



American Public Transportation Association

Legislative Committee

Agenda

May 17, 2026
2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. MT

Hyatt Regency Salt Lake City
Room: Salt Lake C (Level 2)
Salt Lake City, UT

Virtual Participation via Zoom
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86216992603>

Meeting ID: 862 1699 2603

Passcode: APTA

1. Welcome and Call to Order—Beth Holbrook, Chair
2. Approval of Minutes of April 12, 2026 Legislative Committee Meeting—Beth Holbrook
3. Remarks from APTA Leadership—Leanne Redden, Chair, APTA, and Paul Skoutelas, APTA President and CEO
4. Legislative Update and Surface Transportation Authorization Strategy—Ward McCarragher, Vice President, APTA Government Affairs and Advocacy
5. Discussion of Pending Public Transportation Bills and Legislative Proposals—Stacie Tionson, Senior Director, APTA Government Affairs and Advocacy
 - a. [H.R. 6635](#), the Bus Operator Safety and Security Act (Figures) (D-AL)
6. Urging State Adoption of FMCSA “Under-the-Hood” CDL Waiver—Stacie Tionson
7. APTA Advocacy Messaging and Communications—TJ Doyle, Vice President, APTA Communications and Marketing
8. APTA Advocacy Afternoon and Upcoming Fly-In—Jillian Kinder, Legislative Representative, APTA Government Affairs and Advocacy
9. Open Discussion

10. Adjourn

ENCLOSED DOCUMENTS

- Minutes of April 12, 2026 Legislative Committee Meeting (05.17.2026)
- [APTA Advocacy Palm Card](#) (04.12.2026)
- [APTA 2026 Surface Transportation Authorization Recommendations](#) (02.2026)
- [APTA FY 2027 THUD Appropriations Priorities Letter \(House\)](#) (05.06.2026)
- [APTA PRESS RELEASE APTA Backs Senators' Call for Robust Public Transportation Investments in FY 2027 Transportation Appropriations Bill](#) (05.13.2026)
- [Senators' Letter on Transportation Investment](#) (05.12.2026)
- [Senators' Letter on Public Transit Investment](#) (02.27.2026)
- [Senators' Letter on Passenger Rail Investment](#) (02.12.2026)
- APTA FACT SHEET H.R. 6635, the Bus Operator Safety and Security Act (05.11.2026)
- APTA Under-the-Hood Commercial Driver's License (CDL) Materials:
 - [Fact Sheet: "Under-the-Hood" CDL Waiver for Transit Bus Operators](#) (February 2026)
 - [Transit Agency Briefing Document: "Under-the-Hood" CDL Waiver for Transit Bus Operators](#) (February 2026)
- [APTA Advocacy Message Guide](#) (04.12.2026)
- [APTA Government Affairs 2026 Legislative Calendar](#) (05.01.2026)

**AMERICAN PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ASSOCIATION
LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**

**April 12, 2026
3:15 p.m. – 5:15 p.m. ET**

MINUTES

1. Welcome and Call to Order—Beth Holbrook, Chair

Legislative Committee Chair Beth Holbrook welcomed APTA members to Washington, DC, and called the meeting to order. She welcomed members who have joined the Legislative Committee since the APTA Winter Meeting in December 2025.

**2. Approval of Minutes of December 4, 2025 Legislative Committee Meeting—
Beth Holbrook**

Chair Holbrook presented the minutes of the Legislative Committee meeting, which occurred on December 4, 2025, for approval. A motion was made to approve the minutes, which was seconded, and then approved without objection.

3. Remarks from APTA Leadership—Leanne Redden, Chair, APTA, and Paul Skoutelas, APTA President and CEO

APTA Chair Leanne Redden provided opening remarks, highlighting the importance of the Legislative Committee's work. She stated that the biggest priority in the coming year is Surface Transportation Authorization, explaining that the current law expires September 30, and how APTA members can impact the authorization process by meeting with their Members of Congress about APTA priorities for the next bill.

APTA President and CEO Paul Skoutelas opened his remarks, noting that *Passenger Transport* highlighted the original Legislative Conference and underlined the importance of advocating for industry priorities, pushing APTA members to tell their story to their Members of Congress. He emphasized the need to maintain pressure on Congress to ensure that the next Surface Transportation Authorization bill ensures robust investment in public transportation.

4. Capitol Hill Update—Richard Sun, Transportation Counsel, Senate Democratic Leader Charles E. Schumer (D-NY)

Richard Sun, Transportation Counsel, Senate Democratic Leader Charles E. Schumer (D-NY), highlighted four main topics: funding distribution, Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA), contract authority and advance appropriations. Sun discussed tensions over who controls funding, since States receive equal Senate representation even though transit needs vary across different areas. Sun encouraged APTA members to share stories about the human impact of transit and build relationships with Members of Congress.

5. Coalition Partner Update—Joung H. Lee, Deputy Director/ Chief Policy Officer, American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO)

Joung H. Lee, Deputy Director and Chief Policy Officer, AASHTO, emphasized the critical need for stable, long-term Federal funding into the 2030s. He highlighted the importance of preserving the Highway Trust Fund's contract authority and prioritizing formula funding in the coming Surface Transportation Authorization bill. He also stressed the importance of streamlining project delivery through National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) reforms to ensure the benefits from infrastructure projects are experienced much sooner.

Addressing current legislative and financial challenges, Lee noted that delays in annual appropriations make it difficult for states to program capital investments effectively and advocated for better funding for tools like TIFIA and Private Activity Bonds. He discussed balancing state and local funding and possibly creating new funding categories for safety and related projects that could go directly to Metropolitan Planning Organizations. Lee also noted that transit projects are currently funded unevenly with Federal and state dollars. He concluded that the focus must remain on tangible outcomes and protecting funds to ensure states get the highest return on investment.

6. Legislative Update and Surface Transportation Authorization Strategy—Ward McCarragher, Vice President, and Mark Hybner, Director, APTA Government Affairs and Advocacy (GAA)

APTA Vice President Ward McCarragher urged APTA members to coordinate with States on funding needs, focusing on building current investments, accelerating project delivery, and strengthening collaborative, local decision-making. He highlighted critical 2026 deadlines, specifically the September 30 expiration of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and the complexities created by the midterm elections.

McCarragher warned that the Fiscal Year (FY) 2027 President's Budget Request proposed significant cuts to passenger rail and Capital Investment Grant (CIG) funding. Using graphs to show the different types of funding from the IIJA, with different colors to represent Contract Authority, Advance Appropriations, and the General Fund, he explained the importance of the type of funding in the next Surface Transportation Authorization. He emphasized the need for reliability of Federal funds to ensure long-term project stability. Finally, he addressed the urgent Highway Trust Fund Mass Transit Account shortfall in 2027 and noted that Congress will need to act in the near term to ensure continued funding to public transit.

APTA Director Mark Hybner outlined the recent FY 2027 President's Budget Request, highlighting the drastic cuts to CIG, competitive grant programs, and Bus and Bus Facility funding that halve the amounts recommended by APTA. To counter these cuts, he emphasized the need to protect the guaranteed funding established by the IIJA, noting that transportation must compete for priority against other sectors like energy and water.

Hybner suggested that advocacy efforts should highlight transit's role in easing the burden of rising gas prices and its significant economic impact across all 50 states to gain broader bipartisan support. By framing transit as a solution for family savings and private-sector growth,

APTA aims to build a stronger coalition for sustained investment.

7. APTA Advocacy Messaging and Communications—TJ Doyle, Vice President, APTA Communications and Marketing

APTA Vice President TJ Doyle explained the new “That’s Transit” campaign centered on securing full transit funding through the upcoming Surface Transportation Authorization bill. He outlined the strategy, aimed at bipartisan appeal, positioning public transportation as an economic powerhouse that drives job creation and supports American manufacturing. By simplifying the message, the campaign seeks to demonstrate to lawmakers that transit is a prerequisite for a competitive and growing national economy.

Doyle also highlighted the campaign’s tactical rollout, which uses simplified, high-impact content and targeted advertising across platforms like *LinkedIn* and the *New York Times*. He also highlighted that the ads could be adjusted geographically to support specific regional needs. He concluded by emphasizing that advocacy efforts will be continuous, with surges in media amplification to coincide with Authorization milestones and large-scale events, such as FIFA and the Olympics, to maximize the visibility of APTA messaging.

8. State and Local Transit Ballot Initiatives—Art Guzzetti, Vice President, APTA Policy, Mobility, Technical Services and Innovation and Jessica Grennan, Executive Director, Center for Transportation Excellence (CFTE)

APTA Vice President Art Guzzetti explained the importance of local ballot initiatives in transportation funding and introduced Jessica Grennan from CFTE.

Jessica Grennan, Executive Director, CFTE, discussed securing comprehensive transit funding through CFTE, which provides resources and strategy for local ballot initiatives. She noted that transit measures have historically performed very well, achieving an 86 percent success rate, particularly during election years. While several initiatives are currently moving through various stages of signature collection and legislative approval, she warned that opposition remains active, citing North Texas and Oregon as two places with active opposition. She concluded by highlighting CFTE’s quarterly webinars and workshops designed to connect campaigns and navigate the legal complexities of getting transit measures across the finish line.

9. AI’s Role in Public Transit’s Transformation—Matthew Dickens, Senior Director, Policy Development and Research, APTA Government Affairs and Advocacy

APTA Senior Director Matthew Dickens outlined APTA’s research on AI learning research, set to release in May, which includes a comprehensive AI primer and practical deployment guidance. While current adoption across transit agencies is limited, the research demonstrates that AI and Machine Learning have made the deployment of agency services more efficient.

To show real-world impact, Dickens highlighted several successful case studies, including CapMetro’s on-demand virtual scheduling agent; WMATA’s data-driven segmentation; Riverside Transit’s disruption management; and MTA NYC’s predictive maintenance system. He closed by

explaining the “Plan for Success”, which outlines the steps agencies can take to implement their own AI pilot program.

10. Advocacy for APTA 2026 Surface Transportation Authorization Recommendations—Beth Holbrook and Phil Eng, Vice Chair

Chair Holbrook reminded everyone that the IIJA is set to expire on September 30, making it vital for APTA members to identify which funding and policy recommendations matter most to their agencies and highlight those when going to Hill meetings. She urged members to move beyond just asking for funds and instead focus on powerful storytelling to drive their advocacy efforts. By picking recommendations that align with their most successful projects, transit agencies can better demonstrate the real-world value of their work to lawmakers and the public. She shared her own example of the upcoming 2034 Olympics in her home state of Utah as a talking point for meetings with her Congressional delegation.

Vice Chair Phil Eng reiterated that a major theme in his meetings was taking control of the narrative and consistently sharing and boosting positive news from the transit industry. He notes that since transit is fundamentally about moving people, stories should highlight the human impact and economic value brought to the local community. He concluded by encouraging members to think about how specific improvements help their individual agencies while also explaining how those successes benefit the national transportation network.

11. Adjourn

Chair Holbrook thanked everyone for their participation. There being no further business, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded, and then approved without objection. Chair Holbrook adjourned the meeting.

AMERICAN PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ASSOCIATION
FACT SHEET
H.R. 6635, THE BUS OPERATOR SAFETY AND SECURITY ACT
May 11, 2026

On December 11, 2025, Rep. Shomari Figures (D-AL), together with Rep. Jefferson Van Drew (R-NJ), introduced [H.R. 6635](#), the “Bus Operator Safety and Security Act”. This bipartisan legislation requires the installation of barriers to fully enclose bus operator workstations on fixed route buses, with a few exceptions.

Summary

H.R. 6635, the Bus Operator Safety and Security Act, amends 49 U.S.C. § 5329 by adding a new subsection to require the installation of a barrier for all fixed route bus operator workstations when the buses are purchased with Federal funds.

The bill requires a barrier to be installed around the workstation that: extends from the floor to the ceiling of the bus; can completely enclose the workstation and prevent the unwanted entry of persons, fluids, and objects into the workstation; and does not impede the operator’s lines of sight from the workstation to the exterior of the bus.

Any new fixed route bus that is more than 30 feet long with a useful life of 10 years or more purchased with Federal funds (except § 5311 funds) is subject to this mandate. This requirement may be waived if a recipient certifies that a labor organization representing the plurality of the frontline workforce employed by the recipient or, if applicable, employed by a contractor to the recipient, has agreed to waive the installation of the barrier.

The barrier installation on new bus purchases is required beginning two years after the date of enactment of the bill.

Background

Under 49 U.S.C. § 5329, the Public Transportation Safety Program, public transit agencies serving a large urbanized area (i.e., population of 200,000 or more) must develop a risk reduction program as part of their Public Transportation Agency Safety Plans. That program must include, among other items, an agency’s plan to mitigate assaults on transit workers, including considering the use of barriers to restrict access to bus operator workstations, if an agency’s Safety Committee determines that the use of barriers would reduce assaults.¹

¹ 49 U.S.C. § 5329(d)(1)(i-ii).