

The Capitol Report

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Senate, House Make Progress on Transportation Funding Compromise Governor's Possible Veto Last Remaining Stumbling Block

Senate and House negotiators led by Senator Jeff Mullis and Representative Vance Smith made progress on a compromise version of Senate Resolution 845 yesterday. The Senate's latest version included language similar to the House's but included it in companion enabling legislation instead of in the constitutional amendment itself. The House appeared ready to agree to a simplified version of the Constitutional Amendment as long as the enabling legislation was passed in conjunction with it. The Senate is insisting on the simplified version of the Constitutional Amendment because they believe it will have a better chance of success in the ballot referendum in November. Both sides stated that they are close to a compromise.

The final piece in the puzzle is Governor Perdue, who sent a letter to the House and Senate Study Committee members at the start of the Session in January detailing his objections to a funding plan at that time. While the Governor cannot veto the constitutional amendment, he would have the opportunity to veto the enabling legislation. Efforts are under way to determine if the Governor can support the current version or what changes may be necessary to forge an agreement between the House, the Senate and the Governor.

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