prohibited every state and quasi-public entity from executing public works contracts over \$500,000 unless it obtains an affidavit stating that any principal or key personnel of the entity submitting a bid or proposal attesting whether they have been convicted of, entered a plea of nolo contendere for, or admitted to, a public entity crime related to procurement or performance of any contract.

**THE BILL TO ESTABLISH** a process for equipment dealers to recover losses when a dealer is in possession of an abandoned piece of special mobile equipment, [HB 7243](#), An Act Concerning Special Mobile Equipment Liens, was approved by the Senate this week. It had earlier been approved by the House, and now moves to the governor's office for signature. The bill was a CCIA initiative. The association's equipment dealers conducted a very successful advocacy campaign on the bill.

**THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY** failed to pass a bill authorizing tolls on Connecticut's highways; however, the legislature took a step closer to tolls by approving a resolution to establish a [constitutional lockbox amendment](#) to safeguard revenues earmarked for transportation, according to an [article](#) in *CT News Junkie*. Gov. Malloy has said he would not consider any discussion of tolls unless a lockbox amendment is sent before voters on the 2018 ballot. The [toll proposal](#) that the House of Representatives debated at length, but did not pass, would have directed ConnDOT to craft a plan to establish tolls and present it to legislators in 2018.

**HOUSE DEMOCRATIC LEADERS** said their push to bring tolls to Connecticut is not over. Last week, House Majority Leader Matt Ritter (D-Hartford), guaranteed that electronic tolling will come to the state, regardless of which political party is in control in the future, according to a [report](#) on the WTNH website. "Tolls are inevitable," Ritter said. "Whether you have a Republican or Democratic governor, they'll be here in the next five years." Democrats said both parties agree that the Special Transportation Fund will have serious deficit issues in the coming years.

**GOVERNOR MALLOY AND** Lt. Governor Nancy Wyman issued a [press release](#) immediately after the General Assembly adjourned Wednesday night "enthusiastically applauding" the Connecticut State Senate for voting to give final legislative passage on the transportation lockbox resolution. The release asserted, "Today's legislative approval means that the question on whether to adopt the constitutional amendment will next go to the voters in a referendum that will be held during the next statewide

election in November 2018. Once approved by the voters, it will be ratified into the state constitution."

**A MILEAGE TAX STUDY** received strong opposition in the General assembly when the House passed an amended version of [SB 76](#) by a vote of 116-34. The bill requires the legislature to approve, through a specified process, the use of any state money by ConnDOT for a study, plan, program, material, or activity concerning the use of a mileage-based user fee for motor vehicles operated on state roads.

**THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY** gave final passage to [H.B. 7073](#), as the Senate approved the proposal in the waning hours of the legislative session. The bill: (1) clarifies that the remedy for bringing a lawsuit against an owner by an unpaid subcontractor includes attorney's fees and interest; and (2) requires that on private construction contracts retainage must be released no later than 30 days after the issuance of the final completion certificate or the equivalent written acceptance by the owner. The bill now goes to the governor's desk for his approval. Hats off to the Connecticut Subcontractors Association for their active promotion of this bill.

**A NEW STATE TRANSPORTATION** Policy Advisory Committee would be established with the passage by the Senate of an [amendment](#) to HB 7138 to develop and recommend policies for improving transportation planning and the selection of transportation projects. The House had passed the bill earlier. The proposal would give the council oversight over any capital project that expands the capacity on a limited access highway, transit or railroad system or parking facility or is estimated to cost \$150 m. or more. With passage, the bill heads to the governor for his signature.

**THE BILL THAT WOULD HAVE** required contractors and subcontractors applying to the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) for prequalification to state whether they have been cited, in the last five years, for one or more violations of any state or federal occupational safety and health laws ([HB 6664](#)) died on the House Calendar as the General Assembly adjourned sine die on Wednesday night. CCIA and AGC opposed the bill.

**THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY** approved a plan proposed by U.S. Rep. John Larson and East Hartford State Senator Tim Larson to bury parts of Interstates 84 and 91 in Hartford underground. On Wednesday night, the CT House of Representatives gave final passage to [legislation](#) allowing ConnDOT to consider using available federal funds to construct the tunnels. According to an [article](#) in the *Bristol Press*, the Larson brothers say a tunnel system would connect Hartford to its waterfront and free land for recreation and development.

**CONSTRUCTION OF A CASINO** in East Windsor could begin by early fall and certainly by the end of the year, according to an [article](#) in the *Hartford Courant*. Kevin Brown, chairman of the Mohegan Tribal Council, said the timetable would become clearer soon, once designs are completed and final regulatory approvals are secured. The project faces an ongoing court fight from MGM and possibly others; however court action cannot stop construction unless there is a court-imposed injunction. And the tribes have maintained their intention to begin construction even under the cloud of court action.

**NOW THE BUDGET** takes center stage in the General Assembly. A date for the Special Session has not been set at this time; however, the budget debate is expected to heat up according to an [article](#) in *CTMirror*. Labor savings from state employee union concessions and benefit modifications are apparently a major obstacle to a bipartisan path to budget resolution. Whether a closely divided General Assembly will work together to address the impending \$5.1 b. deficit remains to be seen.

**SEVERAL LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS** that were not completed in the Regular Session and could impact the construction industry may be taken up in the continuing budget negotiations and the Special Session. The proposals could include crumbling house foundations in Northeastern Connecticut, prevailing wage laws, transportation funding, and legalizing marijuana.

**CONNDOT BID RESULTS** for June 7, 2017: [Proposal No. 0135-0301](#), Replacement of MNRR Bridge over Atlantic Street – Phase 2 (Stamford): Halmar International LLC: \$74,846,308.25; Yonkers Contracting Co.: \$77,311,168.40; J.F. White Contracting Company: \$79,877,258.80.

**THE NEW TAPPAN ZEE BRIDGE**, still under construction over the Hudson River north of New York City, is fully drivable but still several months from its official opening, [according](#) to *Construction Equipment Guide*. One of the new bridge's two parallel spans will officially open sometime in the fall. The original bridge opened in 1955, and that span will be torn down after the new bridge opens. This is the second major bridge project to be completed in New York this year, following the opening of the new Kosciuszko Bridge between Brooklyn and Queens in April.

**OVER 130 TRANSPORTATION** funding bills have been considered in 36 states since the start of 2017, according to [research](#) by ARTBA's Transportation Investment Advocacy Center. Motor fuel taxes remain the most popular revenue proposal vehicle in 2017, with 42 bills introduced in 21 states that include a motor fuel tax increase. Non-fuel tax recurring funding is the second most proposed topic, with 30 bills including either registration fee increases, tolling, sales taxes, license and weight fees, or another source of revenue. The research also shows that transportation funding continues to be a bipartisan issue. Republican state lawmakers have introduced 73 bills to date, while Democratic state lawmakers have introduced 29 bills.

**AGC OF CONNECTICUT** scholarships were awarded last week to three students who either plan to enter, or are currently enrolled, in construction-related programs in the fall. Cassandra Factora of Southport, a student at Fairfield Ludlowe High School, will attend Johns Hopkins University and was awarded the Angelo J.M. Giardini Scholarship. Olivia Apergis of Bristol is a student at Georgia Tech and received the Michael T. Timura Scholarship. Emily Magyari of Stamford, a student at Stamford High School, will attend Penn State and was awarded the Young Contractors Forum Scholarship. Congratulations!

**OSHA ANNOUNCED** this week it has designated June 12-18, 2017, as "Safe + Sound Week," a new nationwide effort that calls on organizations of all sizes in a wide range of industries to raise awareness of the value and importance of workplace safety and health programs, according to a [press release](#). Joining OSHA to sponsor the effort are the National Safety Council, American Industrial Hygiene Association, American Society of Safety Engineers, and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. In addition, 85 trade associations, industry, and professional groups are partnering with the Safe + Sound Week initiative.

**BUILDING PATHWAYS CONNECTICUT** will host informational sessions in June throughout Connecticut. This special apprenticeship readiness program to promote women and minorities into the building trades is a collaborative effort of the Apprenticeship and Training Directors Committee of Connecticut, the John J. Driscoll United Labor Agency, and the CT AFL-CIO. Attendance at an information session is mandatory in order to apply for entry into the program. Sessions will be held on June 12 in Rocky Hill, June 13 in North Haven, and June 16 in Hartford. An informational flyer is provided [here](#).

**FLIERS INCLUDED IN HIGHLIGHTS**, 6/9/17: 1) [CCIA June Calendar](#); 2) [YCF Joint Summer Meeting](#) 6/15.

**FROM THE INTERNET:** On this day, June 9, 1973, with a victory at the Belmont Stakes, Secretariat became the first horse since Citation in 1948 to win the Triple Crown, by winning the Kentucky Derby, the Preakness, and the Belmont Stakes. The U.S. retail industry makes \$6.8 b. a year from gift cards that no one redeems.