

SENATE TRANSPORTATION
COMMITTEE
2008

Senator Jeff Mullis, 53rd, Chairman
212 English Avenue
Chickamauga, GA 30707

Senator Chip Pearson, 51st, Vice-Chairman
P.O. Box 209
Dawsonville, GA 30534

Senator Bill Jackson, 24th, Secretary
P.O. Box 528
Appling, GA 30802

Senator Jeff Chapman, 3rd
P.O. Box 3119
Brunswick, GA 31521

Senator John Douglas, 17th
295 Nicklaus Circle
Social Circle, GA 30025

Senator Greg Goggans, 7th, Ex-Officio
1300 Hampton Road
Douglas, GA 31533

Senator Judson Hill, 32nd, Ex-Officio
3102 Raines Court
Marietta, GA 30062

Senator Kasim Reed, 35th
1755 Loch Lomond Trail
Atlanta, GA 30331

Senator Valencia Seay, 34th
P.O. Box 960008
Riverdale, GA 30274

Senator Cecil Staton, 18th
P.O. Box 26427
Macon, GA 31221

Senator Doug Stoner, 6th
P.O. Box 1781
Smyrna, GA 30081

Senator Steve Thompson, 33rd
1170 Longwood Drive
Marietta, GA 30008

Minutes of the Senate Transportation Committee

January 30, 2008

A meeting of the Senate Transportation Committee was held on January 30, 2008 in Room 450 of the Capitol. Chairman Mullis called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m. Members present included Senators Pearson of the 51st, Jackson of the 24th, Chapman of the 3rd, Douglas of the 17th, Goggans of the 7th Ex-Officio, Hill of the 32nd Ex-Officio, Seay of the 34th, Stoner of the 6th, and Thompson of the 33rd.

The Chairman asked Gordon Kenna from Georgia Concrete & Products Association to come forward. He presented the committee with information regarding the need for pedestrian facilities and state funding. Areas of need include sidewalks, crosswalks that are not controlled by traffic signals, and handicapped accessible curb cuts. The Chairman thanked Mr. Kenna for his presentation and asked if there were any questions. There were no questions.

The Chairman announced that he was creating three subcommittees to perfect policy regarding Transportation. They are as follows:

Airports & Seaports – Members include Hill of the 32nd as Sub-committee Chairman, Pearson of the 51st, Seay of the 34th, and Chapman of the 3rd.

Roads & Bridges – Members include Jackson of the 24th as Sub-committee Chairman, Thompson of the 33rd, Douglas of the 17th, and Goggans of the 7th Ex-Officio.

Intermodal, Rail & Transit – Members include Stoner of the 6th as Sub-committee Chairman, Reed of the 35th, Staton of the 18th, and Hill of the 32nd Ex-Officio.

Chairman Mullis stated that he was moving [SR 428](#) and [SB 271](#) to the Intermodal, Rail & Transit Sub-committee, and [SR's 716](#), [718](#), [720](#), [723](#), and [733](#) to the Roads & Bridges Sub-committee for further attention.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by the Chairman at 2:19 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Senator Bill Jackson 24th, Secretary

/s/ Debra Charnote, Recording Secretary

Minutes of the Senate Transportation Committee

February 6, 2008

A meeting of the Senate Transportation Committee was held on February 6, 2008 in Room 450 of the Capitol. Chairman Mullis called the meeting to order at 2:41 p.m. Members present included Senators Pearson of the 51st, Jackson of the 24th, Chapman of the 3rd, Douglas of the 17th, Goggans of the 7th Ex-Officio, Hill of the 32nd Ex-Officio, Reed of the 35th, Seay of the 34th, and Stoner of the 6th.

The Chairman asked Oriol Balaguer, Director of Ports, Airports & Coasts from Catalonia Spain to come forward. Director Balaguer discussed some of the transportation issues he is facing in Barcelona, Spain, and how those issues are similar to Atlanta's transportation problems. The Chairman thanked Director Balaguer for speaking to the committee and asked if there were any questions. There were no questions.

SB 371 (Stoner, 6th) Local School Districts; rail crossings

Senator Stoner presented the bill. This legislation requires each local school district to survey its established school bus routes annually, and submit a list to the DOT identifying each rail crossing that does not have active warning devices on an established bus route by July of each year. "Active warning devices" are defined, in this provision only, as automated control gates, lights, and warning bells, used singly or in any combination.

This bill does not actually require active warning devices to be placed on rail crossings along school routes. However, it forces an inventory of such crossings and a list for DOT to prioritize and encourages the school systems to reroute. Furthermore, there are federal funding programs for school railroad crossings based on lists completed by DOT which prioritizes the list based on the safety risks of each crossing. The railroad companies actually install the devices (which cost several hundred thousand dollars) and are reimbursed by the federal government. Buddy White, a Railroad Union representative, Joel Herrell of Norfolk Southern, and Gerald Ross, Chief Engineer for the GDOT offered their support of the bill.

Senator Douglas moved that the bill be amended to provide for a July 1, 2008 start date. After brief discussion, Senator Jackson made a motion that **SB 371 Do Pass by Substitute** and Senator Douglas seconded. The bill passed unanimously.

SB 371 DO PASS BY SUBSTITUTE

SR 750 (Pearson, 51st) *Transportation, U.S. Dept. of; urged*

Senator Pearson presented the resolution. He explained that the United States Department of Transportation's (USDOT) main mission has largely been fulfilled with the completion of the federal interstate highway system. The federal motor fuel taxes charged to the citizens of Georgia are needlessly sent to the federal government before being returned to the state government. Furthermore, Georgia, as a donor state, does not receive back as much motor fuel tax as it collects and sends to the federal government.

Therefore, this resolution urges the USDOT to make the funds collected under the federal tax immediately available to individual states to fund their transportation needs and to cease collection of state motor fuel taxes in Georgia so that the state can collect and distribute the taxes without the delay caused by federal collection and disbursement.

Senator Reed moved that **SR 750 Do Pass by Substitute** and Senator Staton seconded. The resolution passed unanimously.

SR 750 DO PASS BY SUBSTITUTE

SR 781 (Mullis, 53rd) *GDOT; Statewide Strategic Plan*

Chairman Mullis presented the resolution. Based on the findings and recommendations of the Final Report of the Joint Study Committee on Transportation Funding, this legislation urges the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) to develop a state-wide strategic transportation plan that will include:

- Utilization of public-private initiatives (PPIs) to raise capital to start and maintain transportation facilities, when a project meets the criteria for a PPI;
- Implementation, as soon as practicable, of high occupancy toll lanes (HOT lanes) to electronically toll drivers who desire to travel in low congestion lanes for a price;
- Preparation and implementation of proposals to have private companies build and maintain transportation facilities on behalf of the state. The private companies will be offered concessions (such as toll revenue) in order to make the deal palatable to investors; and
- Construction and funding of a modern public transit system that may include express buses, light or heavy rail, a mag-lev train, or a combination.

This legislation also urges GDOT to report to the General Assembly, by December 31, 2008, on its progress in developing a state-wide strategic transportation plan.

Senator Jackson moved that **SR 781 Do Pass** and Senator Seay seconded. The resolution passed unanimously.

SR 781 DO PASS

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by the Chairman at 3:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Senator Bill Jackson 24th, Secretary

/s/ Debra Charnote, Recording Secretary

Minutes of the Senate Transportation Committee

February 11, 2008

A meeting of the Senate Transportation Committee was held on February 11, 2008 in Room 125 of the Capitol. Chairman Mullis called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. Members present included Senators Pearson of the 51st, Jackson of the 24th, Chapman of the 3rd, Douglas of the 17th, Hill of the 32nd Ex-Officio, Reed of the 35th, Seay of the 34th, Staton of the 18th, Stoner of the 6th, and Thompson of the 33rd.

SB 411 (Williams, 19th) *Contracts; design-build procedure*

Senator Williams presented the bill. The introduced version of the bill only removed the provision in current law which limits DOT to contracting for design-build contracts for no more than 15 percent of the total construction projects awarded the previous year. The Committee Substitute repeals current law governing “design-build” in its entirety and replaces it with the “Transportation Alternative Delivery Act,” which authorizes DOT to utilize the following delivery methods: competitive sealed bidding (awarded to lowest bid); competitive sealed proposals (awarded to best qualified bid which may or may not include cost); construction management of risk (DOT contracts for design and construction separately); and design-build (design builder is responsible for design and construction).

According to the DOT Commissioner, Gena Abraham, this will allow for an open, competitive process and equal opportunities for all businesses.

Senator Williams stated that current law, which requires bidders to be selected on cost, has resulted in a selection of the lowest bid and a subsequent increase in price after the bid has been awarded, representing a large cost difference. This bill will also allow new, start-up companies to participate in the process because it will not be subject to prequalification requirements.

Senator Thompson moved **SB 411 Do Pass by Substitute** and Senator Jackson seconded. The bill passed unanimously.

SB 411 DO PASS BY SUBSTITUTE

SB 410 (Stoner, 6th) **State Road/Tollway Authority; fund**

Senator Stoner presented the bill. This legislation authorizes the State Road and Tollway Authority (SRTA) to promulgate rules and regulations, subject to available funding, for the creation of a state Congestion Relief Fund (Fund) to be used for traffic congestion relief projects initiated by Community Improvement Districts (CIDs) throughout the state. In order to qualify for a loan from this Fund, a CID must demonstrate that it is able to provide funds to match the loan amount requested from the Fund.

Senator Reed moved that **SB 410 Do Pass by Substitute** and Senator Seay seconded. The bill passed unanimously.

SB 410 DO PASS BY SUBSTITUTE

SB 420 (Pearson, 51st) **Soil Erosion/Sedimentation**

Senator Pearson presented the bill. Current law provides for the imposition of civil penalties for violations of the provisions under the Erosion and Sedimentation Act. Under this legislation, such penalties may not be assessed against the Department of Transportation (DOT) or any contractor working under a contract for the DOT. Senator Pearson explained that this is the only instance where one department can transfer money from another department (EPD can fine DOT).

Senator Steve Thompson offered an amendment to the bill. The amendment clarifies that the legislation does not diminish the property rights of a landowner adversely affected by construction activity of the DOT. According to Mr. Neil Herring, a lobbyist for the Sierra Club, this will protect downstream property owners. Senator Douglas moved that the committee adopt the amendment, and Senator Chapman seconded. The committee unanimously agreed to create a substitute to the bill.

Senator Reed moved that **SB 420 Do Pass by Substitute** and Senator Hill seconded. The bill passed unanimously.

SB 420 DO PASS BY SUBSTITUTE

SB 417 (Mullis, 53rd) DOT Commissioner; benchmarks

Chairman Mullis asked Tom Leslie from Georgia Engineering Alliance to come forward to present the bill. Value engineering studies must be performed on all projects whose costs exceed \$10 million, and the Commissioner of DOT must submit an annual report to the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives detailing the amount saved due to the value engineering studies. The Commissioner of DOT must also develop and publish benchmarks, based upon the type and scope of a construction project, that detail a realistic time frame for completion of each stage of a construction project and submit an annual report to the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives detailing the progress of every construction project valued at \$10 million or more against the benchmarks. These reports, as well as the status reports, must be published on DOT's website.

The discussion centered on the value engineering (VE) studies. Senators Reed and Thompson questioned the cost of performing VE studies, quoted by Senator Mullis as a "second opinion," or the attempt to assure highest value by delivering all required functions at the lowest overall cost. Commissioner Abraham responded that the VE studies result in a more cost-effective means to carry out a project that outweighs the cost of a project without VE studies. Currently, federal law requires DOT to use VE studies for projects over \$25 million. This bill allows DOT to use VE studies for projects at \$10 million or more.

Senator Jackson moved that **SB 417 Do Pass** and Senator Stoner seconded. The bill passed unanimously.

SB 417 DO PASS

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by the Chairman at 1:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Senator Bill Jackson 24th, Secretary

/s/ Debra Charnote, Recording Secretary

Minutes of the Senate Transportation Committee

February 13, 2008

A meeting of the Senate Transportation Committee was held on February 13, 2008 in the Senate Mezzanine, Room 455 of the Capitol. Chairman Mullis called the meeting to order at 3:06 p.m. Members present included Senators Pearson of the 51st, Jackson of the 24th, Chapman of the 3rd, Douglas of the 17th, Goggans of the 7th Ex-Officio, Seay of the 34th, Staton of the 18th, Stoner of the 6th, and Thompson of the 33rd.

Tom Bauer of the Georgia Transit Association introduced Butch McDuffie who presented the committee with an overview of the Athens Transit Authority. Senator Mullis thanked Mr. McDuffie for the presentation. Chairman Mullis then stated that he was moving SB 256 to the Roads and Bridges Sub-committee to allow for issues to be resolved between interested parties.

SR 845 (Mullis, 53rd) *County Governments; TSPLOST*

Senator Mullis presented the resolution. This Committee Substitute proposes a constitutional amendment which will authorize, on or after May 1, 2009, a 1% sales and use tax to be limited to a specified period of time to fund transportation projects.

This bill provides for the creation of 159 special transportation districts. The geographical boundary of each county will correspond to the geographical boundary of one of the special transportation districts. A joint resolution must be adopted by the county and each municipality that wishes to participate. The joint resolution calling for the imposition of the tax and the ballot submitting the questions of the imposition of the tax to the voters of the special transportation district must describe: the specific transportation project(s) to be funded; the maximum cost (which will be the maximum amount of net proceeds to be raised by the tax); and the maximum period of time for which the tax may be levied. However, the tax will not be subject to any exemption with respect to the sale or use of food/beverages or the sale or use of property used in the production or generation of energy.

The General Assembly is required, no later than April 1, 2009, to enact legislation providing for the method of distribution of the proceeds and for the expenditure of the proceeds: at least 80% must be spent within the special transportation district; the remaining 20% of the total amount of proceeds must be remitted to the DOT on a monthly basis, which must spend at least 10% on multicounty or regional mass transit networks and the other 10% will be collected in the general fund to be used solely for general transportation purposes.

Also, no later than April 1, 2009, the General Assembly must enact legislation providing for a multicounty or regional transportation sales and use tax alternative to focus on projects of regional significance. The board of commissioners of each county and the governing authority of each municipality which desires to participate in this tax must adopt a resolution by majority vote calling for such tax. The combined geographic boundaries of those counties will constitute the boundary of the single regional transportation special district. This tax must be approved by the voters in the entire regional district in the same way as the special transportation districts. The legislation enacted by the General Assembly must provide: at least 80% of the total amount of proceeds must be spent in the regional district on the specific transportation projects; the remaining 20% must be remitted to DOT on a monthly basis, which must spend at least 10% on mutli-county or regional mass transit and the other 10% will be collected in the general fund to be used solely for transportation purposes. Senator Seay asked about the cap placed on Atlanta's sales and use tax. This legislation will remove this cap by authorizing a 1 percent increase.

Terry Chastain, Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce and Get Georgia Moving Coalition, Tom Gehl, Georgia Municipal Association, Matt Hicks, Association of County Commissioners, Tom Bauer, Georgia Transit Association, Mike Kenn, Georgians for Better Transportation, and Jeff Katz, Technology Leadership Corporation, all offered their support of the bill.

Senator Pearson moved that **SR 845 Do Pass by Substitute** and Senator Goggans seconded. The resolution passed 7-2, with nay votes from Senators Chapman and Douglas.

[SR 845 DO PASS BY SUBSTITUTE](#)

SB 444 (Pearson, 51st) DOT Surplus Property

Senator Pearson presented the bill. This legislation allows the Department of Transportation to more readily dispose of surplus property not needed for public road purposes. Real property owned by the department for 40 or more years that is not in a transportation corridor or within the right of way of a transportation facility will be evaluated to determine the necessity for retaining the property. If the property is not needed, the department may dispose of the property in accordance with this legislation without the necessity of offering the property to the owner, or his or her successor in interest, at the time the property was acquired by the department.

Senator Douglas moved that **SB 444 Do Pass** and Senator Chapman seconded. The bill passed unanimously.

SB 444 DO PASS

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by the Chairman at 4:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Senator Bill Jackson 24th, Secretary

/s/ Debra Charnote, Recording Secretary

**Minutes of the
Senate Transportation Committee**

February 20, 2008

A meeting of the Senate Transportation Committee was held on February 20, 2008 in Room 450 of the Capitol. Chairman Mullis called the meeting to order at 2:20 p.m. Members present included Senators Pearson of the 51st, Jackson of the 24th, Chapman of the 3rd, Douglas of the 17th, Hill of the 32nd Ex-Officio, Reed of the 35th, Seay of the 34th, Staton of the 18th, and Stoner of the 6th.

**NOTE: Senators Pearson left and Senator Hill arrived
at 2:35 p.m.**

Chairman Mullis invited Kevin Green, Executive Director of the Clean Air Campaign to come forward to present an update to the committee. The Chairman thanked Mr. Green for his presentation and asked if there were any questions. There were none.

[SR 428](#) (Mullis, 53rd) *Senate Railroad Safety & Security Study*

Chairman Mullis asked Buddy White, a representative for the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, to speak about the resolution. This resolution creates the Senate Railroad Safety and Security Study Committee, to be composed of five members of the Senate appointed by the Lieutenant Governor. This bill was recommitted this session and the Committee Substitute changes the date (when the Committee will stand abolished and when a report, if made, must be completed) to reflect 2008.

NOTE: Senator Jackson arrived at 2:43 p.m.

Senator Reed moved that **SR 428 Do Pass by Substitute** and Senator Stoner seconded. The resolution passed unanimously.

[SR 428 DO PASS BY SUBSTITUTE](#)

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by the Chairman at 2:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Senator Bill Jackson 24th, Secretary

/s/ Debra Charnote, Recording Secretary

**Minutes of the
Senate Transportation Committee**

February 28, 2008

A meeting of the Senate Transportation Committee was held on February 28, 2008 in Room 341 of the Capitol. Chairman Mullis called the meeting to order at 2:15 p.m. Members present included Senators Pearson of the 51st, Douglas of the 17th, Hill of the 32nd Ex-Officio, Seay of the 34th, Staton of the 18th, and Stoner of the 6th.

This was a joint committee meeting with the purpose of hearing presentations about High Speed Rail and Commuter Rail. House members present included Davis of the 109th and Hamilton of the 23rd.

NOTE: Senators Mullis and Pearson left at 2:29 p.m.

Chairman Mullis invited Chris Brady, speaking on behalf of Walter Buss, Transrapid International, regarding the Maglev train and high speed rail technology. Committee members discussed what route the high speed rail would take, how many stops, the costs involved, and various funding options. This project has the support of Congressman Wamp (R-TN-3rd), Mayor Ron Littlefield of Chattanooga, and various others. Possibly we could share the cost of the project between the two states along with federal funding. There is currently federal grant money earmarked for the project. Senator Stoner thanked Mr. Brady for his presentation.

NOTE: Senators Mullis and Pearson returned at 3:20 p.m.

Senator Stoner invited Ed Campbell of SYSTRA, Emory Morseberger, Chairman of Georgians for the Brain Train, and Andy Welsh of the Henry County Chamber of Commerce to step forward to make a presentation about commuter rail. The current commuter rail project is for a commuter rail that would connect Athens, Atlanta and Macon. Committee members discussed the length of time it would take to ride from point to point and the costs involved.

NOTE: Senators Seay and Staton left at 3:34 p.m.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by the Chairman at 3:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Senator Jeff Mullis 53rd, Chairman

/s/ Debra Charnote, Recording Secretary

Minutes of the Senate Transportation Committee

March 5, 2008

A meeting of the Senate Transportation Committee was held on March 5, 2008 in Room 450 of the Capitol. Chairman Mullis called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. Members present included Senators Pearson of the 51st, Jackson of the 24th, Chapman of the 3rd, Douglas of the 17th, Goggans of the 7th Ex-Officio, Hill of the 32nd Ex-Officio, Seay of the 34th, Staton of the 18th, and Stoner of the 6th.

SB 256 (Mullis, 53rd) *Outdoor Advertising Signs*

Senators Mullis and Heath presented a substitute to the bill. This Committee Substitute prohibits new signs higher than 75 feet on or after July 1, 2008. However, owners of any new signs built on or after this date will also be granted a DOT permit to trim and remove vegetation and trees within the viewing zone of the sign.

All trees may now be removed from within a viewing zone using best efforts to create a conical view zone so that the cleared area does not exceed the width of the outdoor sign plus ten feet on either side at the edge of the sign face and does not exceed 500 feet along the pavement of the traveled way. However, endangered or historic trees cannot be removed and DOT and local governments may not plant a tree, except erosion preventative ground covering, in the viewing zone of a sign.

As a condition of the permit, the value of the landscaping cannot be less than DOT's appraised value of the benefit conferred upon the applicant for receiving the permit. The appraised value is the average value determined by averaging two appraisals of fair market value performed by two independent registered foresters, both chosen by the permittee, with fair market value determined in accordance with the published timber prices contained in Timber Mart-South, a publication of the Center for Forest Business, the Warnell School of Forest Resources at the University of Georgia. If the appraised value is less, the applicant can pay the difference. This money will be deposited into the Roadside Beautification Fund and one-half must be spent within four months of the end of the fiscal year.

Signs exceeding this height in existence on July 1 are not required to be lowered. If lowered, DOT and the owner must enter into an agreement providing for the granting, or renewing, of a permit to trim and remove, without a fee. If not lowered, the owner must abide by current law governing outdoor advertising signs, which places certain restrictions on what types of trees may be removed and trimmed.

In support of the bill were Vernon Lee and Joe Garner of the Outdoor Advertising Association and the Georgia Chamber of Commerce. In opposition of the bill were Mary Lovings of the Garden Club of Georgia, Dorothy McDaniel of Trees for Columbus, and a member of the Georgia Conservancy.

Senator Pearson moved that **SB 256 Do Pass by Substitute** and Senator Stoner seconded. The bill passed unanimously.

SB 256 DO PASS BY SUBSTITUTE

SR 1055 (Mullis, 53rd) **Joel A. Katz Parkway; dedicate**

Senator Mullis presented a substitute to the resolution. This Committee Substitute combines all of the road and bridge dedication resolutions.

Senator Goggans moved that **SR 1055 Do Pass by Substitute** and Senator Pearson seconded. The resolution passed unanimously.

SR 1055 DO PASS BY SUBSTITUTE

HB 1026 (Smith, 129th) **Transportation, Dept. of; utility facilities**

Rep. Smith presented a substitute to the bill. Current law requires any utility using or occupying any part of a public road, which the Department of Transportation (DOT) has undertaken to improve, to remove, relocate, or make necessary adjustments to its facility when the facility constitutes an obstruction or interference with the use or safe operation of the road by the traveling public or will interfere with construction or maintenance.

Under this legislation, a utility must remove, improve, relocate, or adjust if adjacent to a public road. The Committee Substitute adds language stating that nothing in this legislation will be construed so as to deprive any utility relocated from a location in which it owned a property interest of compensation for such interest.

Senator Hill moved that **HB 1026 Do Pass by Substitute** and Senator Douglas seconded. The bill passed unanimously.

HB 1026 DO PASS BY SUBSTITUTE

SR 1047 (Pearson, 51st) Transportation, Dept. of; county barns

Sen. Pearson presented a substitute to the resolution. This Committee Substitute urges the Department of Transportation (DOT) to develop a strategy to consolidate its barns and road maintenance operations in order to save taxpayers money and improve efficiency. Further, the General Assembly urges DOT to report, by December 31, 2008, its progress in consolidating such barns and operations.

The original resolution specifically urged DOT to consider contracting with counties, where feasible, to save taxpayers money and raise the efficiency of road maintenance. The Committee Substitute added that DOT should consider contracting with counties and the private sector.

Senator Hill moved that **SR 1047 Do Pass by Substitute** and Senator Seay seconded. The resolution passed unanimously.

SR 1047 DO PASS BY SUBSTITUTE

HB 1019 (Lunsford, 110th) GA Transp. Infrastructure Bank Act

Rep. Lunsford presented the bill. This Committee Substitute creates the Georgia Transportation Infrastructure Bank (Bank) within the State Road and Tollway Authority (SRTA). The Bank must establish and maintain at least four of the following accounts in SRTA's fund: State and local roadway account; State and local nonroadway account; Federal roadway account; and Federal nonroadway account.

The Bank may provide loans and other financial assistance to a government unit to pay for all or part of the eligible costs of a qualified project which include costs of preliminary engineering, traffic and revenue studies, environmental studies, right of way acquisition, legal and financial services, and construction. The Board must determine which projects are eligible projects and then select qualified projects from the list of eligible projects. Preferences may be given to eligible projects which have local financial support.

The Committee Substitute adds language clarifying that an "eligible project" includes terminals for freight, railroad, or transit.

Senator Seay moved that **HB 1019 Do Pass by Substitute** and Senator Staton seconded. The bill passed unanimously.

HB 1019 DO PASS BY SUBSTITUTE

SR 842 (Mullis, 53rd) **Trans., GA Dept. of; maglev train**

Senator Mullis presented the resolution. This resolution urges the Department of Transportation to explore the feasibility of constructing a maglev system connecting Hartsfield-Jackson Airport in Atlanta with the Chattanooga Municipal Airport, known as "The Plane Train."

Senator Staton moved that **SR 842 Do Pass** and Senator Chapman seconded. The resolution passed 8-1, with one nay vote from Sen. Douglas.

SR 842 DO PASS

SR 1060 (Mullis, 53rd) **Transportation Commissioner; reports**

Senator Mullis presented the resolution. The General Assembly requests that the Commissioner of the Department of Transportation (DOT), beginning on December 31, 2008, and annually thereafter, prepare a report for the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the Chairpersons of the Senate and House Transportation Committees detailing the progress DOT has made in the following areas: (1) Disposal of county maintenance barns and surplus equipment; (2) Road maintenance; and (3) Bridge maintenance.

Senator Douglas moved that **SR 1060 Do Pass** and Senator Goggans seconded. The resolution passed unanimously.

SR 1060 DO PASS

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by the Chairman at 11:05 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Senator Bill Jackson 24th, Secretary

/s/ Debra Charnote, Recording Secretary

Minutes of the Senate Transportation Committee

March 12, 2008

A meeting of the Senate Transportation Committee was held on March 12, 2008 in Room 307 of the Coverdell Legislative Office Building. Chairman Mullis called the meeting to order at 1:15 p.m. Members present included Senators Pearson of the 51st, Jackson of the 24th, Chapman of the 3rd, Douglas of the 17th, Reed of the 35th, Seay of the 34th, Staton of the 18th, and Stoner of the 6th.

Chairman Mullis invited Doyle Watkins from Wastow Enterprises to make a presentation to the committee. The presentation was in reference to the company's new technology and possible relocation to the State of Georgia. The Chairman thanked them for their time and asked if there were any questions from the committee. There were none.

Chairman Mullis stated that he was moving HR 1023 to the Roads & Bridges Subcommittee for further attention.

HB 981 (Butler, 18th) *Weight of vehicles and loads; concrete*

Rep. Butler presented the bill. This legislation removes the restriction in current law which allows concrete haulers to exceed weight and load limitations (up to a certain weight) only when the concrete is for delivery to a customer located in the same or adjoining county, and provides that concrete haulers are entitled to a 5 percent variance from the weight limitations within a 100 mile radius of the farm or point of origin. Feed and granite haulers are currently entitled to such a variance.

Discussion centered around ACCG's opposition to the bill: allowing concrete haulers a variance to exceed the weight and load limitations will cause more wear and tear on the roads (and more quickly) that the county and taxpayers will have to pay for paving and maintenance of these roads.

Senator Stoner moved that **HB 981 Do Pass** and Senator Jackson seconded. The bill passed unanimously.

HB 981 DO PASS

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by the Chairman at 1:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Senator Bill Jackson 24th, Secretary

/s/ Debra Charnote, Recording Secretary

Minutes of the Senate Transportation Committee

March 20, 2008

A meeting of the Senate Transportation Committee was held on March 20, 2008 in Room 450 of the Capitol. Chairman Mullis called the meeting to order at 2:20 p.m. Members present included Senators Jackson of the 24th, Hill of the 32nd Ex-Officio, Seay of the 34th, Staton of the 18th, and Stoner of the 6th.

Chairman Mullis welcomed Rich Markwith from AE Com DMJM + Harris to give a presentation to the committee on project management. Sen. Mullis thanked Mr. Markwith for his presentation to the committee. There were no questions.

[HB 426](#) (Jones, 44th) *Railroad Crossings; warning devices*

Rep. Jones presented the bill. This legislation requires each local school district to survey its bus routes annually, and submit a list to the DOT identifying each rail crossing that does not have active warning devices. Further, this legislation requires each local school district to minimize the number of established school bus routes that cross these rail crossings. The DOT must use this information as an important factor in selecting rail crossings to upgrade with active warning devices. An amendment was made in committee to change the effective date to January 1, 2009 instead of July 1, 2008.

Senator Hill moved that **HB 426 Do Pass by Substitute** and Senator Seay seconded. The bill passed unanimously.

[HB 426 DO PASS BY SUBSTITUTE](#)

[HB 1189](#) (Sheldon, 105th) *Statewide Strategic Plan; GDOT*

Chairman Mullis presented the bill. The Commissioner of the Department of Transportation (DOT) must prepare a report detailing the progress DOT has made on preparing a State-wide Strategic Transportation Plan. An updated version must be prepared and delivered annually thereafter. Both the report and plan must be published on DOT's website. A Committee Substitute was offered. This version allows extra time for completion and implementation.

Senator Jackson moved that **HB 1189 Do Pass by Substitute** and Senator Stoner seconded. The bill passed unanimously.

[HB 1189 DO PASS BY SUBSTITUTE](#)

SR 1120 (Rogers, 21st) *Safety Evaluations; GDOT*

Senator Hill presented the resolution. This legislation requests the Department of Transportation to evaluate the condition of the roadside shoulders on SR 140 and SR 20 in Cherokee County and perform any needed repairs in a timely manner.

Senator Hill moved that **SR 1120 Do Pass** and Senator Stoner seconded. The resolution passed unanimously.

SR 1120 DO PASS

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by the Chairman at 2:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Senator Bill Jackson 24th, Secretary

/s/ Debra Charnote, Recording Secretary

Minutes of the Senate Transportation Committee

March 27, 2008

A meeting of the Senate Transportation Committee was held on March 27, 2008 in the Senate Mezzanine Room 455 of the Capitol. Chairman Mullis called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. Members present included Senators Pearson of the 51st, Jackson of the 24th, Goggans of the 7th Ex-Officio, Hill of the 32nd Ex-Officio, Reed of the 35th, and Seay of the 34th.

HR 468 (Houston, 170th) *Sheriff D. J. Connell Memorial Hwy*

Chairman Mullis presented the resolution. This legislation includes twelve road and bridge dedications (the Committee Substitute adds one road dedication).

Senator Reed moved that **HR 468 Do Pass by Substitute** and Senator Goggans seconded. The resolution passed unanimously.

HR 468 DO PASS BY SUBSTITUTE

HR 1023 (Holmes, 61st) *Tuskegee Airmen Parkway; dedicate*

Chairman Mullis presented the resolution. In recognition of the Tuskegee Airmen and the organization, this resolution dedicates Camp Creek Parkway in Fulton County from its intersection with Fulton Industrial Boulevard to its intersection with Interstate Highway 85 as the Tuskegee Airmen Parkway.

The Committee Substitute adds two road dedications:

- In recognition of Mr. Roderick Steele, a slave who helped the Confederate soldiers to detour General Sherman's army through Mulberry Grove Plantation, this resolution dedicates the viaduct from Monteith to Meinhart over I-95 in Port Wentworth as the Roderick Steele Viaduct.
- To memorialize the bravery and loyalty of the 600 Confederate soldiers moved to Ft. Pulaski in 1864 where they were intentionally starved, this resolution dedicated the portion of the road at the intersection of US80 and County Road 228 (Fort Pulaski Road) for one-half mile in each direction on US 80 as The Immortal Six Hundred Memorial Highway.

Senator Seay moved that **HR 1023 Do Pass by Substitute** and Senator Jackson seconded. The resolution passed unanimously.

HR 1023 DO PASS BY SUBSTITUTE

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by the Chairman at 3:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Senator Bill Jackson 24th, Secretary

/s/ Debra Charnote, Recording Secretary

June 1, 2008

Honorable Bob Ewing
Secretary of the Senate
State Capitol
Room 353
Atlanta, GA 30334

Dear Mr. Ewing:

Along with the minutes of the **Senate Transportation Committee**, I am returning the following Bills and Resolutions:

<u>SB 233</u>	<u>SR 733</u>	<u>HB 1123</u>
<u>SR 297</u>	<u>SR 811</u>	<u>HB 1124</u>
<u>SR 298</u>	<u>SR 812</u>	<u>HR 14</u>
<u>SR 299</u>	<u>SR 813</u>	<u>HR 146</u>
<u>SR 341</u>	<u>SR 814</u>	<u>HR 147</u>
<u>SR 404</u>	<u>SR 815</u>	<u>HR 195</u>
<u>SR 453</u>	<u>SR 980</u>	<u>HR 321</u>
<u>SR 454</u>	<u>SR 1029</u>	<u>HR 423</u>
<u>SR 486</u>	<u>SR 1035</u>	<u>HR 531</u>
<u>SR 716</u>	<u>SR 1061</u>	
<u>SR 718</u>	<u>SR 1069</u>	
<u>SR 720</u>	<u>SR 1071</u>	
<u>SR 723</u>		

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Debra Charnote
Recording Secretary
Senate Transportation Committee