

WSP Washington Update - January 29, 2020 - Interim Update - House Democrats Release Infrastructure Framework

This morning, the Democratic leadership in the US House released the outline of a broad infrastructure package called, "Moving Forward Framework". The outline calls for approximately \$760B over five years (FY'21-FY'25) for a variety of infrastructure programs including highways, transit, rail, airports, ports, harbors, inland waterways, wastewater, drinking water, broadband deployment, brownfields, and clean energy investments. The largest funding category is \$489B for reauthorization of the FAST Act surface transportation legislation (highways, transit and rail) which expires on September 30, 2020. The proposal includes provisions to tackle climate change through the development of various green infrastructure. However, the plan is largely silent on specific revenue measures that would pay for these investments, other than to mention potential "user based mechanisms" and expansion of federal financing mechanisms such as Build America Bonds, tax credit bonds, tax credits, and Private Activity Bonds (PABs).

The full framework can be found [here](#), the press release [here](#), and a fact sheet [here](#).

The proposed funding levels include (over five years):

- \$329B for highways (including \$10B for safety programs), a 21% increase over current funding, with a focus on maintaining existing roads, resiliency, performance measures, funding for projects of national and regional significance, and a national pilot program to test the viability of a Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) fee
- \$105B for transit
- \$55B for rail, including Amtrak and intercity/commuter passenger rail
- \$30B for airports, including raising the cap on the Passenger Facility Charge (PFC)
- \$50B for clean water, including \$40B through the Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund
- \$25B for drinking water
- \$20B for harbors and ports, focusing on drawing down the balance in the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund
- \$10B for Corps of Engineers water resources development projects including flood control, navigation, and environmental restoration
- \$34B for clean energy, including grid modernization, energy efficiency, and renewable energy investments
- \$86B for broadband deployment

Some of the bills needed to implement the proposals have already been introduced as stand-alone bills. The centerpiece, a FAST Act reauthorization bill, is expected to be introduced by House T&I Committee Chairman Peter DeFazio (D-OR) later this spring.

Republicans did not participate in today's announcement despite infrastructure legislation traditionally being a bi-partisan effort. However, House T&I Committee Ranking Member Sam Graves (R-MO) and Highways and Transit Subcommittee Ranking Member Rodney Davis (R-IL) issued a press release which can be found [here](#). The Republicans identified several key principles such as addressing the long-term sustainability of the Highway Trust Fund, incorporating innovative developments in technology, streamlining the project delivery process, addressing the needs of rural communities, prioritizing core programs and functions of existing programs, and ensuring state flexibility. The Republican principles do not directly address climate change, nor do they include recommendations on new revenue.