

WSP Washington Update - May 18, 2018 - Interim Report - House FY'19 US DOT Appropriations

Earlier this week, the House THUD Appropriations Subcommittee released and approved the FY'19 US DOT funding bill. The full House Appropriations Committee will vote on the bill next Wednesday, May 23 and the Senate Appropriations Committee is expected to act on its version of the bill sometime the week of June 4. FY'19 is the second year of the two-year budget deal, that Congress agreed to in February which raised the budget caps on both defense and domestic spending and designated at least \$10B per year in additional general funds for infrastructure programs. The FY'18 DOT appropriations bill, which was signed into law on March 23, significantly increased funding for many DOT programs, particularly TIGER (now BUILD), Amtrak, and transit and rail discretionary grants.

The House FY'19 bill recommends that the highway and transit formula programs receive the same amount that was authorized in the FAST Act for those programs in FY'19, plus additional funding from the General Fund (\$4.25B for highways and \$800M for transit). Other programs, such as transit Capital Improvement Grants (CIG) (New Starts/Small Starts/Core Capacity), are recommended to receive the same increased funding level as in FY'18. The TIGER (now BUILD) program is recommended to receive \$750M, which is only half of the FY'18 level of \$1.5B, but is significantly higher than in prior-year House bills, which often zeroed out TIGER, and higher than the pre-FY'18 levels of approximately \$500M per year. It is likely that the Senate version of the appropriations bill will provide additional funding for TIGER.

Here is a [link](#) to the House bill text and a [link](#) to information about the bill from the House Appropriations Committee.

Program	FY'17 Enacted	FY'18 Enacted	House Subcommittee FY'19 Bill
Highway Program	\$43.26B	\$47.5BB	\$50.3B
TIGER (BUILD) Grants	\$500M	\$1.5B	\$750M
FTA CIG Grants – New Starts/Small Starts/Core Capacity	\$2.41B	\$2.65B	\$2.61B
FTA Formula Grants	\$9.73B	\$10.5B	\$10.7B
FTA WMATA	\$150M	\$150M	\$150M
FAA Airport Improvement Program (AIP)	\$3.35B	\$4.35B	\$3.85B
Amtrak NEC	\$328M	\$650M	\$650M
Amtrak National Network	\$1.16B	\$1.29B	\$1.29B
FRA CRISI Grants	\$68M	\$593M	\$300M
FRA SOGR Grants	\$25M	\$250M	\$500M
FRA Restoration Grants	\$5M	\$20M	\$0

Other program details:

FTA – of the total of \$2.61B for CIG grants, \$835M is designated for New Start projects with signed FFGAs, \$200M is for Core Capacity projects with signed FFGAs, \$500M is for pending New Start projects, \$502M is for Small Starts, and \$550M is for new Core Capacity projects. The bill states that 85% of the CIG funding must be obligated by December 31, 2020 in an effort to force FTA to expedite the approval of pending FFGAs and to get money out the door faster. New FFGA projects must have at least a 50% non-federal match.

FRA – the House bill provides \$150M for the Mag Lev program (which is likely for the DC to Baltimore project). There is no money recommended for the RRIF loan subsidy unlike in the FY'18 bill which included \$25M. The Senate may opt to include RRIF subsidy funding in its bill. Of the \$300M for the FRA CRISI program, \$150M is designated for Positive Train Control (PTC) implementation. As in previous years, the House bill includes language opposing additional federal funding for the California High-Speed Rail project. In past years, the final DOT appropriations bill has always dropped the CAHSR language.

TIGER/BUILD – of the \$750M recommended, \$250M is designated for rural projects (under 200,000 in population), \$250M for urban projects, and \$250M for seaport facilities and related intermodal connectors. In FY'17, US DOT awarded 64% of the TIGER/BUILD grants to rural projects. The bill does not provide funding/eligibility for planning projects. The bill states that US DOT must issue a new NOFO for the FY'19 funds.