

### **January 2014 Monthly Report for MTC**

**To:** Steve Heminger, Executive Director  
**From:** Tom Bulger, President GRI  
**Re:** Monthly Report for January 2014  
**Date:** January 31, 2014

- **Congress and President to Sign FY 2014 Omnibus Appropriations Bill**
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- **Secretary Anthony Foxx Touts Tax Reform as Transportation Fix at US Conference of Mayors**
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### **Congress and President to Sign FY 2014 Omnibus Appropriations Bill**

On Thursday, January 16, 2014, Congress passed a \$1.012 trillion FY 2014 omnibus Appropriations bill (H.R. 3547) which will fund the Federal Government through the rest of FY 2014. The 1,600 page bill includes all twelve FY 2014 Appropriations bills. The President signed the legislation.

The massive Appropriations bill provides the following for selective federal transportation programs:

- **Federal Transit (FTA):** Provides \$8.6 billion from the Mass Transit account of the Highway Trust Fund, which mirrors the MAP-21 Authorization. In addition, \$2.15 billion in discretionary funding (\$1.943 billion for discretionary Capital Investments) and redirects \$190 million in unobligated funds, for a total of \$2.132 billion for Capital Investment Grants, an increase of \$276 million over FY 2013.
- **Federal Highways (FHWA):** The bill provides \$41 billion in FHWA Obligation Authority limitation, equal to the MAP-21 Authorization, an increase of \$557 million above the FY 2013 amount.

- **TIGER:** The bill includes \$600 million for the TIGER program vs. \$474 million in FY 2013 and the President's request of \$500 million.
- **High Speed Rail:** The bill provides \$1.6 billion for the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA); however, does not include any funds requested by the Administration for High Speed Rail.
- Finally, there are a half-dozen policy riders attached to the Omnibus, none of which apply to transportation.

### **President Obama's State of the Union Address**

On January 28, the President delivered his "State of the Union" address. The President stated on numerous occasions that he is willing to govern without Congress. He promised dozens of actions this year through Executive Orders.

The President did call on Congress to enact a surface transportation bill for highways, mass transit and safety programs. How the Administration would pay for a surface transportation bill has now shifted from war savings to corporate tax reform.

### **Secretary Anthony Foxx Touts Tax Reform as Transportation Fix at the US Conference of Mayors**

On January 23, I attended the US Conference of Mayors' mid-winter meeting. Specifically, I attended a session with the new USDOT Secretary, Anthony Foxx. Secretary Foxx again stated that the President wants to fund transportation with proceeds from corporate tax reform vs. a fuel tax increase. He implored the mayors to help find a bi-partisan solution to the shoring up of the rapidly depleting Highway Trust Fund. He also told the audience to tell their members of Congress what transportation projects have been shelved or postponed.

### **MTC January 2014 Washington, DC Meetings**

In January, we set up a series of meetings for MTC staff in Washington, DC. On January 13, we met with Paul N. "Chip" Jaenichen, Sr., the recently confirmed Administrator of the USDOT Maritime Administration, and his senior staff about MTC's Freight policy recommendations.

On January 14, we met with Mr. Robert Edmonson, Chief of Staff at Representative Nancy Pelosi (D-CA). Also, we met with the senior staff of Senator Barbara Boxer's Environment and Public Works Committee concerning MAP-21 reauthorization and Senator Boxer's idea to shift the federal excise tax on fuel to the wholesale level. We learned that the Highway Trust Fund will begin to go into the red as early as this August unless new Trust Fund revenue is approved.

Meetings were also held with staff of Rep. Lofgren (D-CA), Rep. Eshoo (D-CA) and Rep. Lee (D-CA). MTC staff additionally met with Ms. Leslie Wollock of the National League of Cities (NLC) and Mr. Kevin McCarty of the US Conference of Mayors concerning Surface Transportation Authorization legislation.

## **Washington, DC March 2014 Meetings**

Currently, we are working on a number of meetings and briefings for MTC commissioners and staff during the March 9-12 annual visit to Washington, DC.

## **California Transportation Congressional Reception on March 11**

The California Transportation Congressional Reception will be held on the evening of March 11 in the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Room, 2165 Rayburn House office building. The reception is from 6-8 p.m. All of the necessary subcontractors for the reception have been engaged.

Currently, we are working with the reception PR firm to update the invitation list and secure our “Special Guests” at the reception.

## **Comings and Goings**

Comings and Goings this past month include:

- Rep. George Miller (D-CA) announced his retirement from the House of Representatives.
- Former USDOT Secretary Ray LaHood joined the infrastructure advocacy group Building America’s Future. Mr. LaHood will replace former Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger.
- Ms. Polly Trottenberg stepped down as the Under Secretary for Policy at the USDOT to become the Commissioner of Transportation in New York City.
- Peter Rogoff has been selected to become the Under Secretary for Policy and will be leaving as the FTA Administrator.
- Ms. Therese McMillan will be the Acting Administrator at FTA.
- Ms. Erin Ryan has left Rep. Jackie Speier’s (D-CA) staff to return to California.