Both Chambers of Congress Release Surface Transportation Authorization Plans

Following years of little movement on the next surface transportation authorization, both the Senate and House of Representatives have released bill language. Currently operating on its eighth extension, SAFETEA-LU is due to expire again on March 31 and legislators have made clear that they aim to pass an authorization plan prior to that deadline, rather than passing another extension.

Spearheaded by Senate Environment and Public Works Committee’s Chairman Boxer (D-CA) and Ranking Member Inhofe (R-OK), the Senate EPW committee released a bill built on bipartisan support. The bill, Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21), was approved unanimously by the committee on November 9, 2011. The two-year bill maintains current funding levels that have been indexed for inflation, and is valued at about $109 billion over the two year span. Of the $109 billion necessary to pay for the bill, $12 billion has not yet been found. The Senate Committee on Finance is currently searching for an offset that would close that gap.

MAP-21 combines a great number of federal programs that appeared in SAFETEA-LU, reducing the count from about 90 programs to less than 30. The program consolidation, process streamlining and creative financing are reflective of the Committee’s awareness of current budget limitations.

Despite the large number of programs consolidated and eliminated in the bill, one new program was named as a core highway program: the National Freight Network Program. The program provides just over $2 billion for FY2012 and FY2013 each, with the money being distributed through formula funding for infrastructure improvements that strengthen our freight network, reduce congestion and increase productivity.
Senate, House Give Unprecedented Recognition to Freight in New Transportation Proposals

As an investment, the infrastructure required to move goods efficiently offers many returns – to individuals, businesses and to large sectors of our economy. Not only does investing in our goods movement infrastructure better ensure that beans for our morning caffeine fix will be waiting for us at our local coffee shop, but efficient modally integrated systems also reduce travel time, cost, and environmental impact of our imports and exports. You get a fresher and less expensive cup of coffee, the coffee shop hires more baristas and does more business and the state and local government collects more sales and income tax. On the flip side, increased transport efficiency allows more of our products to find customers and markets around the world at competitive cost.

In the short term, freight investment puts our planning engineers, construction workers and system operators to work. Over the long term, investment in our goods movement system is an investment in our national economy, our import and export portfolio, and our American people.

After years of championing this message, Congress has taken heed and reflected the need for a national freight policy in three pieces of legislation: the Senate Environment & Public Works Committee’s “Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century”, the Senate Commerce, Science & Transportation Committee’s “Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Enhancement Act of 2011” and the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee’s “The American Energy and Infrastructure Jobs Act”.

Proposals set forth late last fall by the Senate Environment & Public Works Committee and the Senate Commerce, Science & Transportation Committee put resources toward the development of freight policy and the planning and building of multimodal freight infrastructure. This week, House T&I Committee is introducing legislation that calls for a national freight policy, but looks to states to do the planning and building.

Each committee has taken a different approach to addressing our nation’s vast, complex and interconnected freight infrastructure needs and a comprehensive solution may lie in a combination of these approaches. But before the inevitable and necessary process of analyzing, comparing and contrasting each proposal on its merits, we should take a little time to appreciate the lawmakers and their staffs who have listened and heard our message that America cannot prosper without a vigorous commitment to the infrastructure that keeps it all moving.

In EPW’s Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP21) bill, we applaud Senators Boxer and Inhofe for their united support for a new core program of freight investment guided by national goals and coordinated policy administered by U.S. Department of Transportation, including continuing investment through Projects of National and Regional Significance.

Senators Lautenberg (D-NJ) and Cantwell (D-WA) deserve high praise too for placing the FREIGHT Act in the Senate Commerce, Science & Transportation Committee’s portion of the surface transportation authorization and we do hope that upon its true merits the FREIGHT Act will be passed into law. The FREIGHT Act addresses both policy and funding for our nation’s freight system in three portions: development of a national freight plan, establishment of an Office of Freight Planning and Development within the Office of the Secretary at US DOT, and the establishment of a multimodal, competitive, merit-based grant program to fund projects that will improve the efficiency of the national freight system. Each of these three prongs works in a unique way that is imperative to the improvement of the system as a whole. Without a national plan, we lack a vision of how to evaluate priorities and measure the public benefit of investments. Without a long-range systemic view, we have no insight as to where freight flows will occur and how to deal with changes in trade patterns, and of course, we miss the opportunities that lie in planning.

The establishment of an Office of Freight Planning and Development within the Office of the Secretary at US DOT would allow for coordination on multimodal projects that currently require a great deal of repetitive regulatory work at the state, local and federal levels. This office would increase efficiency and help eliminate redundancies. And, further, our nation desperately needs a freight-specific grant program to provide for large-scale projects that do not qualify for state formula funding and often cross state boundaries and other jurisdictional lines.

The drafters of our Constitution prescribed the Federal Government with the role of protecting interstate commerce; this Congress has taken their duties to heart, and we hope their hard work together results in a bill that sets the mark for freight.
SAFETEA-LU’s Projects of National and Regional Significance (PNRS) grant program was preserved in MAP-21. While not explicitly a freight program, freight-focused projects accounted for 73% of SAFETEA-LU’s PNRS funding. Although MAP-21’s PNRS program carries the same name, the program’s language is a hybrid of SAFETEA-LU’s PNRS program and the TIGER grant program.

The EPW Committee’s portion, however, is just one of four needed for a complete surface transportation authorization proposal in the Senate. MAP-21 will combine with portions provided by the Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation, the Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs and the Committee on Finance.

In December, the Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation approved their portion of the bill. Due to an issue of process, this legislation was not met with the same bipartisan support. Instead, following a heated markup, the bill was approved by a party-line vote of 13-11.

That issue of process was the inclusion of a freight title that the Republican Committee members wanted to markup at a later date. Offered during the markup as a substitute, the freight title was put forward by Committee member Senator Lautenberg (D-NJ) and contained a great deal of language from the FREIGHT Act. Included in the substitute were provisions for freight policy development and infrastructure investment grants; an amendment to the substitute offered by Senator Maria Cantwell (D-WA) would establish an Office of Freight Planning and Development at the U.S. Department of Transportation (also from the FREIGHT Act).

In the House, leadership has been working closely with House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman John Mica (R-FL) to find the necessary resources for a five-year bill, authorized at current funding levels. Their bill – The American Energy & Infrastructure Jobs Act – will link infrastructure improvements to increased production of domestic energy with an eye to keeping the Highway Trust Fund solvent.

Similar to the Senate EPW Committee’s MAP-21, the House bill also calls for a great deal of program consolidation, merging or eliminating almost 70 programs. The bill also places an emphasis on public-private partnerships and project streamlining, increases the amount of money dedicated to the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) loan program, and encourages states to utilize their State Infrastructure Banks.

The House bill calls for the development of a five year National Freight Policy, though different from the Senate proposed versions, the House bill will rely heavily on state input in the development of this policy.

The bill has a number of provisions that are dissimilar from the Senate versions, such as a national increase in legal truck sizes and weights. It is also missing programs present in the Senate bills, such as the reauthorization of Projects of National and Regional Significance, and all provisions from the FREIGHT Act.

Though their approaches are vastly different in many respects, one thing rings true in both chambers of Congress: a renewed vigor to pass a surface transportation authorization bill in the near-term future.
The Coalition for America’s Gateways and Trade Corridors is pleased to welcome the following NEW MEMBER: Kootenai MPO

Located in Coeur d’Alene, Idaho, the Kootenai Metropolitan Planning Organization (KMPO) is a federally designated planning organization for Kootenai County. KMPO ensures continuous, cooperative, and coordinated transportation planning for Kootenai County by coordinating with the public, cities, small towns, the county, highway districts, the state, transit providers, and the Coeur d’Alene Tribe.

Formed in 2003, the independent agency was created to meet a federal mandate that was triggered when Coeur d’Alene and its neighboring areas exceeded a combined population of 50,000. KMPO develops both long and short-range transportation plans and projects for Kootenai County that will create room for future improvements.

KMPO’s long-range Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) provides a blueprint for future transportation system improvements with a 20-year outlook. To help select transportation projects and make capital investment decisions, KMPO uses a regional transportation computer model to forecast travel patterns and traffic volumes into the future.

Among KMPO’s current projects are the Transit Center Location Study and the Bridging the Valley project, both promoting economic and transportation growth. The Transit Center Location study is being conducted to aid in the identification of an ideal location for a transit center facility to be used by public transportation providers and serve as the starting point for pedestrians and bicyclists using area trails in the Coeur d’Alene metropolitan area. The Bridging the Valley project aims to separate motor vehicle traffic from the 75 railroad crossings in the 42 mile passageway between Spokane, Washington and Athol, Idaho. This separation will contribute to traffic mobility, traffic safety, and train whistle noise reduction.

KMPO continues its research and project developments, creating a more consumer-friendly and environmentally balanced atmosphere for those of the Kootenai County region.

For more information, visit: www.kmpo.net

For a full list of CAGTC members, visit www.tradecorridors.org
Never before have the crucial linkages between the economy and freight been as important as now. And nowhere is this more evident than the six-county region served by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). In 2010, almost 1.2 billion tons of cargo, valued at nearly $2 trillion, moved across the transportation system of Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino, Riverside, Ventura, and Imperial Counties. This trade activity, both international and domestic, generates billions of dollars and millions of jobs in Southern California and throughout the nation. As the regional Metropolitan Transportation Organization (MPO), SCAG is responsible for providing a blueprint for long-term transportation investments in Southern California through its Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), including those designed to increase mobility for goods moving through Southern California.

Goods moving through the region utilize a vast multimodal network that includes the largest container port complex in the U.S., international border crossings with one of America’s largest trading partners (Mexico), extensive networks of roadways and rail, and one of the largest clusters of warehousing and distribution facilities in the country. With almost $270 billion in trade moving through the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach in 2010, nearly $10 billion through border crossings with Mexico, and approximately $65 billion in air cargo, international trade serves as a major economic driver. In addition, local and domestic freight-dependent industries contributed over $250 billion to the regional GDP in 2010. With the expected growth in international cargo (e.g., container volumes expected to triple to 42 million) and domestic freight (e.g., major freight-dependent industries projected to more than double in size) over the next 25 years, SCAG has partnered closely with local, state, and federal stakeholders from the public and private sectors through ongoing efforts such as FreightWorks (http://www.scag.ca.gov/goodsmove/video.htm) to pursue strategies to facilitate goods movement activities. However, these strategies must not only address challenges resulting from congestion and mobility, but also those related to air quality, environmental concerns, and community impacts.

Continued on page 6
SCAG’s 2012 RTP includes a plan for the goods movement system in Southern California with regional initiatives and projects totaling nearly $50 billion through 2035. Key regional initiatives include a comprehensive system of zero-emission freight corridors; alleviation of major truck bottlenecks; a regional rail package addressing mainline freight rail capacity needs and grade separations; as well as an environmental strategy to address truck and rail related emissions. The comprehensive system of zero-emission freight corridors would consist of truck-only lanes separated from general traffic, reaching from the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach to the eastern boundaries of the region.

Truck-only freight corridors are intended to provide capacity in congested corridors, improve truck operations and safety by separating trucks and autos, and provide a platform for the introduction and adoption of zero-emission technologies. The regional rail package includes main line capacity enhancements, on-dock and near-dock rail facility improvements, and grade separations to accommodate the anticipated growth in international and freight rail. Other critical projects include strategies to facilitate access to the San Pedro Bay Ports (e.g., improvements to the Gerald Desmond Bridge) and the Port of Hueneme, and to alleviate congestion at critical international border crossings. Further evaluation of these and other goods movement system components is currently underway with SCAG’s Comprehensive Regional Goods Movement Plan and Implementation Strategy.

Maintaining the flow of goods through Southern California by investing in critical transportation infrastructure is crucial to the economic health of the region and the nation. SCAG continues to work with partner agencies and diverse stakeholders to explore ways to support freight movement through the leading trade gateway in the United States. Through collaboration and coordination, SCAG develops plans and strategies to address freight issues and encourage support for projects of regional and national significance in Southern California. For more information on SCAG and its goods movement program including current studies and technical reports, please visit www.scag.ca.gov.
SAN PEDRO, Calif. — Jan. 17, 2012 — For the second consecutive year, the Port of Los Angeles experienced record-breaking exports as outbound container volumes surged 14.5 percent in 2011 compared to 2010. Imports also increased 2.3 percent compared to the previous year. Total annual volumes, including empty containers, rose 1.4 percent. Complete statistics are available here.

“We’re fortunate to have stronger year-over-year results in 2011 but we are not resting on our laurels as the nation’s premier trade gateway,” said Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa. “That’s why we are investing $1.5 billion in capital improvements over the next five years. We’re going to create more than 20,000 construction jobs and keep infrastructure at the Port of Los Angeles unparalleled as we face a new competitive landscape.”

“2011 was our second straight year of record exports and it’s an example of how our Port is prepared to handle a shift in global trade patterns,” said Port Executive Director Geraldine Knatz, Ph.D. “We continue to facilitate export opportunities through our nationally-recognized TradeConnect program while focusing our longer-term strategies on retaining and growing our position as the nation’s busiest container seaport.”

The Port handled a total of 7,940,511 Twenty-Foot Equivalent Units (20-foot containers or TEUs) in 2011 compared to 7,831,902 TEUs in 2010. Port exports rose 14.5 percent to 2,109,394 in 2011 compared to 1,841,273 in 2010. Total year-over-year imports increased 2.3 percent to 4,066,763 in 2011 versus 3,973,933 the prior year.

The Port ended 2011 on a strong note, with December volumes showing gains in all categories. Exports increased 9.2 percent (176,530 TEUs) compared to the previous December (161,625,000 TEUs). Imports jumped 6.4 percent (318,355 TEUs) compared to December 2010 (299,304 TEUs). Total December volumes, including empties, increased 6 percent to 649,468 TEUs compared to December 2010’s 612,651 TEUs.

As part of President Obama’s National Export Initiative Agenda, which calls for a doubling of U.S. exports over a five-year period, the Port continues to focus on assisting businesses throughout the region learn the basics of exporting, including costs, risks, finding overseas markets, trade financing and logistics. Export workshops occur throughout the year.

The Port of Los Angeles is America’s premier port and has a strong commitment to developing innovative strategic and sustainable operations that benefit the economy as well as the quality of life for the region and the nation it serves. As the leading seaport in North America in terms of shipping container volume and cargo value, the Port supports more than 830,000 regional jobs and $35 billion in annual wages and tax revenues. A proprietary department of the City of Los Angeles, the Port is self-supporting and does not receive taxpayer dollars.

The Port of Los Angeles – A cleaner port. A brighter future.
Source: www.PortOfLosAngeles.org
J. Christopher Lytle Named Executive Director of the Port of Long Beach

J. Christopher Lytle was named to the Port's top management position on November 14, 2011, by the Long Beach Board of Harbor Commissioners, the Port's five-member governing body.

A shipping industry veteran, Mr. Lytle served as Deputy Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer from 2008 to 2011, reporting to former Executive Director Richard D. Steinke. He joined the Port in September 2006 as one of four Managing Directors; he oversaw the Port's Trade Relations and Port Operations Bureau, which includes the Communications, Trade Development, Security and Maintenance Divisions.

Before joining the Port, Mr. Lytle served as Vice President of West Coast Operations for the French-based shipping line CMA CGM, which has significant marine and terminal operations at the ports of Long Beach, Oakland and Seattle. Mr. Lytle has also held executive positions at P&O Ports North America, Denmark-based APM (Maersk) Terminals, and Sea-Land Service, Inc.

Mr. Lytle has been affiliated with several associations serving the maritime industry, including the Pacific Maritime Association, where he served as Alternate Director, and the Pacific Merchant Shipping Association, where he was on the Board of Directors. He has also served as a Director for the Steamship Association of Southern California and the Propeller Club of Los Angeles and Long Beach. He now serves as a Director of the Marine Exchange of Southern California, as a member of the Executive Committee for the Center for International Trade and Transportation, and as a Director on the Long Beach Area Chamber of Commerce Board.

Mr. Lytle holds a master’s degree in business administration from the University of Puget Sound and a bachelor’s degree in business administration from Central Washington University. He served as an Infantry Officer in the U.S. Army and has traveled extensively in his various maritime industry positions to overseas destinations including Europe, Asia and the Middle East.

Mr. Lytle replaces Richard D. Steinke, who was the Port’s Executive Director for 14 years before announcing his retirement in April, 2011.

Source: Port of Long Beach

OKI Releases Regional Freight Plan

The OKI region is a major link in America’s freight transportation network. More than 323 million tons of freight flow into, out of and through the region annually. About one-third of this freight is inbound, destined for major businesses in the region such as General Electric, AK Steel, Toyota, and Schwan Food Company. For these and hundreds of other businesses, transportation is their lifeblood. Fortunately from an economic development standpoint, the OKI region provides a powerful nexus for truck, rail, barge, and air transportation.

More than 80 percent of the region’s freight moves by truck, so major highways and local roads are vital to regional commerce. Interstate 75, running north-south through the region, is one of the heaviest truck corridors in America. The region is also home to major railroad facilities including three intermodal terminals, three train classification yards and numerous industrial sidings. Together, the region’s three railroad companies handle almost 100 trains per day.

Barge terminals are critical to the region’s heavy industries. While just 10 percent of the region’s freight moves by barge, its low cost is essential to shipping bulk commodities such as chemical products for DuPont and scrap metal for AK Steel.

For time sensitive cargo, the Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport (CVG) offers service from major parcel carriers such as FedEx and also serves as the North American hub for DHL. The DHL hub at CVG employs more than 1,800 people and total freight has increased 190 percent since 2009. For many years, transportation planning has focused on moving people by automobile or public transit. Now, attention is turning to freight transportation and the importance of freight mobility to economic activity.

OKI, recognizing the link between freight mobility and economic development, launched this regional freight plan to understand industry trends, forecast freight demand, and identify projects which maintain freight mobility and spur business growth.

Source: OKI Regional Freight Plan http://www.oki.org/freight/finaldraft.html
Member News

Port of Vancouver USA Celebrates Centennial Year with New Website

VANCOUVER, Wash. — The Port of Vancouver USA launched its Centennial website in an effort to share its history with the local community in an informative and interactive environment.

Founded on April 6, 1912, the port has served as a global gateway for the past century – creating jobs and economic growth through leadership, stewardship, and partnership in marine and industrial development. The website, themed “A Century of Possibilities,” was created in addition to the port’s current website, highlighting the port’s first 100 years.

Because strong connection with the local community is a key element of the port’s early and continued success, the website’s primary focus is on user-friendly interactivity with the people who have supported the port since its origin.

As part of the year-long celebration, the site invites visitors to share their personal stories and photographs of the port by clicking the “Send us your port memory” icon. These documents may be displayed on the website’s front page, with the hope of generating widespread discussion.

Over the next 12 months, the Centennial website aims to immerse visitors in the port’s various milestones, and to think about tomorrow while honoring the past, present, and the future.

Community members can visit the site and add their voices to the discussion by going to www.portvanusa.com/centennial, or by going to www.portvanusa.com and clicking on the Centennial website icon on the front page. Comments can also be emailed to the port at info@portvanusa.com.

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Metro Job Growth Outshining Indiana and the Nation

(January 20, 2012) — The Evansville metropolitan area is helping fuel Indiana’s job growth for the past twelve months according to the latest data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. In fact, the Evansville metro added more actual employment over the same time one year earlier than larger metropolitan areas such as Atlanta, Georgia; Des Moines, Iowa; Wichita, Kansas; or Indianapolis, Indiana. The Evansville metro also had a larger percentage of job growth than those same metros along with beating out competitors such as Chattanooga, Tennessee and the Quad Cities area of Davenport, Iowa, Moline and Rock Island, Illinois in addition to larger regional metros of Columbus, Ohio; Lexington, Kentucky; and, Nashville, Tennessee.

“Over the past 12 months our metropolitan area grew by 3,900 jobs or 2.2 percent getting us very close to the 2007 pre-recession levels,” said Greg Wathen, president & CEO of the Coalition. “At this pace, we should exceed the prerecession levels of employment by mid-year, which is quite an accomplishment given the unstable economic climate.”

Though many metros lag very far behind their pre-recession employment levels, the Evansville metro is less than one percent from its pre-recession employment benchmark with a mere .08 percent difference. The recession was officially dated as beginning in December 2007 and ending in June 2009.

Formed in late 2006, the Economic Development Coalition of Southwest Indiana acts as the umbrella economic development organization for Gibson, Posey, Vanderburgh and Warrick Counties in Southwest Indiana and has attracted nearly $400 million in new investment and more than 2,875 new jobs. The Coalition facilitates and coordinates business retention, expansion and attraction activities; and, supports efforts to enhance the business climate through regional capacity building.

Another important aspect of the Coalition’s multi-faceted job description is helping the communities it serves build new capacity for future development. In four years, the Coalition has secured $58 million in grants for such things as expansion of water and sewer systems; building new community centers; and, making improvements to the region’s levee system, which protects thousands of acres.
Freight Projects Compete Well in TIGER III

*Investments in goods movement infrastructure accounts for 45% of grants*

On December 15, 2011 the US Department of Transportation announced the 46 projects that will receive funding from the third round of Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grants, dubbed TIGER III. Of those 46 projects, 18 were devoted to freight or had a strong freight component accounting for over $232 million of the total $511 distributed through the grant program.

Several projects offered by member organizations of the Coalition for America’s Gateways and Trade Corridors (CAGTC) will receive funding through the program, including:

- Washington State Department of Transportation for *I-5 Lewis-McChord Area Congestion Management*;
- Port of Long Beach for *Port of Long Beach Rail Realignment*;
- Riverside County Transportation Commission for *State Route 91 Corridor Improvements*;
- City of Chicago’s Chicago Transit Authority for *Chicago Blue Line Renewal & City Bike Share*; and
- Mississippi Department of Transportation for *Mississippi River Bridge ITS*.

“This is a terrific first step that the Department of Transportation has taken to aid Riverside County commuters and for all of Southern California; we are pleased that the Obama Administration recognizes that this project needs to get done,” said Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) Chairman Greg Pettis. “Riverside County can look forward to a huge economic boost and an easier commute.”

RCTC’s State Route 91 Corridor Improvements project will improve the movement of both goods and people through the expansion of express lanes, the addition of general-use lanes, and the rebuilding of seven interchanges. The bustling corridor is vital to residents of the Inland Empire, as well as goods movement between I-15, I-10, and the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach. A recently-conducted study indicates that the net economic and time savings benefit of the project will exceed $3.2 billion and create as many as 16,000 jobs during the five-year time span of construction.

Washington State Department of Transportation’s I-5 Lewis-McChord Area Congestion Management project will add capacity to relieve severe congestion on the 15.5-mile corridor which is vital to freight movement along the entire West Coast corridor of I-5. The project is estimated to save road users $138.8 million in vehicle operating costs, $232.8 million in travel time reliability, and $95 million in freight shipping operational costs. In addition, time saved by reducing congestion will increase productivity and add over 2,300 new jobs to the region.

“It’s vital that we do all we can to reduce congestion in this important I-5 corridor,” said Washington State Transportation Secretary Paula Hammond. “Some 15,000 freight trucks travel through this corridor every day, making it a critical economic lifeline for Washington state and the Pacific Northwest. We’ll use the federal grant money for transportation investments that will make the corridor work better for freight and travelers.”

The two rounds of TIGER grants awarded prior to TIGER III devoted a great deal of funding to freight as well. In February of 2010 the first round of TIGER, enacted as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), awarded money to a total of 51 projects, 22 of which (or 43 percent) contained a strong freight component. Those 22 projects received 49 percent of the available funds, totaling more than $730 million. In October of 2010, TIGER II projects with a strong freight component received $316 million, or 53% of the $600 million in available funding. The next round of TIGER grants, expectedly TIGER IV, was enacted as part of the 2012 Transportation Appropriations legislation and will distribute $500 million for worthy projects in the coming year.
FMCSA Releases Final Hours of Service Rule

On December 22 the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) released its long-awaited Hours-of-Service rule for commercial truck drivers. Major changes include reducing the maximum number of hours a commercial truck driver can work in a week by 12 hours, lowering the limit from 82 hours to 70 hours. Further, the rule mandates drivers take at least a 30 minute break at any point during an eight hour driving period if they intend to continue driving. The rule also imposes a “34-hour restart” provision which requires 34 consecutive hours off-duty before a driver can begin a new work week; these consecutive hours off-duty must include two periods between the hours of 1 a.m. and 5 a.m. A driver can use the “34-hour restart” provision once during a seven-day period.

Although FMCSA’s proposed rule reduced the daily number of driving hours from 11 to 10, the final rule retained the 11 hour limit.

U.S. Transportation Secretary LaHood Announces $77 Million in Transportation Research and Education Grants

Tuesday, January 17, 2012 - U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood announced that $77 million in grants was given to 22 University Transportation Centers (UTCs) to advance research and education programs that address critical transportation challenges facing our nation. The UTCs, which are located throughout the United States, conduct research that directly supports the priorities of the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), and the participating universities are a critical part of our national transportation strategy.

“Transportation matters in everyone’s daily life. These research centers will help us solve the transportation challenges we face today and those that we know lay ahead of us,” said Secretary LaHood.

DOT’s Research and Innovative Technology Administration (RITA), which administers the UTC program, used a competitive selection process to select ten University Transportation Centers (UTCs), two Transit-Focused UTCs, and ten Regional UTCs. The centers will advance U.S. transportation technology and expertise in research, education, and technology transfer. Each one of the selected UTCs will receive a $3.5 million grant which they must match with funds from non-federal sources. The 22 UTCs selected are all consortia, involving a total of 121 different universities.

“We are excited about the proposals these consortia put forward. They have the potential to advance basic and applied transportation research today and ensure a robust pipeline of professionals for the transportation workforce of tomorrow,” said RITA Acting Administrator Greg Winfree. “It is absolutely crucial that we continue to invest in research, which has the added benefit of attracting and developing the high level of professionals needed for innovation and expertise in transportation.”

UTCs work with regional, state and local transportation agencies to help find solutions to challenges that directly impact their communities and affect the efficiency of the nation’s transportation system. UTC projects are peer-reviewed and the results of their work are shared with the national transportation community to encourage greater progress through collaboration. The selected universities will research a wide range of transportation-related issues including shared rail corridors, innovations in multimodal freight and infrastructure, bridge inspection methods, and reducing roadway fatalities and injuries.

Source: www.rita.dot.gov
Industry News

Freight Railroads Expect to Spend a Record $13 Billion on Capital Expenditures, Hire More than 15,000 in 2012

Washington, D.C.—Jan. 30, 2012—The Association of American Railroads (AAR) today announced that the nation’s major freight railroads are projected to invest a record $13 billion in capital expenditures in 2012 to expand, upgrade, and enhance the nation’s freight rail network. The freight railroads also expect to hire more than 15,000 employees this year, replacing retiring workers and adding new positions nationwide.

“Unlike trucks, barges or airlines, America’s freight railroads operate on infrastructure they own, build and maintain themselves so taxpayers don’t have to. And this year they are investing at a record rate to meet the demands of the recovering economy,” said Edward R. Hamberger, AAR President and CEO. “These investments help businesses get their goods to market more efficiently and affordably, so they too can innovate, invest and hire. That’s how freight rail spurs the American economy and supports jobs all across the country.”

With hundreds of infrastructure projects underway nationwide, privately owned freight rail networks are maintained through continued investments that have reached record levels in the past three years. These investments include expenditures such as intermodal terminals that facilitate truck to train freight transport; new track, bridges and tunnels; modernized safety equipment; new locomotives and rail cars, and other components that ensure the U.S. freight rail network remains the best in the world.

In recent years, railroads have been spending roughly 17 percent of their annual revenue on capital expenditures, compared with the average U.S. manufacturer that spends roughly 3 percent of revenue on capital expenditures.

“As the demand to move more freight by rail increases and a significant percentage of the rail workforce hits retirement age, freight railroads are continuing to add and fill jobs nationwide,” said Hamberger. “These jobs are well paying, highly skilled careers that cannot be offshored.”

Rail employee compensation averages roughly $100,000 per year, with jobs ranging from engineers and dispatchers, to law enforcement, to information technology and industrial development. Freight railroads have roughly 175,000 employees nationwide, many of whom are veterans and reservists. In fact, one in five of recent new railroad hires are veterans.

Source: www.AAR.org

U.S. Rep. John Mica To Accept AAPA ‘Port Person Of Year’ Award At March 20 Event Luncheon

AAPA Centennial ‘Spring Conference’ Speakers Will Focus On Raising Priorities For Freight Infrastructure

U.S. Congressman John Mica (R-FL) will be honored on March 20 as the American Association of Port Authorities’ (AAPA) “Port Person of the Year” during the association’s 100th anniversary Spring Conference event, March 19-20, at The Renaissance Washington, DC Downtown Hotel.

Celebrating its first century as the Western Hemisphere’s leading trade association representing port authorities, AAPA selected Rep. Mica to receive its most prestigious annual award based on his leadership of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, six transportation subcommittees (several of which are crucial to America’s seaports), and his staunch support of maritime and port infrastructure policy and investment priorities.

Nominated last fall for “Port Person of the Year” by both the Port of Jacksonville and the Port of New Orleans, AAPA’s Executive Committee approved Rep. Mica’s nomination at its Jan. 18 meeting in Tampa.

In addition to receiving AAPA’s “Port Person” award, Rep. Mica will give a keynote address during lunch. As part of his remarks, he is expected to discuss what he and his congressional colleagues have been doing to pass comprehensive surface transportation reauthorization legislation, just announced as HR 7, The American Energy and Infrastructure Jobs Act, and expand employment opportunities to build the nation’s infrastructure.

“Chairman Mica understands that increased federal funding in land- and water-side transportation infrastructure is an essential and effective utilization of limited resources that will pay long-term dividends through increased trade, sustainable job creation and tax revenues,” said AAPA President and CEO Kurt Nagle. “We greatly appreciate leaders who understand and support our industry, and I’m very pleased AAPA is honoring Chairman Mica with the ‘Port Person of the Year’ award for our centennial year.”

Source: www.AAPA-Ports.org
Using Public-Private Partnerships To Carry Out Highway Projects

Congressional Budget Office

January 2012

The United States has a network of over 4 million miles of public roads. That system has faced increasing demands over time: The number of vehicle miles traveled (both passenger and commercial) rose from approximately 700 billion in 1960 to just under 3 trillion in 2009. In 2010, the federal government and state and local governments spent about $160 billion to build, operate, and maintain roads. (This study adopts the practice of the Federal Highway Administration in using the words “highway” and “road” synonymously.) Almost all of those infrastructure projects were undertaken using a traditional approach in which a state or local government assumes most of the responsibility for carrying out a project and bears most of its risks, such as the possibility of cost overruns, delays in the construction schedule, and, in the case of toll roads, shortfalls in the road’s revenues. Some observers assert that an alternative approach, using a public-private partnership, could increase the money available for highway projects and complete the work more quickly or at a lower cost than is possible through the traditional method. Specifically, such a partnership could secure financing for a project through private sources that might require more accountability and could assign greater responsibility to private firms for carrying out the work. For example, a private business might take on the responsibility for specific tasks, such as operations and maintenance, and their accompanying risks.

In this study, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) finds that private financing will increase the availability of funds for highway construction only in cases in which states or localities have chosen to restrict their spending by imposing legal constraints or budgetary limits on themselves. The reason is that revenues from the users of roads and from taxpayers are the ultimate source of money for highways, regardless of the financing mechanism chosen. The cost of financing a highway project privately is roughly equal to the cost of financing it publicly after factoring in the costs associated with the risk of losses from the project, which taxpayers ultimately bear, and the financial transfers made by the federal government to states and localities. Any remaining difference between the cost of public versus private financing for a project will stem from the effects of incentives and conditions established in the contracts that govern public-private partnerships.

CBO also finds, on the basis of evidence from a small number of studies that such partnerships have built highways slightly less expensively and slightly more quickly, compared with the traditional public-sector approach. The relative scarcity of data on public-private partnerships for highway projects, however, and the uncertainty surrounding the results from the available studies make it difficult to apply their conclusions definitively to other such projects.


Recent Examples of the Economic Benefits from Investing in Infrastructure

The White House

November 2011

Investments in transportation infrastructure have substantial economic benefits, in both the short and the long run. Evidence of these benefits is clearly visible in many of the infrastructure projects that have recently been completed throughout the country.

This report discusses the compelling economic rationale for making these investments now and lays out four types of infrastructure projects likely to yield large returns. The benefits of these investments are illustrated in this report through examples of recent projects that have already had a substantial positive impact. The report ends by discussing innovative methods of financing infrastructure, leveraging private funding and creating structures to direct infrastructure funds where they will be most effective.

The University of Memphis is currently taking applicants for The Freight Transportation Leadership Academy. The Academy is a four-part executive leadership program that places an emphasis on freight. Each weekend class will concentrate on a different mode of transportation. The educational flow of each session will focus on leadership skills, provide time for networking with participants, interact with several executives and modal experts, offer professional coaching time, and include tours of all the modes to see transportation in action. The conversations and hands-on experience will allow participants to gain a basic knowledge of how the industry works. By understanding the interaction between the modes, participants can become successful employees, individuals and experts in their respective fields.

Class Logistics
The class meets four times throughout the spring on the one weekend of each month. Each session runs from Thursday at 1 pm – Saturday at noon.

Specific class dates include:
§ RAIL: Thursday, March 8 – Saturday, March 10
§ RIVER: Thursday, April 12 – Saturday, April 14
§ RUNWAY: Thursday, May 10 – Saturday, May 12
§ ROAD: Thursday, June 7 - Saturday, June 9

Classes will meet in Memphis, TN at the Herff College of Engineering Executive Training Center on the University of Memphis campus.

To learn more, please visit http://www.memphis.edu/ifti/the_academy.php or contact Dan Pallme, Director of Transportation Leadership, by calling 901-678-2688 or emailing depallme@memphis.edu.

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Maritime Week Americas 2012 (May 21-25) will be held in Panama, one of the greatest maritime centres in the world and right at the heart of some of the most exciting changes impacting the global shipping, port and bunkering industries today. Featuring: MWA Bunkers (the largest annual bunker conference in the Americas); MWA Ports – Intermodal: Countdown to 2014 – An Assessment (a major conference on port logistics, investment and developments); MWA Shipping (a one-day conference on ship registries). IBIA one and two-day bunker training courses, several technical and commercial workshops, port-related seminars, a world-class exhibition, exclusive field trips to the Panama Canal and the canal expansion site, and a spectacular variety of networking activities. To learn more please visit our website: www.maritimeweekamericas.com or contact our Event Sales team: Email: events@petrospot.com Tel: +44 1295 814 455
CONGRESS: Road forward seen for transportation bill
*The Press Enterprise*
January 11, 2012

Cantwell wants to modernize freight transportation infrastructure
*Tri-cityherald*
January 10, 2012
http://www.tri-cityherald.com/2012/01/10/1781163/cantwell-wants-to-modernize-freight.html

Tiger III will boost freight transportation but not transform it
*Streets Blog*
December 21, 2011
http://dc.streetsblog.org/2011/12/21/freight-did-well-in-tiger-iii-but-should-it-do-even-better/

Will freight provisions survive in Senate Commerce Committee action?
*Transportation Issues Daily*
December 13, 2011

Rep. Smith reintroduces natural freight mobility infrastructure act
*Progressive Railroading*
December 12, 2011
ALAMEDA CORRIDOR-EAST CONSTRUCTION AUTHORITY, Foothill Transit, Metro Gold Line Foothill Extension Construction Authority, & San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership

cordially invite you and your guests to the

SAN GABRIEL VALLEY TRANSPORTATION RECEPTION

Tuesday, March 6, 2012
6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Rayburn House Office Building
Room 2103
Washington, D.C.

Please RSVP by March 2 to Ricky Choi
at rchoi@theaceproject.org or
(626) 962-9292 ext. 154

This event complies with the revised House and Senate rules.
Upcoming Events

February 7-8, 2012: Fourth Annual Georgia Logistics Summit, Atlanta, GA


April 10-12, 2012: Critical Commodities Conference, Hilton Riverside, New Orleans

May 21-25, 2012: Maritime Week America’s, Hotel Riu Plaza Panama, Panama Canal

CAGTC is getting social!

The Coalition for America’s Gateways and Trade Corridors is now on Facebook and Twitter.

“Like” us to join our Facebook page &

Follow us on Twitter: http://twitter.com/CAGTC

On Facebook or Twitter? Let us know!
**Why Join CAGTC?**

**Shape Policy**
CAGTC Members have the opportunity to help shape policy and legislation with an organization that is known for getting results on the Hill. Membership gives you a seat at the table as our positions are vetted, debated, finalized and carried to the halls of Congress, where we then pull out the votes. All members are invited and encouraged to participate in our various policy and planning committees, which meet by phone, email and, occasionally, in person.

**Up To Date Information**
CAGTC strives to keep our members well informed and keyed in on important national freight developments. Because our work focuses solely on goods movement issues, we are able to disseminate concise, lightening-quick updates. Our members often tell us that CAGTC delivers information quicker than any of their other DC connections!

**Access**
CAGTC holds one annual, in-person meeting every spring, with impressive member turn out. In addition to our annual meeting, we hold smaller member events on a regular basis, such as our Congressional Goods Movement Briefing each spring and our Trade Corridor Summit in 2007. We also meet regularly with Congressional Members and staff and with the Administration. All of these meetings are free and open to members. Given that this is authorization time, we expect our calendar for Hill visits to book up quickly - in the run up to SAFETEA-LU, CAGTC held over 500 meetings with policy makers!

**Member Promotion**
In all our endeavors, the Coalition highlights its member organizations as examples of good projects and *how* the process should work. We do this in our regular meetings on the Hill, at conferences and during presentations and in our newsletter, which goes out every other month. Members have a spotlight for recent achievements, a sounding board of experts for advice, as well as an opportunity to network with likeminded organizations.

To learn more contact:

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For more information about The Coalition for America’s Gateways and Trade Corridors or for newsletter submissions, please visit our website at www.tradecorridors.org or contact us at 202.828.9100 or enessle@blakey-agnew.com.