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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS

July 31, 2014

Transportation Thursdays

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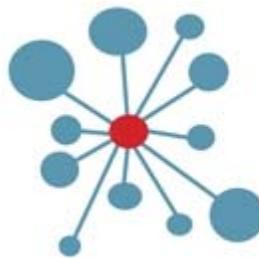
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executive directors' conference
september 21 - september 24, 2014
des moines, ia

Register Today!

Reminder: NARC is holding a webinar on the FHWA/FTA Planning Rule on August 6 at 3:00 PM ET. See registration details below.

LEGISLATIVE BRIEF

House Sends HTF Patch Back to Senate: Earlier today, the U.S. House of Representatives voted 272-150 to send a bill back to the U.S. Senate to patch the Highway Trust Fund (HTF). This bill is identical to the one the House passed two weeks ago. Earlier this week, the Senate amended the House bill to shorten its duration, but a drafting error revealed by the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) leaves the Senate bill \$2 billion short of needed offsets to pay for it. As a result, any potential for generating support in the House for the Senate proposal quickly fizzled. Now the Senate is forced to choose whether to accept the House bill or allow the HTF to become effectively insolvent, slowing payments to states during the busy construction season. The House bill

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Michael Parks

Chair, Transportation
Committee
Assistant Executive
Director, Brazos Valley
Council of Governments

NARCSTAFF

Joanna Turner

Executive Director

Mia Colson

Program Analyst

Nathan Devers

Intern

Marcy Fritter

Office Manager

Taylor Markwith

Program Associate

Anna Rosenbaum

Communications

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Erich W. Zimmermann

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provides \$11 billion in funding for the HTF, and will guarantee solvency through May 31, 2015. The Senate is expected to take up the House measure later tonight or tomorrow, and then adjourn for August recess. The relevant CBO score is **[HERE](#)**. The vote tally is **[HERE](#)**.

ADMINISTRATIVE BRIEF

Secretary Foxx Defends Oil Train Regulations: The U.S. Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT) recently proposed new regulations for trains that transport crude oil and ethanol. The regulations include enhanced tank car standards, a classification and testing program for mined gases and liquids, and new operational requirements for high-hazard flammable trains (HHFT) that include braking controls and speed restrictions. As part of the regulations, the railroad industry will have two years to phase out or fix the outdated and explosion-prone rail tank cars. U.S. DOT Secretary Anthony Foxx defended the proposed regulations. Click **[HERE](#)** for additional information.

REGIONAL BRIEF

D.C. Metro's Silver Line Officially Up and Running: The Washington D.C. regional Metrorail system's new Silver Line opened last Saturday. The Silver Line includes five new stations and more than 11 miles of new track in Tysons Corner and Reston, VA. The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority's reported that the new rail line registered 51,000 trips over the weekend. U.S. DOT Secretary Anthony Foxx attended the opening ceremony, and used the opportunity to urge passage of the Administration's *GROW AMERICA Act*, a proposal for transportation reauthorization. Click **[HERE](#)** for additional information.

The Role of Counties in Building Resilient Communities: Bath County, VA Supervisor Claire A. Collins testified on behalf of the National Association of Counties before the U.S. Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Subcommittee on Housing, Transportation, and Community Development on *Building Economically Resilient Communities: Local and Regional Approaches*. Her testimony included discussions on the distinctive role of counties in economic resiliency; how improving transportation systems, housing options, and job opportunities are critical to enhancing local economic development and resiliency; and how strengthening the federal-state-local partnership is critical to local economic resiliency. Click **[HERE](#)** for additional

information including a transcript and webcast of Supervisor Collins' testimony.

MEMBERREQUEST

Evaluating the Benefits of Transportation Investments: The Wasatch Front Regional Council (WFRC) in Salt Lake City, Utah is working with local partner agencies to evaluate the benefits of local transportation projects. Specifically, WFRC is looking for studies or methodologies used in other regions -- including economic, financial, engineering analyses, and/ or communications materials -- that have evaluated the benefits associated with the development of transportation projects. The studies and other materials can broadly consider new/ improved facilities or maintenance/ preservation/ operations for roads, trails, etc. The benefits include not only traditional transportation metrics such as travel time or infrastructure condition, but also economic development, air quality, and quality of life.

Please send feedback to Anna Rosenbaum, anna@narc.org.

OPPORTUNITYBRIEF

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

Re-listed with Registration Link! NARC WEBINAR: FHWA/FTA Planning Rule

August 6, 3:00 PM ET

Join this National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) webinar to discuss the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)/ Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Metropolitan and Statewide and Nonmetropolitan Planning Rules. Comments on the proposed rule are due in early September, so we need to hear from you! We want to gather our members concerns, positive feedback, and general questions/comments on the rule. This information will inform NARC's comments, and we hope that our members will include information that they learn in their own comments. Click [HERE](#) to register.

WEBINAR: The Regional Development Organization's Role in Disaster Recovery

August 12, 2:00 PM ET

Join the NADO Research Foundation for a webinar featuring speakers

from regional councils that have been involved in disaster recovery efforts. Regional councils are critical partners in disaster recovery. With their regional perspective and interdisciplinary focus, their ability to navigate federal programs, their technical expertise, and their broad network of partners at all levels of government and in the private and philanthropic sectors, they can help communities bounce back from disasters more efficiently and effectively. Presenters will share their experiences, lessons learned, and recommendations for regional councils seeking to engage in recovery work. Click [HERE](#) to register.

NOMINATIONS: 2015 Transportation Planning Excellence Awards (TPEA) Program

Deadline: September 15

FHWA and FTA announced the 2015 *Transportation Planning Excellence Awards* (TPEA) Program nomination period will open soon to recognize plans, projects, or planning processes. The TPEA Program is sponsored by FHWA and FTA, in partnership with the American Planning Association. The TPEA Program recognizes outstanding initiatives of organizations and agencies across the country that used FHWA or FTA federal funds to develop, plan, and implement innovative transportation planning practices. Click [HERE](#) for details on submitting nominations.

PUBLIC COMMENT: FTA Invites Comment on a Bus and Bus Facilities Proposed Circular

Deadline: September 29

The proposed circular provides recipients of FTA financial assistance with instructions and guidance on program administration and the grant application process relative to the *Bus and Bus Facilities Program* (49 U.S.C. 5339), established by MAP-21. The Bus and Bus Facilities Program makes Federal funding available for the purpose of financing capital bus and bus-related projects, which will support the continuation and expansion of public transportation services in the U.S. Click [HERE](#) for the circular. Click [HERE](#) for the notice, published in the Federal Register on July 30.

PUBLICATION: A Guide to Regional Transportation Planning for Disasters, Emergencies, and Significant Events: The Transportation Research Board's *National Cooperative Highway Research Program Report 777: A Guide to Regional Transportation Planning for Disasters, Emergencies, and Significant Events* uses foundational planning principles, case studies, tips, and tools to explain implementation of

transportation planning for possible multijurisdictional disasters, emergencies, and other major events. In addition to the guide, there is a research report and PowerPoint presentation describing the project. Click [HERE](#) to access the publication.

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.

Click [HERE](#) to register today!

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