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# Last chance for Texas Legislature to pass transportation plan



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The Texas Legislature will take one last stab at passing a massive transportation funding measure Thursday and Friday as the second special session winds down.

Both the Texas Senate and the House of Representatives have different versions of the resolution and are trying to iron out the differences, said [Rider Scott](#), executive director of the **Dallas Regional Mobility Coalition**.

The House convenes at 2 p.m. Thursday to take up the measure and will decide whether to concur with the Senate's changes or not.

The Senate version, filed by Sen. [Robert Nichols](#), R-Jacksonville, would take revenue from the state's severance tax, the tax paid by oil and gas drillers at the wellhead,,and split it between the Rainy Day Fund and the state's transportation fund.

The severance tax has become a steady revenue stream because of the shale drilling activity in the Eagle Ford Shale and Permian Basin.

The senate also set a \$6 billion minimum balance for the Rainy Day Fund that must be maintained before funding transportation.

Rep. [Joe Pickett](#), D-El Paso, proposed his own plan that would stop the diversion of gasoline taxes to public education. Currently, 5 cents out of the 20-cent per gallon gas tax funds public schools.

Pickett proposes to reallocate that money to the transportation fund while finding other means to pay for public schools.

Here's a timeline of what's happened:

- The House approved the measure 108-25 on July 19
- The Senate dumped that plan and replaced it with Nichols' measure, which passed unanimously also on July 19
- The special session ends July 30

The governor has threatened to call a third special session if lawmakers don't pass the measure. The transportation measure nearly passed in the first special session in June but [got drowned out because of the debate over the abortion controversy.](#)

If it does pass, it would go to voters in November along with the [water infrastructure funding measure.](#)

Nicholas covers the energy and banking beats for the Dallas Business Journal.  
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