



THE BRIDGES COALITION

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Indiana Creates Ohio River Bridges Commission

Group will negotiate with Kentucky to construct the Ohio River Bridges Project

Kentucky and Indiana are moving closer to progress on the Ohio River Bridges Project.

Indiana Gov. Mitch Daniels' state budget plan approved by the Indiana General Assembly includes legislation authored by State Rep. Steven Stemler, D-Jeffersonville, establishing a commission to negotiate with Kentucky for a plan to put the Ohio River Bridges Project on a fast track.

Stemler said the creation of Ohio River Bridges Commission in Indiana means both states have adopted the same approach for the Bridges Project and can move quickly.

"This puts the project on a fast track for progress and we can all look forward now to building the bridges and creating thousands of jobs," he said.

The Indiana legislation follows a law adopted last week in Kentucky providing for a bi-state authority to fund and build the project, one of the nation's major transportation improvements. The \$4 billion project includes two new bridges linking Louisville and Clark County, Ind. and the rebuild of an interchange where I-65, I-64 and I-71 converge on the Kentucky side.

The bi-state authority to be created could issue bonds that do not count against either state's debt capacity and tap new revenue sources to supplement available state and federal funds.

The project was authorized in 2003, but has stalled because of a lack of a long-term funding plan in Kentucky. Kentucky's share of project costs is \$3 billion and Indiana's is \$1.1 billion.

The project will create more than 56,000 jobs with a \$2 billion payroll during construction and thousands of additional jobs after completion. Congestion relief, safer bridges and connecting highways, cross-river lanes for biking and walking and 40-45 more acres adjacent to Louisville's Waterfront Park are other benefits.

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The Bridges Coalition is a broad-based non-profit organization supporting the completion as quickly and as cost effectively as possible of the Ohio River Bridges Project.