

## WSP | Parsons Brinckerhoff Washington Update - March 9, 2016 - Interim Update

US DOT has issued guidance to state DOTs on the “repurposing” of approximately \$2B in unused highway earmarks as directed by the FY’16 omnibus appropriations bill.

The bill, which Congress passed in mid-December, included a provision in the US DOT section reallocating highway project earmarks that are over ten years old and for which no more than ten percent of the original earmark for a specific project has been obligated. Historically, funding for highway earmarks remained available “until expended.” Congress ended the practice of earmarking funds for specific projects a number of years ago.

Approximately 1,300 projects are affected, primarily TEA-21 and SAFETEA-LU project authorizations. The states with the largest amount of unexpended earmarks are New York, Georgia, and California. Almost all states have some amount of eligible unexpended earmarks with the smallest being Colorado.

Here is a [link](#) to the US DOT Press Release

Here is a [link](#) to the US DOT guidance – see bottom of page for a list of project earmarks eligible for repurposing listed by state

Key points:

- The bill authorizes but does not mandate the release of earmarked funds. Although the FHWA has identified the eligible projects, each state will decide whether to release funds from eligible earmarks
- States will have until the end of FY’16 (September 30, 2016) to redirect the funds
- Redirected funds must be used within 50 miles of the original project
- Redirected funds must be obligated within three fiscal years after the current fiscal year. Any released funds not obligated by the end of FY’19 will lapse
- Released funds can be used for any highway or surface transportation improvements permitted by the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program.

Additional information and materials, including archived Washington Updates, are located on the new WSP | Parsons Brinckerhoff *Federal Briefing* website at [www.federalbriefing.com](http://www.federalbriefing.com) . This is a new URL and title for the website previously named *PB Transportation Update*. The old website URL will automatically redirect to the new website, but please bookmark this new address for future reference.