



Utility & Transportation Contractors Association



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LEGISLATIVE NEWS

March
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UTCA SUPPORTS TAX FAIRNESS LEGISLATION WHICH MAY LEAD TO A DEAL TO RENEW THE TRANSPORTATION TRUST FUND

Bills to reduce and eventually phase out the New Jersey estate tax and eliminate State Income Tax on the first \$100,000 of retirement income cleared a Senate committee Monday with broad support. Senate President Sweeney is moving these measures through the Senate Committee to address Governor Christie's call for tax fairness as part of any increase in taxes to renew the State's Transportation Trust Fund.

The Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee voted 9-0-4 to advance a measure to eliminate the Estate Tax after several business, labor and tax advocacy groups voiced support for the measure. Supporters testified that eliminating the estate tax would make New Jersey more competitive with other states and could even stop residents from leaving New Jersey before they die in order to avoid the tax. The legislation would increase the threshold at which the estate of a deceased family member would become taxable from the existing level of \$675,000 to \$1 million, starting in January 2017. The threshold would rise to \$2.5 million in 2018, \$3.5 million in 2019 and \$5 million in 2020, after which the tax would disappear. Senate Budget Committee Chairman Paul Sarlo (D-36) personally requested that the UTCA testify on behalf of the bill. UTCA Executive Director Anthony Attanasio joined with other representatives of the business community to voice support for this critical measure.

The Committee later approved legislation that would increase, over three years, the state income-tax exemptions for retirement income from pensions, 401(k) plans, annuities, and IRAs. The measure would eventually take exemptions-that currently are \$15,000 for single taxpayers and \$20,000 for married couples filing jointly-up to \$75,000 for single taxpayers and \$100,000 for married couple filing jointly.

These two bills represent the first step in what will hopefully be the beginning of a solution to the Transportation Trust Fund (TTF) crisis. Governor Christie has made it clear that he will not support raising the gas tax or any form of revenue to replenish the soon to be insolvent TTF unless there is "tax fairness" that accompanies any tax increase. Both bills represent the Senate Democrats attempts to advance the tax fairness component of a TTF solution.

UTCA PLAYS CRITICAL ROLE IN THE ADVANCEMENT OF DESIGN-BUILD LEGISLATION

A bill (A1730) to extend design-build procurement to more public bodies was introduced at a legislative hearing held by the Assembly State and Local Government Committee. Prior to its introduction UTCA staff was successful in attaining several key amendments to the bill that both protected the industry's best interests and also strengthened the overall measure. In particular, UTCA was able to work with the bill's sponsor to insert language that clarifies the use of apprenticeship programs. In addition, after the bill was approved by the committee, UTCA staff in conjunction with the NJ Department of Transportation, identified several more areas within the legislation that needed to be addressed. Several amendments will be necessary in order for this bill to adhere to federal regulations and UTCA staff is working with the bill's sponsor to address the necessary changes. UTCA will continue to work on the amendments to the measure in the Assembly and will engage the Senate sponsor once the bill has been amended. UTCA would like to thank Troy Singleton (D-7), bill sponsor and Assembly State and Local Government Chairman, for all of his work with the Association to amend this bill.

UTCA HELPS TO SECURE AMENDMENTS IN ENVIRONMENTAL INFRASTRUCTURE TRUST LEGISLATION THAT LEAD TO ITS PASSAGE

Legislation (A1649) that would require municipalities, counties and water/sewer utility authorities to seek a financing estimate from the NJ Environmental Infrastructure Trust (EIT) prior to the public entity advertising a public works project for bid was recently approved by the Assembly Environment and Solid Waste Committee. The bill does not require any of these entities to utilize the EIT to finance the project, but if the EIT estimate is lower than what the project owner ends up paying they would be required to justify the decision to the Local Finance Board within the Department of Community Affairs. The legislation had been held up due to several concerns the League of Municipalities and the NJ Association of Counties (NJAC) had with several provisions of the bill. UTCA staff worked with these groups to identify solutions to their concerns and then worked with the bill's prime sponsor on amendments. After several months of work, the bill was reintroduced with amendments before the Assembly Environment and Solid Waste Committee. Both the League of Municipalities and NJAC withdrew their opposition of the measure and the bill passed out of committee. UTCA would like to thank Assemblyman Gary Schaer (D-36) for his sponsorship of the legislation and perseverance to get this bill out of committee. The bill now moves on to the full Assembly for a floor vote.

UTCA SUPPORTS LEGISLATION TO AUTHORIZE THE CREATION OF STORMWATER UTILITY AUTHORITIES FOR CERTAIN LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS

Dennis Hart, Director of Utility Operations for UTCA, recently testified in favor of S792, a bill that is the fourth attempt the Legislature has made to address the creation of stormwater utility authorities at the local level. Several earlier efforts have been rejected by the administration. This bill allows for the creation of stormwater utility authorities by government units within which a Combined Stormwater Overflow (CSO)

is located. The bill also allows for these government units to assess fees on the owners of impervious surface lots and utilize those fees to prepare stormwater management plans and implement stormwater management programs. The bill was released out of the Senate Environment and Energy Committee with a unanimous vote.

UTCA will continue to support this bill as it moves through the Legislature.

UTCA TESTIFIES IN SUPPORT OF DECROCE RESOLUTION URGING CONGRESS TO INCREASE TRANSPORTATION FUNDING TO NEW JERSEY

UTCA recently testified in support of Assemblywoman BettyLou DeCroce's (R-26) Assembly Resolution No. 21 (AR21) at a hearing of the Assembly Transportation and Independent Authorities Committee. As reported and amended, AR21 respectfully urges the United States Congress to invest additional federal dollars in maintaining the highways and improving the transportation infrastructure in New Jersey.

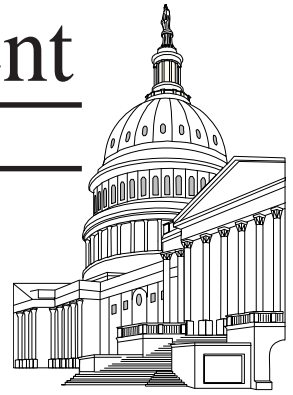
PLEASE CONSIDER SUPPORTING UTCA'S CONSTRUCTORS FOR GOOD GOVERNMENT PAC

UTCA continues to be the leading voice in Trenton and Washington D.C. for the construction industry. Whether it is providing expert testimony before business and legislative groups or positively effecting the legislative process, UTCA stands alone in its record of achievement for our industry. This success can only be made possible by your support of the Association and more importantly with your support of the industry's PAC: Constructors for Good Government.

Please consider making a contribution in 2016 as UTCA plans to be very active in the upcoming legislative session and a robust PAC only strengthens our voice. Thank you for your continued support.

Constructors For Good Government

Please Support Your Industry PAC



2016 Contribution Form

Contributions to Constructors For Good Government go a long way in our efforts to educate members of the Legislature and the Administration to the needs of construction. Please check the appropriate club membership for your firm. **Please remember that contributions to Constructors For Good Government are legally permissible under all State pay-to-play laws.**

Club Memberships:

President's Club - \$10,000 _____

Governor's Club - \$7,200 _____

Ambassador's Club - \$5,000 _____

Leadership Club - \$2,500 _____

Platinum Club - \$1,000 _____

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Silver Club - \$250 _____

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COMPANY CHECKS ARE ACCEPTABLE

Enclosed is a contribution in the amount of \$ _____. **Checks should be made payable to *Constructors For Good Government* .**

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