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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

July 10, 2014

Transportation Thursdays

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NARC REQUEST

NARC is gathering information to take to Congress!

Deadline: July 11, 5:00 PM ET - That's tomorrow!

NARC will explain the impacts of the recent policy guidance released by the U.S. Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT) requiring a voting position for transit representatives on the policy board of metropolitan planning organizations. In order to do this, we need input from our members. It will only take 10 minutes to let us know how or if this policy guidance will affect you. Click [HERE](#) to access our 15-question poll.

Thank you to those who have already completed this!

ADMINISTRATIVE BRIEF

Proposed Safety Performance Rulemaking: The official comment period for the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) regarding safety measures and the *Highway Safety Improvement Program* closed on June 30. NARC did not submit comments to the docket because our reading of the NPRM identified no compelling policy issues that required particular attention. This decision was also informed by the fact that no

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issues were raised by members during a NARC-held webinar, nor in response to several requests for feedback in *Transportation Thursdays* and at NARC's recent Annual Conference. We feel it is important that we be transparent about our decisions, and provide an opportunity if any members feel there was something we missed that necessitated a letter from us. There is still time to submit letters, even after the deadline has passed. If there are important issues you would like to raise in relation to the NPRM, please email Erich (erich@narc.org) and let him know what you think.

States Face Steep Cut in Transportation Funding if Congress Fails to Act: U.S. DOT is again stressing the urgency of finding a solution to the Highway Trust Fund (HTF) crisis. The HTF will be effectively insolvent about a month from now. U.S. DOT Secretary Anthony Foxx stated that this would require the department to cut payments to states by as much as 28 percent. Click [HERE](#) for the Secretary's blog post.

LEGISLATIVE BRIEF

House and Senate Committees Approve Differing Short-Term HTF Fixes: This morning, the U.S. House of Representatives Ways and Means Committee passed a stopgap bill (H.R. 5021 – *Highway and Transportation Funding Act of 2014*) to extend HTF solvency until May 31, 2015. The one-time \$10.8 billion (B) measure transfers \$8.8B to the Highway Account (including \$1B from the Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST) Trust Fund) and \$2.0B to the Mass Transit Account, offset by so-called pension smoothing provisions and extension of Customs user fees. The bill was approved in Committee today by voice vote, raising hopes the bill will pass under "suspension of the rules" early next week. The bill can be found [HERE](#).

This afternoon, the U.S. Senate Finance Committee took up its own measure to provide a HTF patch. The modified Finance version (*Preserving America's Transit and Highways Act of 2014*) provides the same \$10.8B in funding, including a \$1.0B LUST transfer and similar – though not identical – offsets. The Senate bill is bipartisan, with support from Chairman Wyden (D-OR) and Ranking Member Hatch (R-UT), and passed by voice vote with Sen. Carper (D-DE) voting "no." Sen. Carper's "no" vote stems largely from his opposition to the additional funding that was added to the bill, carrying it through the end of next May. He feels a shorter duration would hold Congress to completing a longer-term reauthorization bill during the lame duck session; his

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amendment on this failed 10-14. More information about the Senate Finance bill is [HERE](#).

Though the bills differ, their similarities in total funding and offsets indicate a path toward compromise on an extension that carries through May 2015, rather than through the end of 2014.

State and Local Elected Officials Support Long-Term

Transportation Funding: In a letter to House and Senate leadership, leaders from a number of national associations that represent state, county, and municipal officials – including the National Association of Counties and the National League of Cities – urged Congress to solve the impending HTF crisis and pass a long-term reauthorization to replace MAP-21. The letter cites the need for a strong commitment from the federal government and the uncertainty that arises from short-term extensions and temporary patches. Click [HERE](#) for the letter.

REGIONAL BRIEF

New Publication Detailing Oregon's Per-Mile Charging Program

Released: Oregon is a leader in innovative transportation funding measures, and recently established the nation's first ever *Road Usage Charge Program* for light vehicles. Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) has just released a report, *Road Usage Charge Pilot Program 2013 & Per-Mile Charge Policy in Oregon*, that details how Oregon successfully designed and completed its second per-mile charge pilot program and ultimately passed legislation to establish a fully operational road usage charging program, to launch July 1, 2015. Other states and even Congress are sure to take notice, as the so-called vehicle miles traveled (VMT) tax is a hot topic among those looking for alternatives to the current per-gallon gasoline tax. Click [HERE](#) for the full press release and report.

OPPORTUNITY BRIEF

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

WEBINAR: Section 5309 Bus and Bus Facilities Ladders of Opportunity Initiative NOFA

July 16, 1:30 PM ET

The Federal Transit Administration will host a *Bus Ladders of*

Opportunity Initiative webinar to provide an overview of the Ladders Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA), potential eligible applicants, eligibility requirements, evaluation criteria, application form requirements, and answer any questions from potential applicants. Click [HERE](#) to access the webinar.

WEBINAR: Logistics Sprawl: Spatial patterns of logistics facilities

July 22, 11:00 AM ET

This presentation looks at spatial patterns of freight and logistics activities and the impacts associated with them. It focuses on a phenomenon known as logistics sprawl, which is the tendency of warehouses to move away from urban regions towards more suburban and exurban areas. After presenting the global issues and main data, the presentation compares how the geographic distribution of warehouses changed in several specific cities that are among the country's fastest growing locations for logistics hubs - Los Angeles, Atlanta, Seattle, and Paris too. Click [HERE](#) to register.

WEBINAR: Three *Travel Model Improvement Program (TMIP)* Presentations

July 24, 2:00 PM ET

- 1: Sketch Traffic Forecasting Techniques from NCHRP 765
- 2: Transportation Planner's Web-based Accessibility Toolkit
- 3: Project Evaluation Toolkit (PET)

Each presentation will last approx. 30 minutes with time for Q&A. Attendance is limited to 100 connections and is first-come, first-serve. Click [HERE](#) to access the webinar.

WEBINAR: Neighborhood Wayfinding: What you need to know to get involved!

August 6, 2:00 PM ET

This session will teach you about wayfinding and transportation connections, enabling your community leaders to make good spending choices regarding signs and wayfinding strategies in your community. This session will discuss wayfinding assessments and best practices in successful community wayfinding. Click [HERE](#) to register.

NARC CONFERENCE: Executive Directors' Conference

September 21 - 24; Des Moines, IA

Join the Des Moines Area Metropolitan Planning Organization and NARC for the 2014 Executive Directors' Conference in Des Moines, IA.

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