

## **The First 100 Days of the New Administration and Congress**

### **Overview**

The Trump Administration and the new Congress have begun the process of crafting legislative policies and goals for the year. President Trump has talked about a major infrastructure initiative involving as much as \$1 trillion in investment.

Congress is expected to have an ambitious agenda on a variety of issues, possibly including major tax reform, overhaul of the Affordable Care Act, immigration policy, and federal infrastructure programs.

There have also been rumors that the incoming Administration might revive an earlier unsuccessful effort to eliminate the federal transit program as part of an FY2018 budget proposal. Late April is the timeframe for the Administration's budget proposal. While this rumor would be inconsistent with the effort to improve our infrastructure, we need to be prepared for all possibilities.

Congress passed the FAST Act in December of 2015, which authorized spending for federal transit, passenger rail, and highway programs, through FY 2020. The FAST Act also provided funding through FY 2020 for public transit and highway programs in the Highway Trust Fund. While the FAST Act provided modest increases in investment, it does not fully address our need to restore the nation's aging public transit and highway systems to a state of good repair. The U.S. Department of Transportation has said we need to invest nearly \$90 billion in the nation's transit systems, just to bring them into a state of good repair.

### **APTA Member Action**

One of the best ways that APTA members can advance the cause for maintaining the current federal transit program and increasing federal investment in that program, is to meet directly with their U.S. Senators and Representatives.

- Make appointments to meet with Congress members in their district offices. Use the information included below, and tell them why and how the federal transit program is important to your transit system or your business. During your meeting, invite them to visit your system or business.
- Meet with Congressional staff. Meetings with staff are helpful too, because that staff will convey your issues and concerns to their boss.
- Also make plans to meet with those elected officials or their staff when you are in Washington, DC for APTA's Annual Legislative Conference in March.

## Talking points for First 100 Days

- ✓ **All Americans –Republican and Democrat, rural, suburban and urban, public transportation user and not – benefit from public transportation.**
- ✓ **Strong public transportation makes our economy grow and makes the U.S. more competitive internationally.**
- ✓ **We are in a state of crisis regarding the condition of our infrastructure.**
- ✓ **The new administration and Congress should invest in public transportation as part of an infrastructure bill.**
- ✓ **Public transportation is an integral element of the nation's transportation system which tens of millions of Americans depend on and it makes the overall system work better.**

APTA has a clear vision for America's public transportation: it connects us to our jobs and communities. Where public transportation goes, communities grow. This vision is shared by Democrats, Republicans, and independents alike and can be realized with robust investment on the Federal level. That's why we strongly support Congress and the incoming Administration's plan to renew America's investments in our transportation infrastructure in the first 100 days of 2017 and beyond.

We can capitalize on the bipartisan support for investment in transportation by finding creative ways to highlight the individual and community benefits and by ensuring Congress hears directly from us. Congress can act right now to invest in our public transportation infrastructure, supporting our economy and our communities, making commutes safer and more connected.

Below we provided message guidance about the need for investment in public transportation.

- ✓ America's future is bright when we come together to make smart investments, like those in public transportation that connect and grow our communities.
- ✓ The American public - as well as Democratic and Republican Members of Congress - support greater investment in public transportation.

- ✓ Investments in public transportation grow the economy nationwide and create short- and long-term American jobs in fields like construction and manufacturing.
- ✓ There is a strong return on investment for public transportation: for every \$1 invested in public transportation, approximately \$4 is generated in economic returns. It increases real estate values, brings customers to businesses, and makes our communities more connected.
- ✓ There is no reason to wait: The American public, Democratic and Republican Senators and Representatives, as well as the President-elect all agree that we need to invest in America's infrastructure. Congress and President Trump should work together in the first 100 days to pass legislation that invests in our public transportation infrastructure.
- ✓ Local citizens are voting to tax themselves to invest in their public transportation systems. Similar investments on the federal level are essential to maintaining global economic competitiveness.

1. The new Administration and Congress have an opportunity grow our economy and develop our communities by investing in our public transportation infrastructure.
  - a. "Republican and Democratic Members of Congress, in addition to the President-elect, support infrastructure investment. We share this priority and we know we must work together to modernize our aging public transit systems."
2. A bipartisan majority of Americans and Members of Congress support investment in public transportation.
  - a. "Even in our divided political climate, Democrats and Republicans alike agree that we need investment on all levels in public transportation. Nearly 70 percent of voters polled in the presidential election support investment to repair and improve public transportation. And a large majority who voted for Donald Trump also support greater investment, polling at 65 percent. A Congressional victory on the issue can bridge our political divisions and show Americans that Congress is working for us, not against each other."
3. Investing in public transportation grows the economy and creates short and long-term American jobs in fields like construction and manufacturing.
  - a. "When the government invests in public transportation, they are investing in good American jobs. The productivity gains of \$1 billion federal investment result in 50,000 jobs. Having a strong public transportation system not only creates jobs in fields like construction and manufacturing, but also connects people with jobs in their communities and business owners with new consumers."

4. Return on investment for public transportation is high: for every \$1 invested in public transportation, approximately \$4 is generated in economic returns.
  - a. “Public transportation helps our communities prosper. For every \$1 invested in public transportation, communities get \$4 back in economic returns.”
5. There is a nearly \$90 billion backlog in deferred maintenance and replacement funds for public transit. At present, the United States is investing \$17.7 billion a year in a public transportation system that needs nearly two and a half times that much.
  - a. The American Society of Civil Engineers slapped the nation’s infrastructure with a grade of D+, noting that many structures are falling apart and at risk of failure.
6. Public transportation benefits us all, regardless of whether we use it or not. It makes our communities safer, better connected and stronger economically.
  - a. “From shorter commute times to greater business connectivity, public transportation improves the way our communities work.”
  - b. Residential property values perform 42% better on average if they are located near public transportation with high-frequency service.
7. Public transportation unites our communities. It makes our economy run and we depend on it, even if we don’t ride public transportation ourselves.
  - a. 87% of public transit trips impact the economy by getting people to work and connecting them to local businesses.