



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

TRANSPORTATION THURSDAYS

CONGRESS BRIEF

FAA Reauthorization Action Heats Up

Both the House and Senate released versions of FAA reauthorization proposals this week. House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman Bill Shuster unveiled the **21st Century Aviation Innovation, Reform, and Reauthorization Act** (21st Century AIRR Act) yesterday, which moves air traffic control operations from FAA to a private non-profit called the American Air Navigation Services Corporation. Two key changes are designed to help this proposal succeed where last year's version failed: a change to the board of directors' membership of the non-profit entity and the removal of general aviation users from having to contribute to the newly created entity. Changes that have a more local impact include: significant increase in funding for Essential Air Service; removal of restrictions on charging a higher passenger facility fee (though the cap remains \$4.50); the sunseting of a program to pilot more fuel efficient ground control equipment; a number of studies, including the Essential Air Service (EAS) program and local effects of airport noise; and a new pilot program to help maintain air service at underserved airports.

The Senate draft, released today, has the more straightforward name of **Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization Act of 2017**. The Senate version does not remove ATC from FAA control, so there is obviously one enormous sticking point that needs to be resolved. We are reviewing the recently-released Senate draft and hope to have a comparison of the two bills out sometime soon.

House Members Sign Letter Seeking Long-Term Fix to HTF

Earlier this month, more than 250 House members sent a letter to the House Committee on Ways and Means leaders requesting a long-term fix to the Highway Trust Fund (HTF) as part of a tax reform package. The letter emphasized the importance of resolving the issue before the FAST Act expires in 2020. It also stated that any solution should include a long-term, dedicated, user-based revenue stream that is supported across party lines but did not specifically call for a gas-tax increase. The letter was led by Sam Graves (R-MO) and Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC), the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Highways and Transit.

Letter to Secretary Chao on Essential Air Service

A bipartisan group of nine senators this week sent a letter to Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao asking for her continued support of the EAS program. The 40-year-old program provides support for rural communities' commercial air service and was cut in the administration's proposed fiscal year 2018 budget request. Secretary Chao said in a hearing on the reauthorization of the FAA that she will work with the administration to address this need.

ADMINISTRATION BRIEF

State Safety Oversight Program Status

FTA posted a new **status table** this week that shows what stage each state is in for State Safety Oversight (SSO) Program certification and how much FTA formula funding can be held if states do not come into compliance. The 30 states where rail transit systems operate are required by federal law to establish an FTA-certified **SSO Program** by April 15, 2019. With the certification deadline less than two years away, FTA is encouraging states to act quickly to enact necessary legislation,

statutes, and regulations. Currently, nine states still require legislative action at the state level prior to FTA certification. A state that fails to obtain certification for its SSO Program by the deadline is prohibited from receiving obligated funds for public transportation agencies throughout that state until certification is achieved.

REGIONS BRIEF

Seeking NARC Member Feedback on USDOT Notice Regarding Transportation Regulations

USDOT recently placed a **Notice in the Federal Register** seeking input from stakeholders regarding current agency regulations that slow the project approval process and that should be removed or revised. This notice is in line with the focus that the president and others in the administration have placed on this issue, and is likely to be a major piece of any infrastructure package later this year.

Comments on this notice are due by July 24. NARC is reaching out to both inform you of this deadline and to ask if you would tell us about what you have identified as barriers. Please send us your input, so that we can use those examples for a potential NARC comment to the docket.

We will begin by holding one-on-one conversations with members, and may expand it later to a broader conversation with the entire membership. **If you have ideas in this area you would like to discuss with us, please send an email ASAP to erich@narc.org** and we'll work together to set up a time with the appropriate members of your staff.

NOACA Adopts New Long-Range Transportation Plan, AIM Forward 2040

Earlier this month the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency's (NOACA) Board of Directors approved the newest Long-Range Transportation Plan for their region. *AIM Forward 2040* looks 20 years into the future and identifies \$15.8 billion in transportation projects to improve Northeast Ohio. The region will continue to invest in multimodal alternatives and community livability projects while also funding maintenance for roads and bridges. NOACA had an extensive public engagement process over the past year and incorporated feedback from business and community stakeholders, transportation operators, and interested public into their plan.

The Best Complete Streets Projects of 2016

Smart Growth America conducted a comprehensive review of the 222 new Complete Streets policies enacted in 2016. Topping the list are Brockton, MA; Missoula, MT; and Wenatchee, WA, which all received a perfect 100 score. Before 2012, no policy had scored higher than 90 and the median score was 34 during the first review in 2006. The perfect scores in 2016 demonstrate the continued improvement of Complete Streets policies in diverse communities across the country.

JOBS

[View full list of jobs!](#)

Environmental Justice Planner I or II – Long-Range Transportation Planning

North Central Texas Council of Governments, Arlington, TX

Transportation Planner I or II – Sustainable Development

North Central Texas Council of Governments, Arlington, TX

Systems Planning Manager

Broward Metropolitan Planning Organization, Fort Lauderdale, FL

Principal Planner

Broward Metropolitan Planning Organization, Fort Lauderdale, FL

Veteran Mobility Specialist

Alamo Area Council of Governments, San Antonio, TX

Principal Transportation Planner

Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, Chicago, IL

Transportation Planner

Spokane Regional Transportation Council, Spokane, WA

Transportation Planner

Northern Middlesex Council of Governments, Lowell, MA

Alamo Regional Transit Assistant Director

Alamo Area Council of Governments, San Antonio, TX

Active Transportation Planner

San Diego Association of Governments, San Diego, CA

OPPORTUNITIES

View full list of grants and events!

NPMRDS Users Quarterly Technical Assistance Webinar

July 20, 1:00 – 3:00 PM ET

The next National Performance Management Research Data Set (NPMRDS) webinar will focus on details of the new data set. The new NPMRDS provides average travel times on the National Highway System (NHS) and is used in calculating four of the measures in the System Performance/Freight/CMAQ performance measures **final rule**, which became effective on May 20, 2017. Learn how to access the data and data license details, and hear about the significant improvements made to this version of the NPMRDS, including linkages to 15 HPMS attributes to support the calculation of performance measures.

11th Annual Competition and Call for Communications Concepts with John and Jane Q. Public: Communicating the Value of Long-Term Transportation Planning

Entries due July 24

In 2007, the Transportation Research Board (TRB) Planning and Environment Group launched a new competition looking for fresh and creative methods for communicating technical transportation issues with “John and Jane Q. Public” to share with others within the profession. The inaugural competition had an open theme that solicited communication strategies for technical issues. The contest yielded overwhelming results, with 70 entries received and 11 invited to present at the 2008 TRB Annual Meeting. Since then, the competition has featured a different theme, ranging from a focus on sustainability and climate change to last year’s contest that focused on emergency management.

This year is the 11th annual competition to find top methods for communicating transportation concepts to non-professional audiences. Entries, which should focus on communicating the value of long-term transportation planning, are due by July 24, 2017. **Additional information on the contest and entry instructions** are available online. The entries will be evaluated by a panel of judges representing technical as well as communication disciplines. The winner will be announced at TRB’s 97th Annual Meeting, January 7-11, 2018, in Washington, D.C.

CONTACT US

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