

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

1st Session of the 60th Legislature (2025)

SENATE BILL 966

By: Standridge

AS INTRODUCED

An Act relating to turnpikes; amending 69 O.S. 2021, Section 1703, as amended by Section 1, Chapter 295, O.S.L. 2023 (69 O.S. Supp. 2024, Section 1703), which relates to the Oklahoma Turnpike Authority; updating statutory references; updating statutory language; subjecting Authority to certain oversight; requiring submission of certain reports; creating the Turnpike Legislative Oversight Board; declaring scope and purpose; stating composition; setting terms and conditions for membership; establishing requirements for conduct of Board business; requiring certain reports; directing distribution of reports; authorizing suspension of certain officers under certain circumstances; establishing procedures for certain suspension or removal; providing for codification; and declaring an emergency.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 69 O.S. 2021, Section 1703, as amended by Section 1, Chapter 295, O.S.L. 2023 (69 O.S. Supp. 2024, Section 1703), is amended to read as follows:

Section 1703. A. There is hereby created a body corporate and politic to be known as the "Oklahoma Turnpike Authority" and by that name the Authority may sue and be sued, and plead and be impleaded. The Authority is hereby constituted an instrumentality of the state,

1 and the exercise by the Authority of the powers conferred by ~~this~~
2 ~~act~~ Section 1701 et seq. of this title in the construction,
3 operation, and maintenance of turnpike projects shall be deemed and
4 held to be an essential governmental function of the state with all
5 the attributes thereof. Provided, however, the Turnpike Authority
6 is authorized to carry and shall carry liability insurance to the
7 same extent and in the same manner as the Transportation Commission,
8 and in addition thereto it shall be subject to the workers'
9 compensation laws of the state, the same as a private construction
10 project.

11 B. The Oklahoma Turnpike Authority shall consist of the
12 Governor, who shall be ~~a member~~ an ex officio member, two ~~(2)~~
13 members to be appointed by the Governor, two ~~(2)~~ members to be
14 appointed by the Speaker of the ~~Oklahoma~~ House of Representatives,
15 and two ~~(2)~~ members to be appointed by the President Pro Tempore of
16 the ~~Oklahoma State~~ Senate. The appointive members shall be
17 residents of the state, and shall have been qualified electors
18 therein for a period of at least one (1) year next preceding their
19 appointment. One appointive member shall be appointed from each of
20 six districts of the state, such districts to include the area as
21 follows:

22 District 1. Oklahoma, Canadian, Cleveland, McClain and Garvin
23 Counties.

1 District 2. Washington, Nowata, Craig, Ottawa, Rogers, Mayes,
2 Delaware, Wagoner, Cherokee, Adair, Okmulgee, Osage, Muskogee,
3 Sequoyah, McIntosh and Haskell Counties.

4 District 3. Coal, Logan, Payne, Lincoln, Creek, Okfuskee,
5 Pottawatomie, Seminole, Hughes and Pontotoc Counties.

6 District 4. Kay, Pawnee, Garfield, Noble, Tulsa, Woods,
7 Woodward, Major, Alfalfa and Grant Counties.

8 District 5. Cimarron, Grady, Texas, Beaver, Harper, Ellis,
9 Roger Mills, Dewey, Custer, Caddo, Washita, Beckham, Harmon,
10 Stephens, Jefferson, Greer, Kiowa, Jackson, Tillman, Comanche,
11 Cotton, Kingfisher and Blaine Counties.

12 District 6. Carter, Love, Murray, Johnston, Marshall, Atoka,
13 Bryan, Pittsburg, Latimer, Le Flore, Pushmataha, Choctaw and
14 McCurtain Counties.

15 The Governor shall appoint the members from Districts 1 and 2.
16 The Speaker of the ~~Oklahoma~~ House of Representatives shall appoint
17 the members from Districts 3 and 4. The President Pro Tempore of
18 the ~~Oklahoma State~~ Senate shall appoint the members from Districts 5
19 and 6. Appointive members serving on the Oklahoma Turnpike
20 Authority on ~~the effective date of this act~~ November 1, 2023, shall
21 continue to serve as members of the Oklahoma Turnpike Authority for
22 the remainder of the original terms for which they were appointed,
23 unless sooner removed by the appointing authority for their ~~District~~
24 district. Thereafter, each appointive member shall be appointed in

1 the manner set forth by this section for a term of six (6) years,
2 except that any person appointed to fill a vacancy shall be
3 appointed to serve only for the unexpired term, and a member of the
4 Authority shall be eligible for reappointment. Each appointed
5 member of the Authority before entering upon the duties of office
6 shall take an oath as provided by Section 1 of Article XV of the
7 Oklahoma Constitution ~~of the State of Oklahoma~~. Any appointive
8 member of the Authority may be removed at any time with cause by the
9 appointing authority.

10 C. The Authority shall elect one of the appointed members as
11 ~~chairperson~~ chair and another as ~~vice-chairperson~~ vice chair, and
12 shall also elect a ~~Secretary~~ secretary and ~~Treasurer~~ treasurer. A
13 majority of the members of the Authority shall constitute a quorum
14 and the vote of a majority of the members shall be necessary for any
15 action taken by the Authority. No vacancy in the membership of the
16 Authority shall impair the right of a quorum to exercise all the
17 rights and perform all the duties of the Authority.

18 D. Appointed members of the Authority shall be prohibited from
19 voting on any issue in which the member has a direct financial
20 interest.

21 E. Before the issuance of any turnpike revenue bonds under the
22 provisions of ~~this act~~ Section 101 et seq. of this title, each
23 appointed member of the Authority shall execute a surety bond in the
24 penal sum of Twenty-five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000.00) and the

1 secretary and treasurer shall execute a surety bond in the penal sum
2 of One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000.00), each such surety bond
3 to be conditioned upon the faithful performance of the duties of the
4 office, to be executed by a surety company authorized to transact
5 business in ~~the State of Oklahoma~~ this state as surety and to be
6 approved by the Governor and filed in the ~~office~~ Office of the
7 Secretary of State.

8 F. The members of the Authority shall not be entitled to
9 compensation for their services, but each member shall be reimbursed
10 for actual expenses necessarily incurred in the performance of the
11 duties of such member. All expenses incurred in carrying out the
12 provisions of ~~this act~~ Section 101 et seq. of this title shall be
13 payable solely from funds provided under the authority of ~~this act~~
14 Section 101 et seq. of this title and no liability or obligation
15 shall be incurred by the Authority hereunder beyond the extent to
16 which monies shall have been provided under the authority of this
17 act.

18 G. Whenever the terms "Oklahoma Transportation Authority",
19 "Transportation Authority", or "Authority", when used in reference
20 to the Oklahoma Turnpike Authority, appear in the Oklahoma Statutes,
21 such terms shall mean the Oklahoma Turnpike Authority.

22 H. The conduct of the Oklahoma Turnpike Authority shall be
23 subject to and not exercised contrary to the provisions of Section 2
24 of this act.

1 I. The Oklahoma Turnpike Authority shall annually provide a
2 copy of its most recent annual report to the members of the Turnpike
3 Legislative Oversight Board, in addition to any information
4 requested pursuant to the provisions of Section 2 of this act.

5 SECTION 2. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified
6 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 1703.1 of Title 69, unless there
7 is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

8 A. There is hereby created the Turnpike Legislative Oversight
9 Board for the purpose of overseeing the functions, activities,
10 policies, procedures, and expenditures performed by the Oklahoma
11 Turnpike Authority and any related issues the Board deems
12 appropriate. Members of the Board shall be appointed in January of
13 each year following a state general election for two-year terms, and
14 shall continue to serve until new members are appointed. The
15 President Pro Tempore of the Senate shall appoint six members from
16 the Senate, to be from each of the six districts of the state as
17 provided for in subsection B of Section 1703 of Title 69 of the
18 Oklahoma Statutes, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives
19 shall appoint six members from the House of Representatives, to be
20 from each of the six districts of the state as provided for in
21 subsection B of Section 1703 of Title 69 of the Oklahoma Statutes.

22 B. The President Pro Tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of
23 the House of Representatives shall each designate one of their
24 appointees to serve as co-chair of the Board. The Board shall meet

1 at least once annually. Additional meetings may be called as the
2 co-chairs deem necessary. Meetings of the Board shall be called by
3 the co-chairs. A majority of the appointed members shall constitute
4 a quorum for any meeting of the Board.

5 C. The Board may conduct hearings, studies, and any other
6 meetings necessary to fulfill the duties of the Board. The Board
7 may compel the production of witnesses, experts, data, and any non-
8 privileged information from the Oklahoma Turnpike Authority as
9 necessary for the performance of the Board's oversight duties. The
10 Board shall produce an annual written report on the activities of
11 the Oklahoma Turnpike Authority including information regarding the
12 conduct and quality of the Oklahoma Turnpike Authority's management,
13 administration, and transparency. Such report shall be approved by
14 a majority of the members and distributed electronically to the
15 Governor, the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, the Speaker of
16 the House of Representatives, the members of the Oklahoma Turnpike
17 Authority, and the Executive Director of the Oklahoma Turnpike
18 Authority.

19 D. The Board may, through a majority vote of all members
20 present in person, temporarily suspend any non ex officio member of
21 the board of directors or executive staff of the Oklahoma Turnpike
22 Authority for thirty (30) days for the purpose of an investigation.
23 Causes for suspension include, but are not limited to:

- 24 1. Refusal to cooperate with the requests of the Board;

1 2. Mismanagement of Oklahoma Turnpike Authority funds;

2 3. Professional misconduct; or

3 4. Violation of any applicable administrative rule.

4 E. If the thirty (30) days have elapsed and no investigation
5 has been conducted, the suspended member of the board of directors
6 or executive staff shall be immediately reinstated.

7 F. After the thirty (30) days have elapsed and an investigation
8 has been conducted, the Board may vote to reinstate the suspended
9 member of the board of directors or executive staff, or, through a
10 two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board, with all members present, send
11 the question of retaining the services of the suspended member to
12 the Senate and the House of Representatives. If two-thirds (2/3) of
13 both houses of the Legislature vote to remove the suspended member,
14 the member is removed from his or her position, regardless of the
15 appointing officer.

16 SECTION 3. It being immediately necessary for the preservation
17 of the public peace, health or safety, an emergency is hereby
18 declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and
19 be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

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