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May 24, 2018

House Committee Action on Transportation Appropriations Bill

Yesterday (May 23), the full House Committee on Appropriations marked up the [fiscal year \(FY\) 2019 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies \(THUD\) Appropriations bill](#) (and draft [Committee report](#)). The Full Committee approved the bill by a vote of 34-17.

The House THUD Appropriations bill builds on the historic public transportation and passenger rail investments made in the 2018 THUD Appropriations Act (P.L. 115-141, Division L). The bill provides **\$16.5 billion** for public transportation and intercity passenger rail, including **\$13.6 billion** for public transportation and **\$2.9 billion** for intercity passenger rail. The total FY 2019 public transportation and intercity passenger rail funding levels are **\$203 million** more than the historic investments provided earlier this year and **\$2.5 billion** more than provided in FY 2017. These funding levels are also **\$1.7 billion** more than the FAST Act authorized levels for FY 2019.

For a more detailed analysis of the bill, please see our May 16, 2018 [Legislative Alert](#) detailing the House THUD Appropriations bill. In addition, for a table with specific information on the public transportation and intercity passenger rail funding provided in the bill, [please click here](#).

The Committee on Appropriations considered the following amendments related to public transportation and passenger rail:

Manager's Amendment – Adopted

- THUD Subcommittee Chairman Mario Diaz-Balart (R-FL) offered a manager's amendment that was adopted by voice vote. [The manager's amendment](#) includes several non-controversial changes to the bill and Committee report that were agreed to on a bipartisan basis. The amendment adds port authorities to the list of eligible recipients for National Infrastructure Investments (i.e., TIGER/BUILD grants). The amendment also includes changes to the draft Committee report of the bill relating to new rail projects on existing transportation corridors (page 5 of the amendment), Amtrak (page 6 of the amendment), and on-time performance of commuter railroads (page 7 of the amendment).

Other Amendments – Not Adopted

- THUD Subcommittee Ranking Member David Price (D-NC) offered [Amendment #1](#) that strikes 10 separate policy provisions from the bill. The amendment strikes policy provisions related to high-speed rail in California (sections 151 and 152 of the bill). It also strikes section 165 of the bill, which prohibits using any transit funding to procure transit, passenger rail, or freight rail assets if the entity is owned, directed, or subsidized by a country subject to certain trade restrictions (i.e., China). The amendment failed on a party-line vote of 21-29.
- Subcommittee Ranking Member Price also offered [Amendment #3](#) to increase the additional funding for transit investments to ensure that the additional highway and transit funding above FAST Act authorized levels reflects the 80-20 percent historical split between highway and transit funding. Specifically, the amendment reduces the additional funding for highways by \$210 million (reducing the amount above FAST Act authorized levels from \$4.25 billion to \$4.04 billion) and increases the additional funding for transit by \$210 million (increasing the amount above FAST Act authorized levels from \$800 million to \$1.01 billion). Of the \$210 million of additional transit funding, the amendment provides \$105 million for bus and bus facilities competitive grants and \$105 million for state of good repair grants. The amendment failed by voice vote.
- Representative Pete Aguilar (D-CA) offered [Amendment #1](#) that caps the total number of political appointees at the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) to 110 appointees. A similar provision has been included in prior THUD Appropriations Acts since 1986. The amendment failed on a party-line vote of 22-29.

After the Committee on Appropriations reports the bill to the House, it will be ready to be considered by the full U.S. House of Representatives. At this point, the House Republican Leadership has not scheduled the bill for Floor consideration.

The Senate Committee on Appropriations is expected to begin the process of considering its THUD Appropriations bill in early June.

CALL TO ACTION

We strongly encourage you to contact Members of Congress and urge them to support the increased funding levels provided in the House THUD bill for public transportation and intercity passenger rail. In addition, we urge Congress to identify additional resources to further increase funding for these critical infrastructure investments in our nation's bus and rail systems.

Transit-Oriented Development Planning Funding Opportunity

On May 23, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) issued a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for \$25.8 million in grants under a pilot program for transit-oriented development (TOD) planning, as authorized by section 20005(b) of the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) (P.L. 112-141). The pilot program authorizes FTA to award funds to local communities through a competitive process. These comprehensive planning grants are intended to integrate land use and transportation planning with new fixed guideway or core capacity improvement transit capital projects as defined in federal transit statute. FTA anticipates minimum grant awards of \$250,000 and maximum grant awards of \$2 million. To view the APTA summary of the NOFO, [please click here](#). To view the NOFO in its entirety, including eligibility and submission instructions, [please click here](#).

Transit Security Grant Program Funding Opportunity

On May 21, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) issued a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for \$88 million in Transit Security Grant Program (TSGP) grants, as authorized by section 1406 of the Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007 (P.L. 110-53). TSGP grants provide funds to eligible public transit systems (including intra-city bus, ferries, and all forms of passenger rail) to protect critical surface transportation infrastructure and the traveling public from acts of terrorism and to increase the resilience of transit infrastructure. To view the APTA summary of the NOFO, [please click here](#). To view the NOFO in its entirety, including eligibility and submission instructions, [please click here](#).

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