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For Immediate Release

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Rep. Kane supports passage of \$16.5 billion transportation bond bill

BOSTON – State Representative Hannah Kane (R-Shrewsbury) recently supported a \$16.5 billion transportation bond bill that provides funding for a variety of road and bridge projects, as well as the MBTA and the state’s regional transit authorities.

House Bill 5248, *An Act authorizing and accelerating transportation investment*, was enacted by the House of Representatives on a vote of 146-0 on January 5, the last day of the 2019-2020 legislative session. The bill, which was negotiated by a six-member legislative conference committee, represents a compromise between two earlier versions of the bill passed by the House and Senate.

Representative Kane said it was critical to get a transportation bond bill passed before the end of session to ensure that funding can be authorized in time for the spring and summer construction season. Prior to the bill’s passage, Governor Charlie Baker had warned that a failure to approve additional transportation borrowing authority could also negatively impact the state’s ability to proceed with multiple transportation projects that are eligible for federal reimbursement.

Representative Kane, working alongside colleague Senator Michael Moore (D-Millbury), was able to secure \$1.2M for sidewalk improvements in Shrewsbury and for the planning, design, and reconstruction of Route 140 from the Town Center to Route 290. Representative Kane and Senator Moore also secured \$1.4M for the reconstruction of the Toblin Hill Bridge. Representative Kane also worked with her colleagues representing Westborough, Representative Carolyn Dykema (D-Holliston) and Representative Danielle Gregoire (D-Marlborough), to secure \$300,000 for costs associated with the expansion of commuter parking at the Westborough commuter rail station. Finally, Representative Kane helped lead the effort to secure millions in funding to mitigate the impacts of the upcoming decade-long Allston Multimodal Project on Central MA commuters.

The bill changes the fee structure for trips taken with Transportation Network Companies like Uber and Lyft. Currently, there is a flat fee of 20 cents per ride. The fee will now increase to 40 cents for shared rides and \$1.20 for non-shared rides, with an additional \$1 fee tacked on for ride-sharing trips utilizing luxury vehicles. There is an additional 20-cent “public transit access fee” that will be applied only for trips originating in 14 municipalities surrounding the Greater Boston area, to encourage people to utilize the MBTA.

To help mitigate the impact of transportation network services on local roads and other infrastructure, the bill requires that 25% of the ride-sharing fees collected be distributed on a proportional basis to cities and towns based on the number of shared and non-shared rides that originated in that community during the previous calendar year. An additional 25% of the fees collected will be distributed to the Transit Authority Fund, with the remaining 50% dedicated to the Commonwealth Transportation Fund.

Representative Kane said the final transportation bond bill does not include a controversial proposal passed by the Senate that would allow cities and towns to coordinate regional ballot initiative to raise taxes to support local transportation projects.

The transportation bond bill also:

- Provides \$350 million for the Bourne and Sagamore bridges and their approaches to help ease traffic congestion, enhance traffic safety, and leverage federal investments;
- Allocates \$50 million for the planning, design, engineering and construction of the proposed East-West rail project that would provide service between Pittsfield and Boston;
- Creates a special commission on congestion pricing; and
- Requires the MBTA and regional transit authorities to implement low-income fare programs providing free or discounted transit fares to qualifying riders on all modes of transportation they operate.

House Bill 5248 is now before Governor Baker for his review.

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