



NEWS

From the Office of
Representative Charlie Denison

135th District

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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May 5, 2009

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Representative Charlie Denison's House Bill 359 Receives Final Approval from the Missouri Legislature

Important transportation legislation will now head to the Governor

Jefferson City- On Tuesday, the Missouri House of Representatives passed House Bill 359 sponsored by State Representative Charlie Denison (R-Springfield). The bill, which will change the way highway projects are awarded, passed the House by a vote of 144-14. Throughout the legislative process the bill has been supported by a wide coalition of legislators from both parties and numerous organizations from around the state of Missouri. The bill will now go to Governor Jay Nixon's desk for final approval.

"Design-build is a necessary tool to utilize funding from the economic stimulus package," said Mike Kehoe, Chairman of the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission. "It would allow us get a good return for the taxpayers on projects that would be brought on by these federal transportation dollars."

The bill allows the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission to use design-build on up to 2 percent of its annual projects. Design-build, which is a process of awarding highway projects in a single-bid,

rather than awarding separate bids for the design of the project and the construction, has been used successfully on a number of projects since the process was first given legislative approval in 2002.

The authority to use design-build will become increasingly important due to “use it or lose it” provisions in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Under these provisions, states that are unable to utilize their stimulus dollars may lose their funding. This money would then be re-appropriated to states that have projects ready for construction. House Bill 359 will ensure that, should this funding become available, Missouri is able to quickly identify, bid, and begin work on highway projects.

“Throughout this legislative session we have been dedicated to ensuring Missouri handles the dollars from the federal stimulus package in a fiscally responsible manner,” Denison stated after the bill’s passage. “House Bill 359 will give the Highways and Transportation Commission a tool that will be extremely important in cutting the cost and length of projects, and most importantly, putting Missourians to work.”

“Representative Denison took the lead on this important issue early on in the session and successfully guided his bill through the legislative process. Thanks to his efforts, Missouri is now positioned to utilize federal stimulus dollars for one-time projects that will greatly improve our state’s transportation infrastructure,” said House Speaker Ron Richard (R-Joplin).