

Parsons Brinckerhoff Washington Update - July 30, 2014 - Interim Update

Last night, the Senate passed an amended version of the House Highway Trust Fund (HTF) bailout and MAP-21 extension bill, HR 5021, by a vote of 79 to 18. Two of the four amendments that were permitted to be offered passed. The Wyden/Hatch amendment substituting the Senate Finance Committee "payfors" passed by a vote of 71 to 26. The Senate then voted 66 to 31 to pass the Boxer/Carper/Corker amendment to reduce the length of the authorization extension from May 31, 2015 to December 19, 2014 and to reduce the amount of short-term funding from \$10.8B to \$8B in an effort to keep the pressure on Congress to act expeditiously on a longer-term solution. Both amendments required 60 votes to pass and both amendments got significant Republican and Democrat support. A Lee amendment to devolve the federal highway program to the states failed by a vote of 28 to 69.

The amended bill now goes back to the House for consideration. The House is likely to vote to strip out the Senate amendments and return the bill to the Senate. It is anticipated that the House will vote on the bill tomorrow, shortly before they adjourn for the five-week summer recess Thursday afternoon. This will give the Senate little choice other than to agree to the House-passed bill or risk the HTF becoming insolvent and US DOT significantly slowing down highway reimbursements to the states as early as August 1.

In the end, it is likely the strong vote on the Boxer/Carper/Corker amendment won't affect the substance of the final bill, but it does show the influence of the transportation industry stakeholder groups which strongly advocated for the amendment and the strong bi-partisan support in the Senate for moving ahead on a longer-term solution to the HTF.

Here is a [link](#) to the roll call vote on final passage and a [link](#) to the roll call vote on the Boxer/Carper/Corker amendment.