



DATE: April 11, 2013
TO: Members of the Regional Transit Committee
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A recap of transit and transportation bills in the 2013 legislative session

Transit bills and resolutions that passed and await the Governor's signature:

SR 618: Senate Study Committee on Public Transportation in Metro Atlanta/ Senator Brandon

Beach - Creates a Senate Study Committee made up of 5 Senators selected by the President of the Senate to study the current makeup of public transportation in metro Atlanta.

2013 and 2014 Budget Process; GRTA received \$560,000 in the '13 amended budget and \$8.1 million in the 2014 budget for their Xpress Bus System.

Transit-related bills that died in session – but may be available in 2014:

HB 264: The MARTA ACT/ Rep Mike Jacobs

This bill passed the House but stalled in the Senate. Before the end of the session Rep Jacobs amended several other moving bills with some of the language in HB 264. However this posture failed to move the issue forward. HB 264:

- Relieves the 50/50 requirement that MARTA spend its revenue equally on operations and capital, for a three year period – ending in 2016.
- Changes the Board MARTA Board: A caucus of North Fulton Mayors would make the appointments of 2, of the 3, Fulton County board spots. The third Fulton member would be elected by a caucus of South Fulton mayors and the county commission. One member from DeKalb County would be elected by a caucus of those mayors. The Governor would now appoint one board member from either DeKalb or Fulton, and both GRTA and GDOT board members would become non-voting.
- Gives the power of eminent domain for MARTA acquisitions to any city in which property to be acquired is located, rather than restricting this power only to counties or the City of Atlanta.
- The number of years for which MARTA may issue a bond is reduced from 40 to 30. The bill also requires that MARTA's bonded debt service not exceed more than 40% of sales tax revenues beginning on July 1, 2016, and reduces that to 35% on or after 2019.
- Contracts amounts for competitive bidding would be increased from \$100,000 to \$200,000, and all expenditures to a single vendor over \$5000 must be listed on an appendix for each Board meeting and listed on the MARTA website.
- Prohibits any new employee from entering a defined benefit pension plan after January 1, 2014.
- By 2018, MARTA must enter into binding contracts with private contractors for the 12 functional areas which were defied in the KPMG audit. MARTA must maintain an operating reserve of 10% of the prior year's sales tax revenue, rather than the prior year's operating budget.
- Streamlines the arbitration process following union negotiations.

SB 92: Revenue to Transit/ Senator Vincent Fort/ Allows the excise tax revenue generated from motor vehicle rentals to be applied to transit.

SB 90: Requires Transit Providers to Report PPP Progress to GRTA/ Senator Steve Gooch
This bill was not heard in Senate Transportation committee to which it was assigned. The bill requires that all state, regional and local governments report annually to the Governor's Development Council (GRTA) on a number of management issues relating to their progress in utilizing public private partnerships.

Bills relating to transportation in general that passed and await the Governor's signature:

HB 202: Value Engineering Studies (GDOT)/ Rep Epps - First, the bill adjusts the minimum threshold for requiring value engineering studies from \$10M to \$50M. Second, it exempts all interstate projects and freight corridor projects, as proposed by the planning director and approved by the state transportation board, from congressional balancing.

SB 70: Design-Build Changes/ Senator Steve Gooch- This is a department bill which changes the procedures for utilizing a design build contract by expanding the selection process to include selection of the best value bidder through weighing of requirements defined by the department.

SB 218: Emergency Tow Truck Permits / Senator Steve Gooch- This bill allows for higher weights limits on emergency commercial tow trucks.

Bills relating to transportation in general that died in session, but may be available for the 2014 session:

SB 99: Fractional Sales Tax for SPLOST/ Senator Judson Hill

This bill allows for one or more fractional SPLOST at any rate of less than 1 percent if the combined rates do not exceed 1 percent. This bill does not require an intergovernmental agreement.

HB 153: Fractional Sales Tax for SPLOST/ Rep. John Carson

This bill allows counties to ask voters for a fractional percentage for the SPLOST. An intergovernmental agreement between cities and counties is required.

SB 73: Changes Penalty in TIA legislation/ Senator John Albers

This bill would eliminate the 30% match requirement on projects for those regions in the state that did not pass the July 31, 2012 transportation referendum.

HB 195: Changes Definition of Special Districts in TIA Legislation/ Rep Ed Setzler

This bill changes the definition of a special district beginning in July 2013 for those regions that did not vote in favor of the TIA referendum; Districts that approved the tax would cease to exist after January 1, 2023. New special districts could be formed through in intergovernmental agreement of two or more counties whose boundaries are contiguous. A referendum could be held for up to 10 years or as little as three years, and a fractional percent could be asked for.

HB 306: Creating the Piedmont Altamaha Rail Authority/ Rep. Keisha Waites

This bill creates the Piedmont Altamaha Rail Authority authorized to acquire, construct, maintain, operate, and own a higher-speed intercity and urban rail and tram system in Clayton, Henry, and Monroe, Bibb and Butts counties. This was a local bill and did not receive the number of required delegation signatures to move forward this session.