

National Association of Regional Councils



2006 NARC Policy Brief

NARC policies are developed yearly from consultations with and information provided by the association's working groups, committees and its membership. The policies provide a context for NARC's national agenda on significant national and legislative issues. Each policy brief includes a rationale for NARC's position on topics relevant and important to America's regional councils and metropolitan planning organizations, metro and rural, large and small.

SAFETEA-LU Rule Making

Issue: SAFETEA-LU Rule Making

Background: SAFETEA-LU requires that new rules and guidance be issued for all provisions and programs funded by the bill. This regulations process clarifies the intent of the law and directs transportation planning agencies on how to implement each program. Unfortunately, the FHWA, FTA, and EPA failed to promulgate rules after TEA-21, which caused planning agencies the considerable trouble of operating under rules that date back to ISTEA in 1991. These agencies are in the process of drafting new rules. In general, proposed rules and guidance are released to the public for a comment period lasting 60-90 days. After comments are considered, a final rule is published.

Policy Recommendations:

- NARC will continue to work with members of the Administration on drafting regulations for SAFETEA-LU that allow COGs and MPOs to do their job efficiently and effectively.
- NARC will host and publicize listening sessions, workshops, conference calls, and other venues where members can make their opinions known on forthcoming and proposed rules.
- The areas of greatest concern fall under the metropolitan and statewide planning provisions, conformity, environmental streamlining, safety programs, and select transit programs.

Legislative Recommendations:

- NARC will review proposed rules and guidance, registering official comments with agencies as appropriate.

For additional information, contact Fred Abousleman, Director of Transportation, National Association of Regional Councils, 1666 Connecticut Ave. NW, Suite 300, Washington, DC 20009; 202/986-1032, ext. 216; fax: 202/986-1038; e-mail: fred@narc.org.