



C.L. "BUTCH" OTTER
GOVERNOR

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GOVERNOR OTTER LAUNCHES WORK OF TRANSPORTATION TASK FORCE

(BOISE) – Governor C.L. "Butch" Otter today challenged members of a new task force to view transportation funding from a statewide perspective and to look creatively for new revenue streams.

He set the direction for the Governor's Task Force on Modernizing Transportation Funding in Idaho during the group's organizational meeting in Boise. The 15-member panel is charged with exploring traditional and nontraditional revenue options to determine adequate funding for Idaho's current and future transportation system.

Lieutenant Governor Brad Little is chairman of the task force, whose members include legislators, business and industry leaders and local government officials. The executive order creating the task force calls for conclusions and recommendations by December 2010. But Governor Otter told members he would welcome their report earlier.

"I'm prepared to move as soon as you are prepared to move," he said. "We don't have to wait 18 months."

Governor Otter said his colleagues in other western states face the same transportation funding challenges and are asking the same questions. With federal reauthorization of the surface transportation bill expected late this year or in 2010, states can anticipate some new forms of federal funding.

Following his remarks, members of the task force discussed their expectations of the process.

Scott Stokes, acting director of the Idaho Transportation Department, provided an overview of the state transportation system and the crucial role it plays in Idaho's economy. He followed with an afternoon report to the task force about how Idaho's transportation system is funded.

ITD's economics and research manager Doug Benzon also briefed task force members in the afternoon about conducting a cost allocation study to evaluate the fees passenger vehicles and commercial trucks pay.

During the task force meeting, Lieutenant Governor Little announced creation of a Cost Allocation subcommittee. Members include: co-chairmen Jim Kempton and Mark Bowen; state Senators John McGee, Shawn Keough and Edgar Malepeai; state Representatives JoAn Wood and Bill Killen; and Jim Riley.

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