

PB Washington Update - June 21, 2012 - Interim Update

Finally some good news on surface transportation reauthorization. It appears that a potential agreement may have been reached on the highway title of the bill. EPW Chair Senator Barbara Boxer met most of the day and evening yesterday with House T&I Committee Chair John Mica and their senior staffs to negotiate the provisions of a final bill. It appears they made good progress on the highway-related provisions. Mica is meeting this morning with the House Republican conferees to discuss the progress made yesterday. Later today Mica is scheduled to meet with House Speaker John Boehner and Majority Whip Eric Cantor.

There is no word yet on the safety, transit, rail and other transportation provisions or on the non-transportation provisions such as Keystone Pipeline and coal ash, or on a final agreement on how to pay for it all. Therefore, it still appears unlikely a bill can logistically be completed and voted on by next Friday in advance of the June 30 expiration of the short-term extension. As a result, a very short term extension will likely have to be approved, perhaps through July 15 or possibly the end of July.

In US DOT personnel news, yesterday the White House nominated Polly Trottenberg to be Undersecretary for Policy at US DOT. This is the position that Roy Kienitz previously held before he became a strategic advisor to PB. Polly is currently the Assistant Secretary for Policy. She has held a number of prominent transportation positions including handling transportation issues for Senators Moynihan, Schumer and Boxer. The position is subject to Senate confirmation.

Later today, the Senate will hold a confirmation hearing for Michael Huerta to be FAA Administrator. Unlike other US DOT modal administrators, the FAA position is a fixed, five-year term. Huerta is currently the acting FAA Administrator and had been the Deputy Administrator.

The FY'12 discretionary TIGER grants are expected to be formally announced any day now by US DOT.

The House Rules Committee will meet today to act on the House FY'13 DOT appropriations bill. The bill is expected to go to the House floor sometime next week. Here is a [link](#) to the Statement of Administration Policy (SAP) on the House bill, which OMB released this morning. It states that the Administration opposes the THUD bill and staff would recommend a veto. The Administration primarily objects to a number of the HUD provisions in the bill, but is also opposed to the lack of funding for the TIGER and High-Speed Rail programs.