

## PB Washington Update - February 3, 2012 - Interim Update

Around 3:00 AM this morning the House T&I Committee passed HR 7, the 5-year surface transportation authorization bill by a vote of 29 to 24. It was a party-line vote except for Rep. Tom Petri (R-WS), a very senior member of the Committee, who voted with the Democrats to oppose the bill.

This morning in a very short markup, the House Way & Means Committee approved the revenue title of the bill by a vote of 20 to 17. During the markup significant opposition was raised to the provision moving the revenues in the Mass Transit Account into the Highway Account and then funding a replacement Alternative Transportation Account (ATA) exclusively with General Revenues. An offset to cover the proposed \$40B General Fund transfer has not yet been identified. The groups who are on record opposing this proposal include APTA, AASHTO, ARTBA, US Conference of Mayors, US Chamber of Commerce, ASCE, T4America and others. It was also noted during the markup that no one has any idea how much revenue will be generated by the three energy provisions agreed to yesterday by the House Natural Resources Committee which are proposed to be deposited into the Highway Trust Fund.

Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) offered an amendment to strike the transfer of gas tax user fees from the Mass Transit Account and despite a vigorous debate on the issue with many members arguing in support of his amendment, it failed 22 to 15 on a straight party-line vote.

Now that the various titles of the multi-year transportation bill have been completed, the next step is consideration by the Rules Committee and floor debate which is scheduled for the week of February 14. It is expected that the Rule will permit a large number of amendments.

Still no word on when the Senate Finance Committee may markup the Senate revenue title and finally identify the \$12B+ in needed offsets.

The final FAA conference report was passed by the full House today by a vote of 248 to 169. It is expected that the Senate will take up the FAA bill for a floor vote on Monday.