



## FEBRUARY 16, 2010 – INTERIM REPORT

Congress is currently on recess until next Monday, February 22.

Jobs Bill – The PB Interim Update of February 11 reported that a “jobs” bill had been introduced in the Senate by the bi-partisan leadership of the Senate Finance Committee, the so-called “HIRE” bill. However, late last week, after initially indicating his support for the Finance Committee bill, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) decided that he does not support the Baucus/Grassley bill, a bill which appeared to have significant Republican support.

Instead, Reid plans to introduce his own version of the “HIRE” jobs bill – one that was developed without any Republican input. His bill will only include four significant provisions – a payroll tax break, an extension of higher expensing limits for small businesses, an expansion of the Build America Bonds and, fortunately for the transportation industry, a December 31 extension of SAFETEA-LU (along with a \$20B transfer from the General Fund) as well as the restoration of the FY’09 \$8.7B SAFETEA-LU rescission. Reid’s bill does not include various tax breaks, an extension of unemployment benefits and COBRA nor other provisions in the larger \$84B Finance Committee package.

So while the good news is that the Reid jobs bill includes the key transportation provisions from the Baucus/Grassley bill, the bad news is that the potential lack of bi-partisan support will make it very difficult to get the 60 votes needed to pass the Senate. This means Congress may have to find another legislative vehicle to extend the SAFETEA-LU authorization since the current extension expires next week on February 28.

TIGER Grants – US DOT is expected to make an announcement about the \$1.5B in ARRA TIGER grants today or tomorrow, unless the four day federal government shut-down last week has slowed the process. The statutory deadline for the announcement is February 17. A PB Update will be sent out as soon as the announcement is made.

FY’11 Appropriations – House Appropriations Committee Chairman David Obey (D-WI) has set March 19 as the deadline for receiving requests for project earmarks for FY’11. Many subcommittees and individual members set earlier deadlines for requests to be submitted to them. New this year, House members must prioritize their top ten requests across all federal agency programs. Most subcommittees have not yet released the questionnaires they require be filled out for each project request.

FTA FY’10 Partial-Year Apportionments – In today’s Federal Register (2/16) FTA has published a partial-year notice of the FY’10 annual apportionments, allocations and program information. The notice is available [here](#). The tables near the end of the document show the FTA formula funds that are being apportioned. Several tables appear to be missing (particularly for the discretionary grant programs). We anticipate these will be published in the near future. Although the FY’10 appropriations bill has been enacted into law, SAFETEA-LU has only been extended until the end of February, which is 5/12ths of the way through FY’10. As a result, recipients of federal transit funds can generally only access 5/12ths of their FY’10 federal transit funds at this time. FTA will release the remainder of FY’10 funds at a later date.



## PB Washington Update

PREPARED BY CATHY CONNOR  
MANAGER OF GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS



HUD Sustainable Communities Planning Grants Program – On Wednesday, February 10, HUD published a notice in the Federal Register regarding the Sustainable Communities Planning Grant Program. It is an Advance Notice and Request for Comments in advance of an eventual request for grant applications. Comments are due March 12. The FY'10 HUD Appropriations bill provided \$150M to HUD for a new Sustainable Communities Initiative of which \$100M will be available for Community Planning grants to improve regional planning efforts that integrate housing and transportation decisions. The notice is available [here](#).

Don't forget to check out **PB's new Transportation Update website** at [www.PBTransportationUpdate.com](http://www.PBTransportationUpdate.com). The site includes links to key transportation legislative and regulatory documents, links to industry, congressional and US DOT websites and an archive of PB Washington Updates.