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LEGISLATIVE Alert

AMERICAN PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ASSOCIATION



March 29, 2012

Congress Approves 90-Day Surface Transportation Extension

This morning, the U.S. House of Representatives approved, by a vote of 266 to 158, a 90-day extension of current surface transportation law governing federal transit and highway programs. The bill, which would extend SAFETEA-LU and the collection of motor fuels taxes that are deposited in the Highway Trust Fund through June 30, 2012, must now be signed by the President by March 31 to avert the shutdown of federal transit and highway programs. It is expected that the President will sign the measure.

This afternoon, the Senate approved the extension by unanimous consent. Both Houses of the U.S. Congress are scheduled to leave for a two week district work period that begins tomorrow.

Democrats in both chambers had voiced strong opposition to another extension and urged the House to take up and pass H.R. 14, the House version of S. 1813 (MAP-21), the Senate-passed bill that modifies and extends transit and highway programs through the end of Fiscal Year (FY) 2013. House Republican leaders have opposed the Senate's two-year bill and pushed for a 90-day extension that gives them time to redraft and build support for passage of their own five-year bill.

House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee Republican staff have stated that a revised five-year House bill will differ from the earlier version in that it will preserve current law under which a specific portion of motor fuels tax revenues are deposited into the Mass Transit Account (MTA) of the Highway Trust Fund (HTF) and dedicated to programs administered by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). Staff has also said that the revised House bill will preserve the existing MTA, which funds FTA programs, and return the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality program and other current Federal Highway Administration programs to the Highway Account of the HTF.

House Speaker John Boehner (R-OH) has stated that the House will produce a revised version of its multi-year bill upon return from the forthcoming district work period.

ACTION ALERT

- APTA members need to contact their Members of Congress in the House and urge immediate action on a well-funded, multi-year, multi-modal authorization bill that can go to a conference committee with the Senate bill and be signed by the President within the next 90 days.
- APTA members should use the April district work period (March 30 through April 15) to communicate with their Members of Congress in the home districts about the need to pass a long-term bill.