



NSSGA

# Washington Watch

Special Edition

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## Special Legislative Update

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### SENATE EPW COMMITTEE PASSES TWO-YEAR TRANSPORTATION AUTHORIZATION BILL BY A VOTE OF 18-0

The surface transportation reauthorization debate accelerated with the passage on Nov. 9 by the Senate Environment & Public Works Committee of the bipartisan, two-year bill, *Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* (MAP-21). The bill was passed out of committee unanimously by a vote of 18-0.

NSSGA commends the committee chairman, Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), senior committee Republican James Inhofe (R-Okla.), Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.) and subcommittee ranking member David Vitter (R-La.) for their leadership and commitment to addressing this national priority. Their efforts, joined by the majority of their Republican and Democratic colleagues, show that bipartisanship is possible to achieve what is right for the American people.

Although NSSGA has worked for a six-year bill, bringing two-years of certainty and stability to the program at level funding is essential to economic recovery and growth, creating jobs, and maintaining America's global competitiveness.

NSSGA will continue to work hand-in-hand with the Committee and its transportation industry partners for passage of multi-year surface transportation reauthorization before the end of the current extension on March 31, 2012. We will keep you informed of developments.

#### Highlighted Key Elements of Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (MAP-21)

##### Keeps Highway Program at Current Levels

- Reauthorizes the Federal-aid highway program at the Congressional Budget Office's baseline level—equal to current funding levels plus inflation—for two fiscal years.
- Repeals all existing funding formulas and does not add any new formulas. In lieu of the formulas, each state will be apportioned a percentage of the total formula funding equal to the state's share of apportionments and allocations in the FY 2005-2009 SAFETEA-LU period, as adjusted to ensure that each state gets no less than 95.0 percent rate of return on Highway Account tax payments. For the first time in 95 years there will be no more underlying formulas.

##### Consolidates Highway Programs

- Consolidates the number of Federal programs by two-thirds, from about 90 programs down to less than 30, to focus resources on key national goals and

reduce duplicative programs.

### **Acceleration of Project Delivery Time**

- MAP-21 includes program reforms designed to reduce project delivery time and costs while protecting the environment. Examples of improvements include:
  - Expanding the use of innovative contracting methods;
  - Creating dispute resolution procedures;
  - Allowing for early right-of-way acquisitions;
  - Reducing bureaucratic hurdles for projects with no significant environmental impact;
  - Encouraging early coordination between relevant agencies to avoid delays later in the review process; and
  - Accelerating project delivery decisions within specified deadlines.

### **Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Program (TIFIA)**

- The TIFIA program provides direct loans, loan guarantees, and lines of credit to surface transportation projects at favorable terms. TIFIA will leverage private and other non-federal investment in transportation improvements.

Through a MAP-21 created program called "America Fast Forward", provisions build upon the success of the TIFIA program. MAP-21 modifies the TIFIA program by:

1. Increasing funding for the program to \$1 billion per year,
2. Increasing the maximum share of project costs from 33 percent to 49 percent,
3. Allowing TIFIA to be used to support a related set of projects, and
4. Setting aside funding for projects in rural areas at more favorable terms.

### **Research and Education**

- MAP-21 funds research and development, technology deployment, training and education, intelligent transportation system (ITS), and university transportation center activities to further innovation in transportation research.

The primary research areas include:

1. Improving highway safety and infrastructure integrity;
2. Strengthening transportation planning and environmental decision-making;
3. Reducing congestion, improving highway operations; and
4. Enhancing freight productivity.

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