

- Today, the Senate Commerce Committee voted by voice vote to approve the nomination of Elaine Chao to be US DOT Secretary. A vote by the full Senate may not occur until Monday.
- Senate Democrats unveiled their own 10-year \$1T infrastructure plan earlier today – “A Blueprint to Rebuild America’s Infrastructure”. Here is a [link](#) to a summary of the plan. It would be paid for with federal funds by closing tax loopholes. The plan will be very difficult to get approved by the Republican-majority Congress. It includes:
  - \$100B for roads and bridges
  - \$130B for transit and bus systems
  - \$50B for rail (including Amtrak and HSR)
  - \$30B for airports
  - \$10B for ports and waterways
  - \$10B for TIGER
  - \$200B for a “Vital Infrastructure Program” for priority projects
  - \$110B for water and sewer systems
  - \$100B for energy infrastructure
  - \$10B for new innovative financing tools, such as TIFIA, RIFF, WIFIA and an infrastructure bank
  - \$100B for “Main Streets” in local communities
  - \$75B for schools
  - \$10B for VA hospitals and other VA facilities
  - \$20B for expanded broadband
  - \$20B for infrastructure on tribal and public lands
- A new Congressional Budget Office (CBO) report predicts that in 10 years federal gas tax receipts will be 15% below the FY’17 estimated receipts and diesel tax receipts will be down by 2%. On the other hand, trucks taxes will be up by 33%, although they make up only a small percent of the revenues in the Highway Trust Fund. It also says that an additional \$120B in revenues will be needed to pay for the next six-year surface transportation authorization bill.
- President Trump has signed an Executive Order “Expediting Environmental Reviews and Approvals for High Priority Infrastructure Projects”. Here is a [link](#) to the EO. The Order directs the White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) to determine whether an infrastructure project qualifies as “high priority”. The CEQ shall “coordinate with the relevant agency to establish, in a manner consistent with law, expedited procedures and deadlines for completion of environmental reviews and approvals”.
- President Trump also signed a Presidential Memorandum authorizing the construction of Keystone XL and Dakota Access pipelines. Here is a [link](#) to the Keystone memo and a [link](#) to the Dakota Access memo. He also signed a memo directing the Secretary of Commerce to develop a plan under which all new and retrofitted pipelines in the US use materials and equipment produced in the US.