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LEGISLATIVE Alert

AMERICAN PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ASSOCIATION



March 21, 2011

Congress Approves Three-Week Continuing Resolution for Fiscal Year 2011 Appropriations

On Friday, March 18 President Barack Obama signed H.J. Res. 48, a continuing resolution (CR) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2011 appropriations to fund federal government operations for another three weeks through Friday, April 8. The resolution cuts another \$6 billion in federal spending from FY 2010 enacted levels.

Among the \$6 billion in reductions is the elimination of funding for FY 2011 for the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) program that provides grant money for railroad operators to implement Positive Train Control (PTC). Congress authorized \$50 million for this program in fiscal year 2011 in the Rail Safety Improvement Act of 2008, and funds have been appropriated at that level for the past two years. However, since the Administration failed to request funds for this program in the President's budget request for FY 2011, it became an easy target for reduction. No other transportation programs were targeted in the measure.

The bill passed the Senate by a vote of 87 – 13. Nine of the votes against passage were from conservative Republicans that believe the measure does not cut spending enough, while the remaining four votes were from three Democrats and an Independent that believe the cuts are excessive. In the House, the measure passed by a vote of 271-158 with 54 Republicans voting against the bill.

This CR is the sixth such short-term spending resolution enacted for FY 2011. The path forward for compromise on the remainder of FY 2011 spending remains unclear, but House and Senate leaders as well as the Administration continue to negotiate on a spending bill that will fund government operations for the rest of the fiscal year.

APTA members are urged to continue to contact your members of Congress and tell them it is critical to preserve current funding levels for public transportation in the final FY 2011 appropriations measure.

For more information, please contact Paul Dean of APTA's Government Affairs Department at (202) 496-4887 or pdean@apta.com.



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