



## LEGISLATIVE BRIEF

**Foxx Testifies at T&I Hearing:** Yesterday, Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx appeared before the House Transportation & Infrastructure (T&I) Committee to discuss the surface transportation reauthorization bill. Foxx emphasized the need for a long-term funding solution, pleading for Congress to 'budget for results' and 'set the ceiling, not the floor' for transportation infrastructure investments. Though there was a clear consensus that long-term funding is necessary, there was clear disparity of opinion on the best mechanism for acquiring such funding. Suggestions ranged from raising the gas tax, repatriation, implementing road usage fees, and making research and development funds accessible. The full committee hearing is available for online viewing [HERE](#).

**Hahn Freight Bill:** During Wednesday's T&I Committee hearing, Representative Janice Hahn (D-CA) announced her intention to re-introduce, now with the support of several bi-partisan co-sponsors, a bill that would create a dedicated funding program for freight infrastructure. The bill proposes that five-percent of import fee revenues be set aside for maintaining and improving freight infrastructure, a mechanism which she claims could generate up to \$2 billion each year. Additionally, the Administration included a provision of \$18 billion for freight over the next six-year period in its 2016 budget request.

**Rail Reauthorization House Markup:** Today, the House T&I Committee held a full committee markup of the *Passenger Rail Reform and Investment Act* (PRRIA, H.R. 749). The bill reduces Amtrak funding by 40-percent and mandates that Amtrak carry out a business case analysis for all major procurements, among other changes. Though amendments were proposed by both Representatives John Mica (R-FL) and Elizabeth Esty (D-CT), they were both withdrawn amidst the overwhelming interest to push the bill forward. It has been approved by the Committee for consideration by the House. Click [HERE](#) for a summary of the legislation.

**Delaney Introduces Bill for Repatriation:** On January 30, Representative John Delaney (D-MD) introduced the *Infrastructure 2.0 Act*. The bill proposes to repatriate offshore earnings for investment in domestic infrastructure, sets an 18-month deadline for international tax reform, and offers fallback solutions for international tax reform. Click [HERE](#) to view the bill.

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## ADMINISTRATIVE BRIEF

**Doom and Gloom for HTF in June:** According to statements made by Secretary Foxx at the Wednesday T&I Committee hearing, the U.S. Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT) foresees the Highway trust Fund (HTF) dropping below a sustainable level in June. Assuming that current spending levels continue and that no short-term solution is enacted prior to the May expiration of HTF's authorization, the U.S. DOT will have to notify states of dramatic federal funding cuts in June. The possibility of losing federal funding due to HTF failure caused several states to preemptively remove major infrastructure projects from their dashboards.

**Piecemeal Tax Reform:** Though the Administration and supporters are pushing hard to develop a passable comprehensive tax overhaul, others like Senator Charles Schumer (D-NY) have suggested addressing certain tax reforms separately. Such a move would allow Congress to resolve time-sensitive issues like a six-year revenue-generating tax plan to maintain the HTF, while putting off more contentious pieces. As the HTF expiration deadline nears, time may force the Administration to consider a repatriation tax separately.

**Foxx's Reauthorization Bus Tour:** Today, Secretary Foxx announced a bus tour to promote the Administration's transportation authorization proposal, the *GROW AMERICA Act*. The bus tour begins February 17 and includes stops in Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, and Washington, D.C. "Congress continues to pass short-term measures with flat funding that falls short of meeting our country's needs," Foxx said in a statement. "I am once again taking my message directly to the American people because they know that Band-Aid funding measures don't build bridges; they don't create jobs; and they don't help us compete in the 21st Century. We need to put our country back to work with a long-term funding plan." Click [HERE](#) for NARC's summary of the *GROW AMERICA Act*, and [HERE](#) to follow Secretary Foxx's bus tour.

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# MEMBERSHIPREQUEST

Please send responses to Anna Rosenbaum, [anna@narc.org](mailto:anna@narc.org).

**YVCOG - Annual Retreat for Elected Officials:** Yakima Valley Conference of Governments (YVCOG) in Yakima, WA is interested in holding an annual retreat for their elected officials. Does your organization hold a yearly retreat for its elected officials, to educate them on services/programs offered by your regional council? If yes, how do you structure your retreat? How long does the retreat last? Do you pay for all expenses (hotel, food, etc)? How do you encourage attendance? Are you willing to share your agendas/handouts as an example?

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# OPPORTUNITYBRIEF

Click [HERE](#) to view the list of grants and events still open!

## **WEBINAR: T4America Performance Measurement Discussion**

*February 17, 2:30-3:30PM ET*

Transportation for America (T4America) will soon be releasing its report, *Measuring What We Value: Setting Priorities and Evaluating Success in Transportation*, in which they explain the value of quantifying the public benefits of transportation investment. This webinar is an opportunity to learn how innovative state DOTs and MPOs have experienced early success by transitioning to a performance-based system of transportation investment. Click [HERE](#) to register.

## **WEBINAR: FHWA MPO Listening Session**

*February 24, 1:00-2:00PM ET*

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is exploring strategies to help practitioners make effective use of digital engagement techniques, tools, and mobile apps to improve the quality and breadth of public engagement in transportation planning. Click [HERE](#) to register.

## **HEARINGS: House T&I on Transportation Reauthorization PART 2**

*February 26, 10:00AM ET*

The House T&I Committee will hold a full committee hearing in two parts, titled *Surface Transportation Reauthorization Bill: Laying the Foundation for U.S. Economic Growth and Job Creation*. Click [HERE](#) for Part II.