



**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS**

TRANSPORTATION THURSDAYS

### **NARC Legislative Briefings**

Over the next two months, NARC is offering weekly legislative briefings designed to bring you up-to-date with current legislative trends and the ways in which these bills may impact regions. Here is a preliminary schedule of those briefings:

#### July 11, 3:00 PM ET: Farm Bill

This session will focus on the differences between the House and Senate Farm Bills, and the final bill that NARC hopes the House and Senate will adopt and send to the president for his signature.

#### July 18, 3:00 PM ET: Federal Water Pollution Control Act

This session will focus on a bill to codify the Environmental Protection Agency Integrated Planning requirements that will improve the water infrastructure planning process for local governments expected to be introduced to the House.

#### July 25, 3:00 PM ET: FY 2019 Budget and Appropriations

This session will focus on the FY 2019 budget and appropriations process, and how programs that are important to localities and regions are being funded compared to last year.

Other sessions will focus on transportation, autonomous vehicle legislation, and the likely congressional agenda that will begin after Labor Day – exact dates and times will be announced. Within days of the mid-term elections, NARC will host a conference call laying out what the election outcome means for the remainder of the 115th Congress and the 116th Congress, which begins January 3, 2019.

The call-in information for these legislative briefings is below:

- Call-in Number: (571) 317-3122
- Access Code: 480-330-989
- Audio Pin: #

Contact Maci Morin at [maci.morin@narc.org](mailto:maci.morin@narc.org) or Neil Bomberg at [neil@narc.org](mailto:neil@narc.org) with questions.

### **Member Request: Automated Vehicle Action Plans**

The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments in Washington, D.C. is interested in your activities related to autonomous vehicles (AVs). They are exploring how to prepare the region and the impacts the region will face. Have you formed a task force or developed an action plan for your region? Send responses to Sarah Reed ([sarah@narc.org](mailto:sarah@narc.org)).

## **CONGRESS BRIEF**

### **FAA Optimism**

Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee Chairman John Thune (R-SD) remains optimistic that FAA reauthorization will be passed this summer. Thune said that with the Senate in session in August the extra calendar time should allow for FAA, even with the Supreme Court nomination process ramping up.

## **ADMINISTRATION BRIEF**

### **Democrats Object as Transit Grants Get the Gateway Treatment**

FTA sent a **letter** last week to Capital Investment Grant applicants advising them on the importance of local financial commitments. This is the same approach that the agency has taken to the Gateway Project, which would build new bridge and tunnel crossings between New York and New Jersey. The interpretation specifically means that federal loans will no longer count as part of the local share, thereby increasing the amount states and locals must contribute.

Representative David Price (D-NC), ranking member of the Transportation-HUD Appropriations Subcommittee, said that he is concerned that the administration's stance on Gateway is affecting vital transit projects across the country. Representative Mike Quigley (D-IL) called FTA's interpretation of the use of federal loans for transit grants flawed and disappointing. The Capital Investment Grant program includes New Starts and Small Starts and, as of early May, had about 50 projects in the pipeline.

## **REGIONS BRIEF**

### **Supporting Active Living Through Community Plans: The Association of Planning Documents with Design Standards and Features**

This study examines the association between the presence of supportive community planning documents in U.S. municipalities with design standards and requirements that support active living. The study found that the most prevalent design standard was traffic-calming features that increase roadway safety followed by dedicated bicycle infrastructure. It concluded that having more objectives in the plan was positively related to the number of design standards within a plan that promoted active living.

### **NLC Autonomous Vehicles: Future Scenarios**

The National League of Cities (NLC), in partnership with the Bloomberg Aspen Initiative on Autonomous Vehicles, created four scenarios for what autonomous vehicles (AVs) could mean for cities. Each scenario includes a story with use cases and city strategies and tackles sustainability, mobility, jobs, or urban transformations.

### **SEMCOG Local Governments Awarded \$14 million for Walking and Biking Projects, Planning Assistance**

The Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) has awarded almost \$13 million in funding for transportation projects through their Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) and over \$900,000 in funding for their Planning Assistance Program. Funding was allocated to 24 TAP projects and 26 Planning Assistance Program projects. TAP projects are aimed at improving pedestrian safety and connectivity, implementing transportation-related green infrastructure, and improving bicycle facilities to encourage greater use. SEMCOG's Planning Assistance Program provides funding across three categories: traffic safety, road asset management, and multi-community planning. These projects are seen as vehicles to implement strategies contained in regional plans and enable local governments to coordinate efforts on region-wide issues.

## **JOBS**

***View full list of jobs!***

### **Executive Director**

Centralina Council of Governments, Charlotte, NC

### **Transportation Planner**

Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, Pittsburgh, PA

### **Principal Planner**

Community Planning Association of Southwest Idaho, Meridian, ID

### **Executive Director**

Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission, Santa Cruz, CA

## **OPPORTUNITIES**

***View full list opportunities!***

## **Consolidation of Rural Transit Systems**

July 17, 2:00 – 3:30 PM ET

Consolidation is one way that public transportation providers can integrate their services to increase efficiency, reduce operating expenses, improve the customer experience, or achieve other goals. This presentation will share the results of research into the consolidation of rural public transportation services conducted as National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) Project 20-65, Task 69. The purpose of Task 69 was to develop guidance that would be useful to transportation providers and state DOTs considering or engaged in consolidation efforts. The experiences of four case study systems and their state DOTs will be discussed to identify common catalysts for consolidation, steps in the consolidation process, benefits that may be achieved, and challenges that rural public transportation providers may encounter as they work to consolidate their services.

## **CONTACT US**

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