

August 2, 2018 [View this email in your browser](#)



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

TRANSPORTATION THURSDAYS

CONGRESS BRIEF

Senate Passes Transportation Funding, Heads Home

The Senate yesterday passed a package of four appropriations bills, including Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies (THUD), before heading home on an abbreviated two-week session. The chamber will return to work on August 13. The Senate bill fully funds the authorized levels of the current FAST Act authorization at \$45.3 billion. The Senate would also provide a \$2.4 billion boost to STBGP funding for FY19, well above last year's \$1.9 billion increase but lower than the House's \$3.8 billion addition. The path to completing any of the appropriations bills remains unclear and the House does not return to work until after Labor Day. It is likely an extension will be required for most or all of the appropriations bills, but that will become clear once the House is back.

If you want to hear more about the Senate appropriations bill and the Shuster infrastructure proposal, give a listen to a member webinar NARC held yesterday on just those very topics. You can find the recording [here](#).

Another Short-Term Extension for Flood Insurance Program

The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) was extended again this week, just hours shy of the program's expiration. This extension carries through November 30, coinciding with the conclusion of the Atlantic hurricane season. This marks the seventh short-term extension since last September, and more are likely. The House has passed a full five-year reauthorization, but the Senate has not taken any action on that bill or on its own version of a reauthorization. Significant concerns exist around the financial viability of the NFIP, which pays out more in emergencies than it collects in premiums and is currently in arrears by tens of billions of dollars. Reform of the program has been a goal for some in Congress, but this controversy makes a full reauthorization more challenging.

ADMINISTRATION BRIEF

TSA Announces Deployment of CT Scanners

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) has announced it will expand its testing of the use of computed tomography (CT) scanners for conducting scans at airport checkpoints. The result could be better explosives detection, fewer physical bag checks for travelers, and the possibility of leaving laptops and liquids in carry-on bags. The testing will begin with the immediate deployment of 15 machines to larger airports across the country. The expectation is that there will be 145 units in airports by September 2019. Testing has occurred since 2017 in Phoenix, Boston, and at New York's JFK Airport.

Pedestrian Safety and Automated Vehicles

The FHWA recently held roundtable discussions concerning the introduction of automated vehicle (AV) technology. America Walks, an organization which advocates for pedestrian safety and accessible walking communities, was present at the first of five sessions in the roundtable series. Topics of discussion focused not only on impacts on safety and equity, but opportunities to reconsider urban design and planning. As AV technologies inevitably become more widely available, America Walks is focused on ensuring that there is appropriate education as well as policies which promote the safety of walking.

Trump Administration Proposes to Roll Back Fuel Economy Standards

In a widely anticipated move, the Trump administration this week **released a notice of proposed rulemaking** to stop regulations previously established by the Obama administration to tighten vehicle fuel efficiency and pollution standards. The move would preempt California's ability to set its own standards and could trigger a legal battle between the state and the federal government. This came after the Environmental Protection Agency signaled openness to a compromise between California and auto manufacturers that would not require the preemption. The current standard increases to a fuel economic average of 54.5 miles per gallon by 2026. The administration's rulemaking would freeze the standard at 2020 levels and revoke a waiver that allows thirteen states, including California, and D.C. to set more stringent standards. The administration defends the move on grounds of vehicle affordability and safety.

REGIONS BRIEF

Valley Metro Experiments with Driverless Cars Through Waymo Partnership

Valley Metro, which serves the Phoenix, AZ metropolitan area, has partnered with Waymo in a driverless car pilot program. The partnership will initially begin by connecting riders to and from light rail stops, with potential to expand function into Valley Metro's services for people with disabilities and seniors. The "first-mile, last-mile" service will initially be tested with a control group: Valley Metro and Phoenix employees. These employees would use Waymo vehicles to get them to the bus station or light-rail stop they would take to their destination. The program launched Tuesday with \$200,000 in allocated funding and is anticipated to run for two years.

JOBS

[View full list of jobs!](#)

Transportation Travel Demand Modeler

Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, Pittsburgh, PA

Senior Quality Assurance Analyst

San Diego Association of Governments, San Diego, CA

Parks and Recreation Director

City of Kinston, Kinston, NC

Clean Energy Coordinator/Planner

Metropolitan Area Planning Council, Boston, MA

OPPORTUNITIES

[View full list opportunities!](#)

Webinar Series on the Connected Vehicle Pilot Deployment Program: Device Acquisition and Installation

Tampa Connected Vehicle Pilot Deployment, August 7, 11:00 – 12:30 PM ET

USDOT will host a webinar for each pilot site about the connected vehicle devices being acquired and installed as part of the deployment. Representatives from each pilot site will provide an overview of their approach to identifying the type and number of devices, equipment, and software-based capabilities acquired for the pilot. The webinar will also address their approach to engaging with vendors and getting the devices in hand and installed while adhering to a stringent installation schedule.

FTA Webinar Series on New Safety Rules

Webinars: August 2 – September 12

On July 19, FTA issued two final regulations: the **Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP)** rule and the **Public Transportation Safety Certification Training Program (PTSCTP)** rule. The PTASP final rule requires certain rail and bus operators to develop safety plans to better manage their safety risk using Safety Management Systems. The PTSCTP final rule establishes a basic curriculum for rail transit safety personnel responsible for the safety oversight of rail transit systems. To explain the safety rules and their applicability to transit agencies, FTA will host a webinar series from July through September with webinars directed at different

stakeholders. Information on PTASP webinars can be found [here](#) and PTSCTP can be found [here](#).

NPMRDS Users Quarterly Technical Assistance Webinar

August 4 1:00 – 3:00 PM ET

The next National Performance Management Research Data Set (NPMRDS) users webinar will focus on handling frequently asked questions related to the use of the NPMRDS, including common issues with conflation, metric reporting for the System Performance/Freight/CMAQ performance measures, and the National Highway System. Presenters will provide an update on recent developments with the NPMRDS (v2) and FHWA resources to support the use of the data set and the calculation of performance measures.

National Coalition on Truck Parking - Technology and Data Research Needs

August 6, 1:00 – 2:30 PM ET

The National Coalition on Truck Parking – Technology and Data Working Group is hosting a webinar to review and discuss state-level truck parking studies, activities, and needs. The webinar will provide an update on the National Coalition on Truck Parking's recent activities, discuss high-level stakeholder needs, and provide examples from states on recent truck parking research initiatives.

FRA Webinar on the FY 18 CRISI Grant Program

August 8, 10:00 – 11:30 AM ET

FRA is providing a webinar on the FY 18 Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Grant Program, authorized by the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act with over \$318 million in federal funds available for projects that will strengthen intercity passenger and freight rail, support capital projects, and boost safety initiatives including improved highway-rail grade crossings, and congestion mitigation. During the webinar, FRA will provide information about the grant program, new FY 18 updates and requirements, and how to apply for grant funding. Additionally, FRA will share expertise on preparing Benefit-Cost Analyses for proposed CRISI projects. When registering for the webinar, registrants are encouraged to submit questions for the webinar's Q&A session.

Act Fast: The Growing Call for Slower Speeds

August 8, 2:00 – 3:00 PM ET

Every community member has a right to safe places to walk and be physically active. Unfortunately, the rise in pedestrian fatalities in recent years reminds us that our work in protecting that right is far from over. Hear from those leading the call for slower speeds and communities putting people first in the call for safer streets.

National Dialogue on Highway Automation: Workshop 3 – Freight

September 5 – 6, Chicago, Illinois

The National Dialogue on Highway Automation will consist of 5 meetings held across the country. Each workshop will involve discussions on general issues of highway automation and specific topics as identified. Participants should select specific workshops based on their desired topic area, or simply by the most convenient date and location. The Chicago workshop will focus on freight and will explore truck platooning applications and truck automation, as well as implications for traffic operations and infrastructure.

Consortium for Scenario Planning Annual Conference

September 12-14, Columbus, OH

The newly-formed **Scenario Planning Consortium** will hold its first annual conference in Columbus, Ohio, hosted by the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC). Program highlights include training sessions, an “unconference” portion so participants can explore the topics that interest them most, and in-depth information on scenario planning in Ohio. If you have questions about this event, please contact Janae Futrell at jfutrell@lincolnst.edu. Registration is now open and can be found [here](#).

CONTACT US

