



NARC

Building Regional Communities

Transportation Committee

**NARC Annual Conference
Orlando, FL**

June 4, 2018

Co-Chairs:

**The Honorable Fred Strong, Councilman, Paso Robles, CA
Lyle Wray, Executive Director, Capitol Region COG, Hartford, CT
Mike Parks, Deputy Executive Director, Brazos Valley COG,
Bryan, TX**

Presented by:

**Erich W. Zimmermann, NARC Transportation Director
Sarah Reed, NARC Program Assistant**

Agenda

1. Introductions

The Honorable Fred Strong, Lyle Wray, co-Chairs

2. Federal Partner Perspectives followed by question and answer period (30 minutes)

Spencer Stevens, Senior Planner, Federal Highway Administration Office of Planning, Oversight, and Stewardship
Dwayne Weeks, Director of Planning, Federal Transit Administration Office of Planning

3. Transportation Committee Policy Revisions (20 minutes)

Erich Zimmermann, Deputy Director/Transportation Director, NARC

4. NARC Transportation Activity Update (15 minutes)

Erich Zimmermann, Deputy Director/Transportation Director, NARC

5. Old/New Business (5 minutes)

Councilman Strong

6. Adjournment



Speakers:

**Spencer Stevens, Senior Planner
Federal Highway Administration Office of
Planning, Oversight, and Stewardship**

**Dwayne Weeks, Director of Planning
Federal Transit Administration Office of Planning**

General Fund transfers to remain solvent. Over time, increasing construction costs have eroded the purchasing power of the federal fuel taxes, which have not been increased since 1993, while improved fuel economy means drivers contribute a smaller share to the HTF. The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates the HTF will require an **additional \$130-160 billion in the six years after the current authorization expires in the next decade** to maintain current funding levels. Without an increase in dedicated transportation funding, this so-called funding cliff will increase, creating a serious impediment to future reauthorization efforts.

As a result, the federal government is investing too little funding in the nation's transportation network and regional councils are faced with doing more with too little funding. The scope and complexity of transportation planning has increased significantly, including new performance-based planning requirements, rapidly changing vehicle technology, and changing job access and mobility needs. Additional federal funding, in particular to support planning at the regional level, will improve the capacity of regional councils to meet these and other challenges, and support local and regional economic growth through the multimodal movement of people, goods, and services. Federal assistance should also help regional councils promote livable communities by allowing better integration of transportation, economic development, housing, land use, and environment sustainability.

Recommendations:

- Maintain regional planning and programming as cornerstones of federal transportation policy. For more than a half-century, regional planning and coordination have created a multimodal transportation system and advanced the integration of urban, suburban, and rural interests.
- Strengthen local elected officials' role in transportation decision-making. The federal government should engage directly with local elected officials, who best understand their communities' needs, opportunities, and obligations. Specifically, Congress should increase local governments' authority to employ solutions at the regional level and provide regions and local governments the direct authority, flexibility, and funding to create a safe and efficient transportation system.
- Increase transportation funding at all levels of government. Appropriations bills should fully fund the levels provided in authorization bills. The President and Congress should provide additional funds to support all transportation modes. The **TIGER-BUILD** discretionary grant program should be preserved.

1. Updated to reflect most recent CBO numbers
2. Existing language, moved into introduction to better highlight the importance
3. Updated to reflect the program's new name

- Recognize the importance of freight and intermodal freight connections and the essential role of regional councils in issues related to freight movement. MPOs, RTPOs **1** regional councils must be partners in the development of a federal freight program and any federal efforts to create programs to increase freight movement and efficiency, including access to funding.
- Empower regional councils to prioritize freight investments within the context of transportation, economic development, and environmental planning and to promote connectivity across modes and access to the National Highway System.
- Provide consistent, dedicated, and firewalled freight funding and suballocate these funds directly to MPOs or otherwise ensure regional councils are explicitly eligible to utilize this funding.
- Allows for adequate construction and maintenance of the landside infrastructure that accesses the nation's ports and recognizes and funds planning and construction of intermodal facilities to support these operations.
- Support alternative modes of transportation. Provide adequate, dedicated funding for public transportation improvements from the HTF, including New Starts programs; revise federal requirements for local match and eligibility of federal funds for engineering work to eliminate the disadvantage between transit and highway projects; and provide robust, dedicated funding for bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.
- Recognize regional councils as leaders in safety and security; address inconsistencies involving their participation in safety and security planning; and better incorporate regional planning into disaster and resiliency planning.
- ~~Emphasize livable communities and encourage the integration of objectives involving transportation, economic development, housing, land use, and environment sustainability.~~ **2**
- Empower regional councils to collaborate and engage on planning efforts incorporating emerging data and intelligent transportation systems (ITS) technologies, connected vehicle technologies, and other smart mobility-related efforts (such as the federal Smart Cities Program), and ensure regional councils are explicitly eligible to utilize this funding.
- Continue federal leadership in data, research, and technology, particularly as they relate to the needs of local governments and their regional councils.
- Expedite project delivery and eliminate or consolidate duplicative or redundant processes; and recognize MPOs and RPOs as full partners in expediting project delivery.
- New sources of funding – whether derived from user fees, made available through the appropriations process, or as of a separate infrastructure package – should, to the maximum extent possible, be distributed through existing funding channels with the greatest possible share going directly to local areas to decide how it will be spent. **3**

1. Adding RTPO's

2. Language moved into introduction

3. Responsive to President's proposal

NARC Supports Federal Surface Transportation Reauthorization That:

- Increases the overall funding levels of federal transportation programs. Congress should increase and index federal fuel taxes **in the near-term** and encourage the search for new and additional revenue sources as a per-mile road use fee – to provide sustainable, predictable, and adequate funding into the future.
- Increases the suballocated share of the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBGP) and Transportation Alternatives (TA). **Consider expanding suballocation to include MPOs of all sizes.**
- **Recognizes the importance of non-metropolitan transportation planning by increasing funding and authority for RTPOs and RPOs and increases their role in the planning process by strengthening their relationship with MPOs and state DOTs.**
- **Suballocates** National Highway Freight Program (NHFP) funding to MPOs.
- Increases funding for metropolitan planning (PL).
- Provides flexibility in determining MPO boundaries.
- Requires MPO **and RTPO** representation on state Freight Advisory Committees.
- Increases flexibility within **CMAQ** to provide 100% funding for a wider variety of projects.
- Distributes a large share of the available funding through formula grants.
- **Removes the current federal tolling prohibition, leaving states to decide if tolling existing Interstates is appropriate.**
- Authorizes Regional Infrastructure Improvement Zones (RIIZs), a federal tax code change to allow businesses and

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Erich Zimmermann

Is this feasible or desired?

Erich Zimmermann

CMAQ?

Erich Zimmermann

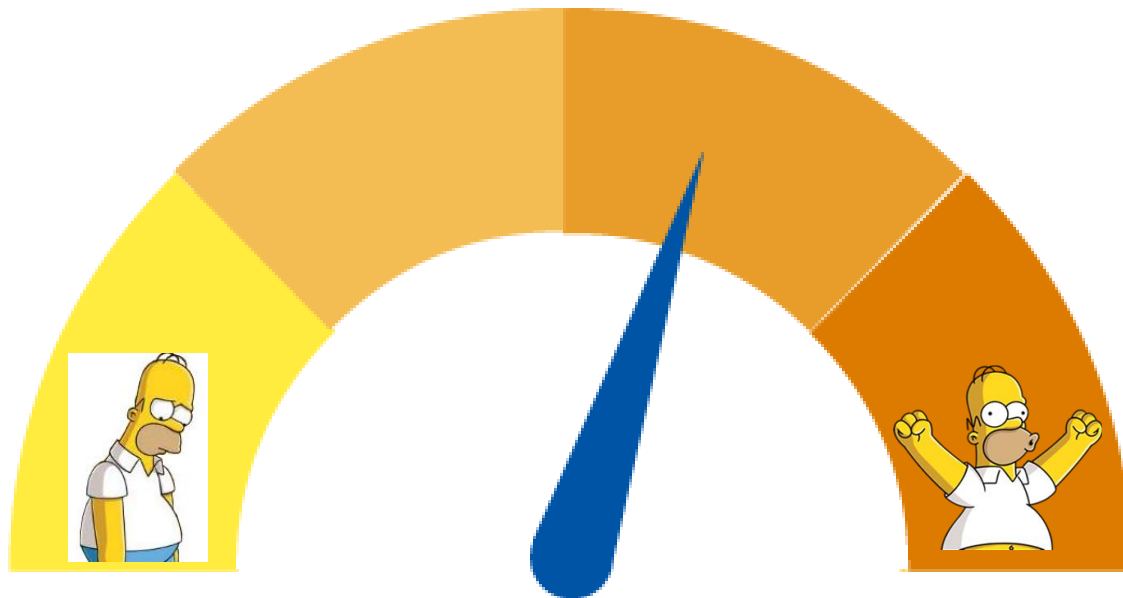
Preventing the transfer of CMAQ to projects that directly undermine air quality?

1. Language supporting consideration of expanding suballocation. Qs about feasibility.
2. Language added regarding RTPOs.
3. Should we ask for direct suballocation of CMAQ?
4. Tolling language.
5. A request to discuss language to prevent CMAQ transfers to projects that undermine air quality.

Broader View

- There is good news (!)
- Congress vs. Administration
- There are some good ideas...and some bad ones too
- What I am watching

Erich's Depress-o-Meter



Good News!

- Overturned MPO Rule
- Tax bill
- Budget deal & 2018 spending bill

\$1.3T Omnibus Spending Bill

- 2-year budget deal
- Big spending increases overall

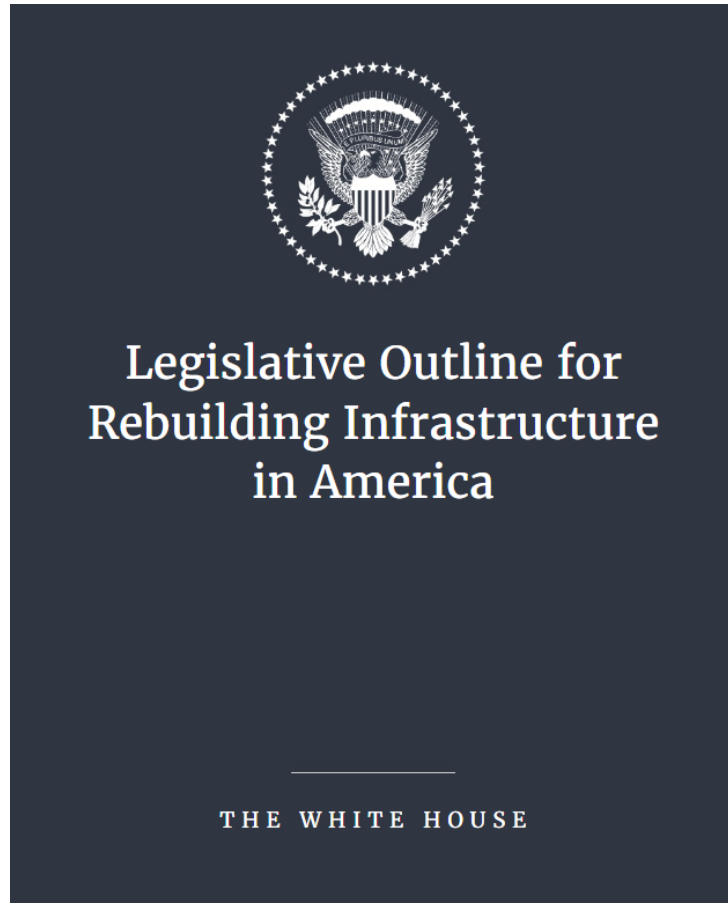
Transportation Highlights

- \$10B each year for infrastructure
- Full FAST Funding, good bump in funding for many categories
 - STBGP
- Automated Vehicle Research
- Big increase for TIGER (now BUILD)

BUILD Program (was TIGER)

- Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) Transportation Discretionary Grants program
- \$1.5 billion for 2018
- Very fast turnaround
- Last year, 62% of projects went to rural projects; expect similar this year
- Projects capped at \$25M, states at \$150M
- Commitment of new, non-federal funds is now an evaluation factor
- July 19, December 17

Trump Infrastructure Plan



Some Good Ideas

- Leveraging
- P3s
- Rural emphasis of Infra plan (and BUILD)
- Multimodal approach
- Innovation

Some (Less) Good Ideas

- Leveraging
- P3s
- Rural emphasis of Infra plan (and BUILD)
- Multimodal approach
- Innovation

Some terrible ideas, too

- Devolution
- 20/80 and focus on match rather than project quality
- Gutting New Starts, Amtrak in approps, TIGER/BUILD
- Killing infra spending to increase infra spending
- Need more spending than financing

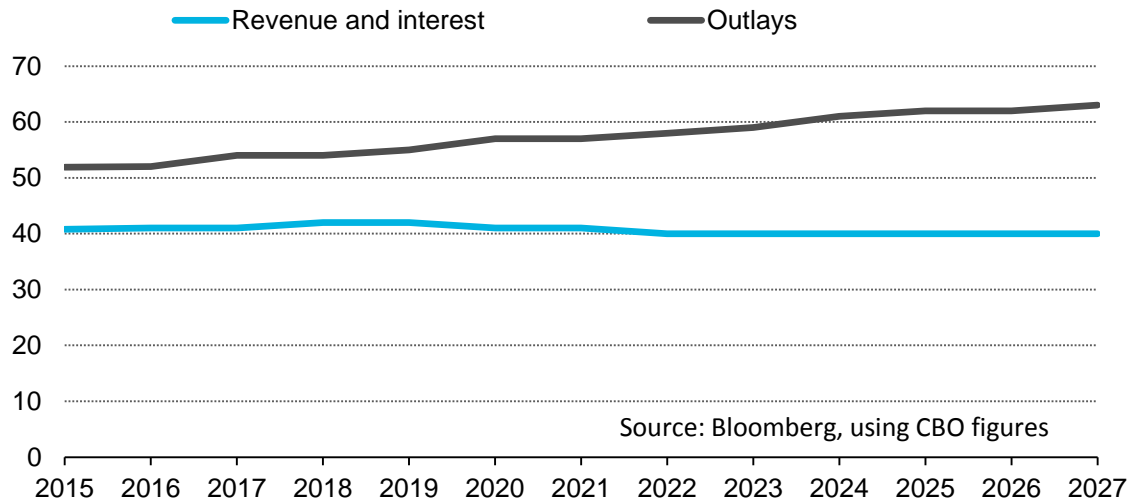
A few things to watch

- Elections and leadership
- Impacts on legislation
- MPO-related proposals
- Reauthorization

Federal Picture

Highway Trust Fund Gap

In billions, by fiscal year



- Transfers to date: \$142B
- CBO expects insolvency by 2021
- Cumulative shortfall of \$196 billion by 2028

- Esty/Baldwin bills
- McCarthy Update
- Jason Lewis amendment
- AV Start bill
- GHG rule
- Appropriations
- Automation workshops
- National Economic Partnerships
- Transportation Thursdays