



**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS**

TRANSPORTATION THURSDAYS



## CONGRESS BRIEF

### **Senate and House Bills Introduced to Repeal MPO Coordination Rule**

Earlier today, Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) and Representative Dan Lipinski (D-IL) each introduced identical legislation to repeal the MPO Coordination Final Rule as enacted in January. Both bills have strong bipartisan support, a key element that we hope will help them move fairly quickly. The Senate bill is co-sponsored by Senators Todd Young (R-IN), Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV), and Dick Durbin (D-IL); Representative Jason Lewis (R-MN) is the primary Republican co-sponsor in that chamber, with seventeen other members from both parties on as well. More details on this as they become available, including bill numbers and next steps NARC members can take to help move these forward.

### **Examining Environmental Barriers to Infrastructure Development Hearing**

The House Oversight Committee held a hearing yesterday to identify examples of environmental regulations that inhibit infrastructure development and consider ways to expedite projects. During the hearing, panelists addressed staffing shortages at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, bureaucratic costs, and the value of the *National Environmental Protection Act* as a whole. Richie Beyer, a county engineer in Alabama; Wayne D'Angelo, counsel for the Steel Manufacturers Association; and Nicholas Loris of the Heritage Foundation testified.

### **Connecting America: Improving Access to Infrastructure for Communities Across the Country Hearing**

Yesterday the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation held a hearing on improving rural infrastructure. South Dakota Governor Dennis Daugaard emphasized that public private partnerships will not work for rural areas, and requested the use of formula funding in any new infrastructure package. Shirley Bloomfield from NTCA - The Rural Broadband Association discussed their work improving broadband in rural areas and the importance of including broadband programs in infrastructure legislation. Each witness stated that rural investments are extremely important because they connect urban areas.

## **ADMINISTRATION BRIEF**

### **Infrastructure Plan Still Lacks Details**

In an address to a joint meeting of Congress on Tuesday, President Trump reaffirmed his intention to call on Congress for a significant increase in federal infrastructure spending. Though details of the plan remained scarce, the speech marked the first acknowledgement from Trump that the \$1 trillion investment he favors will be a mix of public and private capital, with federal dollars used to leverage private investment. This comes amid growing doubts that Congress will tackle this issue in 2017, the victim of a packed legislative schedule and fiscal conservatives' resistance to a huge spending package. Today the administration is meeting with federal agencies to initiate the process of creating a formal infrastructure plan.

### **Revaluating Autonomous Vehicle Guidelines**

Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao told the National Governors Association this week that the autonomous vehicle guidance released by the Obama administration in September would be reviewed. The new administration will reevaluate the guidance and work with stakeholders to update and amend it. Chao urged companies to explain the benefits of the new technology to the public.

## **REGIONS BRIEF**

### **2016 SANDAG Milestones and Accomplishments Video**

The San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) created a video highlighting last year's regional accomplishments in transportation for their Board of Directors retreat. SANDAG either completed or began construction on 23 projects in 2016, including their Mid-Coast Trolley extension.

### **New Transportation for America Director Announced**

Transportation for America named Adrea Turner as their new executive director. Turner previously served as chief of staff for the District of Columbia DOT, and worked for Pew Charitable Trust and Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley's administration. Ms. Turner will replace James Corless, who begins as executive director of the Sacramento Area Council of Governments in April.

## **JOBS**

*[View full list of jobs!](#)*

### **Planning Data and Research Program Director**

Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, Washington, DC

### **Program Coordinator, Short-Range Planning**

Association of Central Oklahoma Governments, Oklahoma City, OK

### **Public Involvement Specialist—Transportation Planning**

Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, Pittsburgh, PA

### **Planner III**

West Florida Regional Planning Council, Pensacola, FL

## **OPPORTUNITIES**

*[View full list of grants and events!](#)*

### **Integration of Dynamic Traffic Assignment with Agent-based and Activity-based Modeling in Maryland**

March 15, 12:30-2:00 PM ET

The Maryland Integrated Travel Analysis Modeling System (MITAMS) is composed of integrated advanced travel demand models with fine-grained time-sensitive traffic network models to support agency goals in the areas of planning, integrated planning and operations, and transportation systems management and operations (TSM&O) at statewide, metropolitan, and subarea/corridor levels. In 2014, Maryland received implementation assistance under the Second Strategic Highway Research Program (SHRP2) C10 track to continue the development and implementation of these models. This webinar will present the results of two efforts.

### **TRB Webinar: Livable Transit Corridors**

March 16, 2:00-4:00 PM ET

The Transportation Research Board (TRB) will conduct a free webinar that features research from the Transit Cooperative Research Program's *Report 187: Livable Transit Corridors: Methods, Metrics, and Strategies*. The planning method presented in the handbook was developed by studying more than 350 transit corridors throughout the U.S. It offers an operational framework for defining and assessing livability to provide clear guidance for corridor-level visioning and planning. A set of analysis tools was developed to identify corridor livability strengths and needs, and recommend paths to implementation. This webinar will examine the potential for transit access, land use and transportation integration, and a stakeholder-driven set of assessment and implementation tools to improve livability in transit corridors.

### **Survey: Resilience in Transportation Planning, Engineering, Management, Policy, and Administration**

Open until March 27

The National Academy of Sciences conducts research related to contemporary transportation issues. The National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) was established within TRB to fund and execute these research projects and publish reports. As part of TRB's ongoing research program, a need was identified to gather information on the current resilience practices within transportation planning, engineering, management, policy, and administration. The study will document resilience efforts and how they are organized, understood, and implemented within transportation agencies' core functions and services. The survey should take approximately 20 minutes.

## **CONTACT US**

*Copyright © 2017 National Association of Regional Councils, All rights reserved.*