

PB Washington Update - June 19, 2012 - Interim Update

Last week was another week full of rhetoric, rumors, and name calling, but little progress on a surface transportation authorization bill. While House and Senate staff continue to make offers and counteroffers on several policy provisions such as Transportation Enhancements, transit, project delivery, and environmental streamlining, the principals keep holding rallies or issuing press releases blaming each other.

At this point, completing a comprehensive bill by June 30th is almost logistically impossible. So, the real question is how long of an extension will Congress agree to - a few weeks in order to wrap up conference deliberations on a multi-year bill or longer, possibly as long as six months, as House Speaker John Boehner has suggested.

Senators Boxer (D-CA), Inhofe (R-OK) and Reid (D-NV) appear to be sticking together in support of passing a multi-year bill – particularly since what may pass will likely look very much like the original Senate-passed bill, and therefore will probably support the shortest extension possible. In the House, Speaker Boehner mentioned a six-month extension, but after taking heat from the industry, he backed off and said a six-month extension is only one option.

The industry groups remain optimistic, at least publically, and continue their DC and grassroots efforts to push for a long-term bill. The Transportation Constructors Coalition (TCC) is running radio ads in some key Republican conferees' districts urging them to pass a bill immediately.

Both the House and Senate are back in session this week and next week before the week-long July 4th recess. Congressional leaders will need to decide on the length and details of the 10th short-term extension in the next few days. At this point we expect the bill to be a "clean" extension of current law, meaning it will not include any extraneous policy provisions.

FY'13 DOT Appropriations – This afternoon, the full House Appropriations Committee approved the FY'13 DOT Appropriations bill. No date is scheduled yet for House floor action or for Senate floor action. Neither bill includes any project earmarks.

Program	FY'12 Enacted Level	House FY'13 Comte Passed	Senate FY'13 Comte Passed
FHWA Ob Limit	\$39.14B	\$39.14B	\$39.14B
Transit – New Starts/SS	\$1.95B	\$1.82B	\$2.04B
Transit- Formula & Bus	\$8.36B	\$8.36B	\$8.36B
Amtrak – Capital and Debt Service	\$952M	\$1.45B includes \$500M for tunnels & bridges	\$1.05B
Amtrak – Operating	\$466M	\$350M	\$400M
High Speed Rail	\$0	\$100M	\$0
Airport Improvement Program	\$3.35B	\$3.35B	\$3.35B
TIGER Grants	\$500M	\$0	\$500M
National Infrastructure Bank	\$0	\$0	\$0