



DECEMBER 16, 2009 – INTERIM REPORT

Congress is moving quickly to wrap up business before they adjourn for the year this Friday or, in the case of the Senate, this weekend or early next week. Now that the “minibus” FY’10 appropriations bill has been passed by the full Congress, all eleven domestic federal agency FY’10 funding bills are complete. President Obama is expected to sign the “minibus” shortly. The only agency left without a FY’10 funding bill is the Department of Defense and Congress is expected to pass that bill today or tomorrow. The DOD appropriations bill will also include a 60-day extension of a number of expiring bills, including SAFETEA-LU. It will extend the SAFETEA-LU authorization until February 28, 2010. In addition, it will include extensions of unemployment insurance, COBRA health benefits, and the Patriot Act.

The House will also debate a “jobs” bill today that will include new funding for infrastructure programs, including transportation and water. There is not enough time for the Senate to debate a “jobs” bill this year since they are still preoccupied with healthcare reform. Therefore, Senate action on the bill will have to wait until early 2010.

The total funding in the House bill, called the Jobs for Main Street Act of 2010, is \$75B. Of that amount, \$48B is new funding for infrastructure programs. Of the \$48B, \$37.3B is allocated to highway, transit, aviation and rail programs as follows:

Highways - \$27.5B

Transit - \$8.4B (Formula program – \$6.15B, New Starts/Small Starts - \$500M, Fixed Guideway

Modernization - \$1.75B)

Amtrak - \$800M (for fleet modernization)

FAA AIP Airports - \$500M

MARAD Ship Construction - \$100M

Other infrastructure funding includes:

Corps Construction - \$715M

Clean Water State Revolving Fund - \$1B

Drinking Water State Revolving Fund - \$1B

These are new funds in addition to whatever was previously funded through the ARRA stimulus bill and FY’10 appropriations. The funding is provided by reducing the unneeded borrowing authority of the TARP bank bailout program.

In addition, the House “jobs” bill includes an extension of the SAFETEA-LU authorization through September 30, 2010, the end of the current fiscal year. This is not to be confused with the 60-day extension in the DOD appropriations bill which is necessary because the current extension runs out this Friday and the “jobs’ bill will not be completed until sometime early next year.



PB Washington Update

PREPARED BY CATHY CONNOR
MANAGER OF GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS



In general, the funding levels provided in the House bill for transportation programs are very similar to those in last January's ARRA stimulus bill. However, the new bill does not include any funding for high-speed rail or the ARRA TIGER multi-modal program. The new funding, if approved by Congress, will generally be allocated to state DOTs and transit agencies in the same manner as the ARRA funding. The bill provides for 100% federal share for the transportation programs, repeals the provision that prohibits Highway Trust Fund balances from earning interest and restores \$19.5B (from the General Fund) to the Highway Trust Fund (\$14.7B to the Highway Account and \$4.8B to the Transit Account) to repay lost interest.

More later when additional details about the "jobs" bill are available.