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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

January 16, 2014

Transportation Thursdays

NARC LEADERSHIP

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Commission

Hon. Fred Strong

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Committee
Board Member, NARC
and
San Luis Obispo Council
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Lyle Wray

Chair, Transportation
Committee
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OPPORTUNITY BRIEF

ADMINISTRATIVE BRIEF | LEGISLATIVE BRIEF

REGIONAL BRIEF

2014 NATIONAL
CONFERENCE OF REGIONS

FEBRUARY 9-11, 2014
WASHINGTON, DC

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 **NARC**
Building Regional Communities

Your Chance to Weigh In: NARC is developing a slate of webinars and learning opportunities for members in 2014. If you have any pressing issues, areas of concern, or something you think is just plain interesting that we could expand upon and discuss as a group, please send your ideas to Erich Zimmermann, erich@narc.org. We still need more input from members, so please don't hesitate to offer your suggestions.

OPPORTUNITY BRIEF

WEBINAR: Reshaping Rural Highways for Livability

January 21, 3:00 – 4:30 PM EST

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Office of Planning, Environment, and Realty and Project for Public Spaces will focus this webinar on the U.S. Route 50 project in Virginia, to discuss how Virginia

Governments

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Department of Transportation (DOT) and stakeholders worked together to balance the role of Route 50 as a major national highway with the reality that it is also the heart of the rural communities it binds together. Register [HERE](#).

WEBINAR: National Performance Measures Research Data Set (NPMRDS) Hosted by FHWA's Office of Freight Management and Operations

February 5, 1:00 PM EST

NPMRDS is the probe data that the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is using internally for passenger and freight analysis, and making available to states and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs). This webinar will demonstrate how states and MPOs can use the data for performance measures. Click [HERE](#) to register, and [HERE](#) for more information.

GRANT: Projects to Improve Air Quality at Ports 2013 Diesel Emissions Reduction Act (DERA) Funding Opportunity

Deadline: *February 13, 2014*

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Office of Transportation and Air Quality (OTAQ) is soliciting proposals that achieve significant reductions in diesel emissions in terms of tons of pollution produced by diesel engines and diesel emissions exposure, from fleets operating at marine and inland water ports. Eligible diesel emission reduction solutions include verified emission control technologies such as exhaust controls and engine upgrades, verified idle reduction technologies, certified engine repowers, and/or certified vehicle or equipment replacement. Additional information can be found [HERE](#).

GRANT: Round 3 of the Implementation Assistance Program SHRP2

Deadline: *February 14, 2014*

FHWA recently released the recipients of [Round 2 grants](#) and announced the schedule for rounds 3 and 4. These grants are intended to help transportation agencies deploy new products developed under the second Strategic Highway Research Program (SHRP2). For additional information or questions, contact Carin Michel, FHWA SHRP2 Implementation Manager at goSHRP2@dot.gov or 410-962-2530. Click [HERE](#) to read the release about the upcoming rounds.

GRANT: U.S. DOT Announces Availability of \$24.9 Million to Put More Zero-Emission Buses into Service Across America

Deadline: *March 10, 2014*

The U.S. DOT's Federal Transit Administration announced the availability of \$24.9 million through its brand new Low or No Emission Vehicle Deployment Program that will put a new generation of advanced, non-polluting transit buses on the road in communities nationwide. The funds are intended to encourage more widespread adoption of reliable "green energy" buses into transit fleets. Click [HERE](#) for the announcement, and [HERE](#) for related information.

ADMINISTRATIVE BRIEF

U.S. DOT Announces Final Rule to Streamline Environmental Reviews for Transit, Highway Projects: The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) announced a final rule this week that will significantly cut red tape, while achieving better environmental outcomes, for certain transit and highway projects under the National Environmental Policy Act and spur them towards completion more quickly than in years past. The new rule will expedite the delivery of certain transit and highway projects. Click [HERE](#) for additional information, and [HERE](#) for the Final Rule.

U.S. DOT Secretary Anthony Foxx Outlines Transportation Vision Focused on Overcoming Infrastructure Deficit: In a speech before the Transportation Research Board's Annual Meeting in Washington DC, Secretary Foxx outlined his top priorities for U.S. DOT, highlighting America's infrastructure deficit and identifying ways to use innovation and improved planning to stretch transportation dollars as effectively and efficiently as possible. He also discussed his vision for multimodal transportation providing greater economic "ladders of opportunity" to all Americans, and reiterated the Department's commitment to safety. Click [HERE](#) for the full briefing, and [HERE](#) for Secretary Foxx's speech.

LEGISLATIVE BRIEF

House Chairman Wants Transportation Bill by August: House Transportation Committee Chairman Rep. Bill Shuster (R-Pa.) said on Tuesday that he wants the House to pass a new transportation funding bill by August. "My hope is to get reauthorization done on time," Shuster said. "We hope to take committee action in the late spring or early summer with the goal to be on the House floor before the August recess. This way there will be time to conference our bill with the Senate's bill."

The current funding bill expires in September. Witnesses strongly urged Congress to increase funding and pass a long term deal. Additional information can be found [HERE](#).

House Passes \$1T Spending Bill, Sends to Senate: On Wednesday, the House approved a \$1 trillion omnibus spending bill that funds the government for the rest of 2014, and will let Congress avoid the risk of a shutdown until the end of September. Members voted 359-67 to pass the bill, which was opposed by 64 Republicans and 3 Democrats. The Senate must approve the bill by Saturday, when government funding expires. Final passage is expected by Friday, and then will be sent to the President for an expected signature. Click [HERE](#) for a breakdown and summary of the bill, and [HERE](#) for more information.

Amtrak Chief Advocates Overhaul of Surface Transportation

Funding: Amtrak President and Chief Executive Officer, Joseph A. Boardman, called on Congress to discard the current Highway Trust Fund and replace it with a self-perpetuating mechanism to finance roads, transit and rail. The next surface transportation authorization will give Congress an opportunity to devise a new model for funding all modes of surface transportation. "The Highway Trust Fund is dead," Boardman said in an address delivered at the National Press Club in Washington. "It's built on an outmoded vision for transportation... We have to replace the notion of a highway program with the idea of a surface transportation program." Click [HERE](#) to read more.

Help Us Help You: NARC is currently conducting meetings with congressional staff on both sides of the Capitol, focusing on transportation-related committees at the moment. If you have something notable to discuss or push with your congressional member, please send it to Erich Zimmermann, erich@narc.org.

REGIONAL BRIEF

DOT Officials Claim that New Metro Trains will Boost Safety: New rail cars were recently unveiled by the Washington D.C. Metrorail subway system, the second-largest public transit network in the United States. A ceremonial test ride on the new 7000 series in Greenbelt, Maryland was conducted by the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA). U.S. DOT Secretary Anthony Foxx said that the new cars will increase safety for the riders and that they are a big

improvement over Metro's oldest cars that have been used since the 1970s. Read the full article [HERE](#).

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