

Parsons Brinckerhoff Washington Update - September 19, 2014 - Interim Update

FY'15 Continuing Resolution

Both the House and Senate adjourned last night after passing the short-term FY'15 Continuing Resolution (CR). The CR provides funding for all federal agencies and programs through December 11, 2014 at current FY'14 funding levels. The CR package includes an extension of authorization for the Export-Import Bank through June 30, 2015, but otherwise is free of extraneous policy riders or provisions. The House passed the CR 319 to 108 and the Senate passed it 78 to 22. The President is expected to sign it shortly.

The Senate will return to session after the November 4 elections on November 12. The House has not yet announced its schedule for the post-election lame duck session. In the lame duck, Congress will need to pass another extension of the CR or possibly reach agreement on some or all of the twelve FY'15 federal agency funding bills and pass them as part of an omnibus package. Congress is also expected to act on a package of tax extenders which could possibly be a vehicle for a gas tax increase. The extent of the lame duck agenda and the willingness of Congress to consider a gas tax increase will depend on the outcome of several key Senate races in determining whether Republicans take control of the Senate.

House T&I Committee P3 Report

On Wednesday, the House T&I Committee Special P3 Panel released its final report. Here is [link](#) to the report. The report addresses the role of public-private partnerships across all transportation modes as well as water, public buildings and ports. The report recommendations are quite general, but are supportive of P3s. The report was signed by all eleven members of the bi-partisan panel which was chaired by Rep. Jimmy Duncan (R-TN) and co-chaired by Rep. Mike Capuano (D-MA). The panel's recommendations will ultimately be incorporated in some manner when the Committee starts to draft a long-term MAP-21 reauthorization bill next year.

The three primary recommendations of the report are: improve public sector capacity, break down barriers to consideration of P3s, and ensure transparency and accountability. At the press conference, Members were clear to say that P3s are only one tool in the toolbox and that adequate federal funding is still crucial, including TIFA financing and PABs. Rep. Barletta (R-PA) again raised the issue of the need to change OMB scoring rules related to GSA capital projects in order to attract private financing.

Greg Kelly, Parsons Brinckerhoff's COO, testified at the first of the Panel's two hearings and seven roundtables.