



## **Alliance Legislative Update** November 16, 2011

***Thanks to Everyone for Making our Annual Meeting a Great Event!***



Rep. Mike Beard  
and Senator Joe  
Gimse

Presentations from the Event  
are available on our web site:  
[www.transportationalliance.com](http://www.transportationalliance.com)



Alliance President  
Mike Forsman, St.  
Louis County



### ***Conference Committee Unveils “Minibus” Including Transportation for FY2012***

With the current continuing resolution set to expire November 18<sup>th</sup>, conferees agreed to an approximately \$182 billion measure announced late Monday that would fund day-to-day operations at the departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Justice, Transportation and Housing and Urban Development, as well as the space program through September, 2012. Although the federal fiscal year began October 1<sup>st</sup>, Congress has yet to pass any appropriations bill for FY2012.

It also contains stopgap spending legislation to keep the government running until Dec. 16 and buy lawmakers more time on other spending bills. Without the stopgap measure, the government would partially shut down this weekend. Lawmakers face a midnight Friday deadline to act on the measure. House and Senate leaders promised votes this week.

The compromise measure would provide \$39.14 billion for the core federal highway programs – a decrease of nearly \$2 billion from FY 2011’s \$41.1 billion. However, the FY 2012 bill would appropriate an additional

\$1.66 billion for federal-aid highways in “emergency relief” funds from the general treasury to rebuild roads and bridges impacted by flooding.

The Senate had proposed retaining highway investment at \$41.1 billion while the House transportation appropriations subcommittee had approved legislation cutting highway investment to \$27 billion. The bill’s highway investment level is consistent with the level of spending authority provided under the latest short-term authorization of the federal surface transportation program.

The public transportation program would see an increase of about \$400 million in the FY 2012 bill, nearly all of that coming in increased transit capital grants. The Airport Improvement Program – which supports capital projects at airports – would see a decrease of \$200 million, down from the \$3.5 FY 2011 funding level.

Also included in the transportation spending bill is \$500 million for the U.S. Department of Transportation’s TIGER (Transportation Infrastructure Generating Economic Recovery) Program, a decrease of \$27 million from FY 2011. For the second fiscal year in a row, no funding would be appropriated for the high speed rail program.

***Senate EPW Committee Passes 2-Year Transportation Authorization***

The Senate Environment and Public Works (EPW) Committee posted its 600-page, two-year reauthorization proposal entitled “Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century” or “MAP-21” on the committee’s Internet website late November 4. The measure, authored by Committee Chairman Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), Ranking Republican James Inhofe (R-Okla.), Transportation & Infrastructure Subcommittee Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.) and Subcommittee Ranking Republican David Vitter (R-La.), passed committee on November 9. The proposal would provide a total of \$85 billion for the federal highway and research programs for FY 2012 and 2013—the public transportation and safety titles are within the jurisdiction of other Senate Committees that have not yet scheduled action.

**MAP-21 Summary of Authorizations**

	FY 2012	FY 2013
Highway Programs	\$39,143,000,000	39,806,000,000
TIFIA	\$1,000,000,000	\$1,000,000,000
Fed lands and tribal programs	\$1,000,000,000	\$1,000,000,000
Territorial & Puerto Rico Highway Program	\$180,000,00	\$180,000,000
Administrative Expense	\$480,000,000	\$480,000,000
Projects of National Significance		\$1,000,000,000
Emergency Relief	\$100,000,000	\$100,000,000
Highway Authorizations	\$41,903,000,000	\$43,566,000,000
Research & Education	\$400,000,000	\$400,000,000
Total Authorizations	\$42,303,000,000	\$43,966,000,000

The measure calls for highway obligation limitations of \$41.5 billion in FY 2012 and \$42.2 billion in FY 2013. The obligation limitation is the amount of money the federal government is allowed to invest in a given year. There is \$739 million a year in MAP-21 authorizations that is considered mandatory spending and therefore not subject to obligation limitations (FY 2012: \$42.3 B - \$.739 M= \$41.5B). By comparison, the FY 2011 highway obligation limitation is \$41.1 billion. MAP-21 includes a mechanism that would reduce these investment levels if the Highway Trust Fund’s Highway Account balance fell below a threshold level to ensure the solvency of the account.

## Highway Policy Reforms

The measure would consolidate the 87 current programs that constitute the federal highway program down to 21 programs. There would be six main formula programs:

- National Highway Performance Program (NHPP). This program would be a consolidation of the current National Highway System (NHS), Interstate Maintenance, and Bridge Programs. The NHPP includes a heavy emphasis on performance standards for each state's NHS routes and bridges. States would have substantial flexibility to spend their NHPP funds, including on transit capital projects, bicycle lanes and ferry boats, but would face penalties if they did not meet targets for the conditions of NHS roads and bridges. NHPP funds can be used on new capacity, but such projects would be limited to 40 percent of a state's combined NHS apportionments for the last three fiscal years.
- Transportation Mobility Program. This program would be similar to the current Surface Transportation Program—a pot of funds that states and local governments could use for almost any activity related to surface transportation, including transit, transportation enhancements, carpool projects, and highway capacity. Funds would be distributed within a state based on population.
- Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Program. MAP-21 would retain the current CMAQ program, which funds activities to improve air quality. The bill would allow states to use CMAQ funds for diesel retrofit programs—a long standing goal of ARTBA.
- Highway Safety Improvement Program. The core infrastructure safety program would be retained and calls for the creation of safety performance measures to help guide state investments. The measure would eliminate the current set asides for high risk rural roads and rail-highway crossings, both of these activities are included in the section's performance goals.
- National Freight Network Program. The bill would create a new program focused on improving the flow of goods movement. The measure would direct the U.S. Secretary of Transportation to develop a National Freight Strategic Plan with freight performance goals, and would allow funds to be focused on the Interstate Highway System and other projects with a demonstrated freight benefit while that plan is being developed. States would be able to spend up to 10 percent of their freight program apportionments on freight rail and maritime activities.
- Metropolitan Planning. The bill would elevate the current metropolitan planning set-aside into a distinct formula program.

## Building a Competitive Minnesota

### Investments in Transportation Infrastructure and Our State's Future Economic Strength

#### Monday, November 28 About the Event

8 a.m. – 9:30 a.m. CST

Travelers South Building  
385 Washington Street  
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Other regions of the United States—and countries around the world including Germany, Singapore, and China—are investing heavily in transportation infrastructure to drive their economic development. This forum will explore what transportation system Minnesota's economy needs in order to compete and grow in the coming decades and provide our citizens with the quality of life they want.

#### Register

Leaders from the Minnesota Department of Transportation and Minnesota Transportation Alliance will present two newly released visions for the state's future transportation infrastructure. A panel of Minnesota business and public-sector leaders will respond to these ideas in a dialogue about which transportation investments they see as most critical to boost growth and create jobs for the long term. Speakers and panelists will engage the audience on questions including:

- What kind of transportation system does Minnesota need to attract and retain the best talent from around the country and the world?
- Do we need to rethink assumptions about the roles of state and federal government in paying for public transportation

infrastructure?

- What new or alternative funding options exist to pay for new investments? Can we develop the consensus necessary to fund these investments?
- What's the right balance between building new infrastructure and maintaining the system we have?

## Registration

There is no cost to attend, but registration is required. To register, please fill out the [online form](#). Space is limited, so early registration is recommended.

## Parking and Transit

The Travelers South Building entrance is located on Fifth Street in St. Paul, across the street from the Ordway. For additional information and directions, [download a map](#) (221 KB PDF) of the Travelers campus.

Travelers has approximately 40 visitor parking spaces available on a first-come, first-served basis. For offsite parking options, please visit the [St. Paul Smart Trips website](#). For transit information, please visit the [Metro Transit website](#) or call [612-373-3333](tel:612-373-3333).

## Sponsors

This event is presented by the [Office of Congresswoman Betty McCollum](#), [St. Paul Area Chamber of Commerce](#), University of Minnesota's [Center for Transportation Studies](#), [Minnesota Department of Transportation](#), and [Minnesota Transportation Alliance](#).