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April, 2012 Monthly Report for MTC

To: Steve Heminger, Executive Director
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From: Tom Bulger, President GRI

Re: Monthly Report for April, 2012

Date: May 1, 2012

- **The Senate and House Reach a Conference Committee on Transportation Authorization**
- **Senate Appropriations Committee Produces FY 2013 Spending Bill**
- **Congress on Recess Most of April**
- **EPA Announces New Ozone Classifications**
- **April Meetings**

The Senate and House Reach a Conference Committee on Transportation Authorization

After months of negotiations, the Senate and the House named conferees to tackle reconciling the Senate and House versions of surface transportation authorization legislation with Senator Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.) as chair of the conference committee. The House abandoned their five-year authorization bill (H.R. 7, Mica) and instead passed H.R. 4348 (Mica), a shell bill, which will go to conference with the Senate's two-year authorization bill, S. 1813 (Boxer).

The House passed H.R. 4348 on April 18, 2012 on a 293 to 127 vote. Essentially, it is a three-month extension of SAFETEA-LU (the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users) until June 30, 2012, and it included a few controversial items such as approval of the Keystone XL pipeline extension. Adding the Keystone XL pipeline extension to the bill garnered enough votes in the House to move the bill to conference. On the Senate side, the bill requires funding offsets through the end of FY 2013.

Now that conferees are appointed, a long-term surface transportation bill could be wrapped up by the June 30, 2012 deadline; however, if this cannot be accomplished, Congress will have to extend the federal surface transportation program until the end of the fiscal year (September 30, 2012). In addition, it is unknown if House Speaker John Boehner, R-Ohio, and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., have a deal regarding inclusion of the pipeline and the Senate bill's overall funding levels.

By far, the Senate bill includes the most advantageous policy and funding elements. Top Senate bill priorities for MTC and the Bay Area include:

- program consolidation;
- performance emphasis;
- new freight program;
- expanded TIFIA Program;
- partial CMAQ suballocation;
- focus on large MPOs;
- new FTA State of Good Repair Program;
- New Starts funding for transit core capacity projects; and
- restore transit commute benefit parity with parking benefit to \$240 per month in 2012.

Senate Appropriations Committee Produces FY 2013 Spending Bill

On April 19, 2012 the Senate Appropriations Committee approved its Fiscal Year 2013 Appropriations Bill for Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies by a vote of 28 to one. The budget authority for the bill is \$53.4 billion, while total funding is \$105.5 billion. Total funding includes limitations on obligations related to programs funded by the Highway Trust Fund. Enacted levels for FY 2012 were \$57.3 billion and \$109.4 billion, respectively.

Highlights of the bill include funding for the following:

- Significant Transportation Projects ("TIGER" program): \$500 million, with no less than \$120 million for projects in rural communities.
- Highway Investments: \$39.1 billion for the annual Federal Aid Highway program. California's obligation limit is \$3.261 billion vs. \$3.258 billion in FY 2012.
- Rail Investments: \$1.75 billion for rail infrastructure, of which \$1.45 billion is for Amtrak. Of the total amount provided, \$100 million is for the High Performance Passenger Rail grant program.
- Transit Investments: \$2.044 billion for the transit New Starts public transportation program. A total of \$8.361 in Federal Transit Administration (FTA) formula grants. Included in this amount is \$4.2 million in urban formula grants, \$984 million for Bus & Bus Facilities, \$1.7 million for Fixed Guideway Modernization, \$164.5 million for Jobs Access and Reverse Commute, and \$113.5 million for planning.
- Airport Investments: \$3.35 billion for capital investments at airports across the country.
- Air Transportation Modernization: \$956 million for the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) NextGen program to modernize the nation's air traffic control system.
- Automobile Safety: \$809 million for vehicle and driver safety programs.
- Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety: Includes \$195 million to support pipeline and hazardous materials safety programs, including pipeline safety research and grants for state pipeline safety programs.
- Aviation Safety: \$1.04 billion is provided to support the FAA's aviation inspector workforce.
- The bill includes a permanent rescission of \$1.973 in previous High-Speed Rail appropriations.
- The housing section of the bill includes \$50 million within Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Community Development Fund for the Sustainable Communities Initiative.

Congress on Recess Most of April

Congress was not in Washington, D.C. for the majority of April. In fact, the House only had six days of votes.

EPA Announces New Ozone Classifications

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is implementing the 2008 ozone standards as required by the Clean Air Act. Meeting these standards will provide important public and environmental health benefits. The EPA has worked closely with states and tribes to identify areas in the country that meet the standards and those that need to take steps to reduce ozone pollution.

The EPA's final designations are based on air quality monitoring data, recommendations submitted by the states and tribes, and other technical information. The agency will work closely with states and tribes to implement the standards using a common sense approach that improves air quality, maximizes flexibilities and minimizes burden on state and local governments.

California's Counties' classifications are listed below:

Region	County/Counties	Classification
Calaveras County, CA	Calaveras	Marginal
Chico (Butte County), CA	Butte	Marginal
Imperial County, CA	Imperial	Marginal
Kern County (Eastern Kern), CA	Kern	Marginal
Los Angeles-San Bernardino Counties (West Mojave Desert), CA	Los Angeles	Severe
	San Bernardino	
Los Angeles-South Coast Air Basin, CA	Los Angeles	Extreme
	Orange	
	Riverside	
	San Bernardino	
Mariposa County, CA	Mariposa	Marginal
Nevada County (Western part), CA	Nevada	Marginal
Riverside County (Coachella Valley), CA	Riverside	Severe
Sacramento Metro, CA	El Dorado	Severe
	Placer	
	Sacramento	
	Solano	
	Sutter	
	Yolo	
San Diego County, CA	San Diego	Marginal
San Francisco Bay Area, CA	Alameda	Marginal
	Contra Costa	
	Marin	
	Napa	
	San Francisco	
	San Mateo	
	Santa Clara	
	Solano	
	Sonoma	
San Joaquin Valley, CA	Fresno	Extreme
	Kern	
	Kings	
	Madera	
	Merced	
	San Joaquin	
	Stanislaus	
	Tulare	
San Luis Obispo (Eastern San Luis Obispo), CA	San Luis Obispo	Marginal
Tuscan Buttes, CA	Tehama	Marginal
Ventura County, CA	Ventura	Serious

Meetings in April

We attended the following meetings in April:

- Intelligent Transportation Society of America Legislative Committee Meetings
- Rep. Steny H. Hoyer, (D-Md.)
- Rep. Gerry Connolly, (D-Va.)
- Rep. Chris VanHollen, (D-Md.)