Transportation Reauthorization Proposal

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Introduction

The American people want the federal government to ensure their hard-earned tax dollars are wisely and effectively invested in improvements for the nation's infrastructure. They want investments in transportation systems to create jobs and a stronger economy.

The American people also want an end to bureaucracy, red tape, and wasteful programs. They want Washington to live within its means and make the difficult but necessary spending decisions that all Americans are forced to make for their own households. They want reform.

This fiscally responsible, multi-year proposal follows these clear mandates from the American people and creates long-term jobs by:

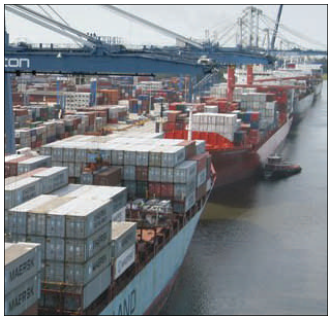
- Better leveraging and maximizing the value of limited federal resources,
- Streamlining the project approval process,
- Reforming our federal transportation programs,
- Reducing the federal bureaucracy,
- Improving programs that don't work while building upon programs that work well, and
- Providing flexibility to states to address their own unique, critical infrastructure needs.

This proposal reauthorizes the federal highway, transit, and highway safety programs and ensures that the revenues deposited into the Highway Trust Fund are used for their intended purposes. Long-term funding for these programs is essential for states to plan major infrastructure improvements. By reducing the federal bureaucracy, eliminating waste, and cutting red tape to make infrastructure programs work better, we can do more with less.

Transportation safety is a key component of this proposal, which ensures that as we seek to streamline federal programs and processes, safety also is improved.

This comprehensive proposal also makes significant reforms and improvements to federal policies and programs relating to freight and passenger rail transportation, hazardous material transportation, and maritime and waterborne transportation. More than ever, the nation's transportation systems must work together as a seamless network in order to ensure the flow of commerce and provide a sound basis for economic growth.

This is a fiscally responsible proposal that maximizes the value of our precious resources, reforms transportation programs, speeds up the completion of projects, and reduces the size of government in order to more effectively build our infrastructure and create jobs for America.



Stabilizing the Highway Trust Fund

As the national debt increases, the American people are becoming more frustrated with the federal government spending money it does not have. Congress must align its spending with the amount of revenue collected.

The foundation of the nation's system for funding highway and transit projects is the Highway Trust Fund. User fees — gas taxes — are deposited into the Trust Fund and distributed to states and transit agencies by formula. The promise of the Trust Fund is that these fees paid by the American people when they use the transportation system will be reinvested in projects that improve their highways, bridges, and transit systems, and not spent on other unrelated federal programs.

The Trust Fund has been essential to the success of our national transportation system because it ensures a reliable source of infrastructure funding for the states and transit agencies that allows them to plan for large multi-year projects and create long-term jobs.

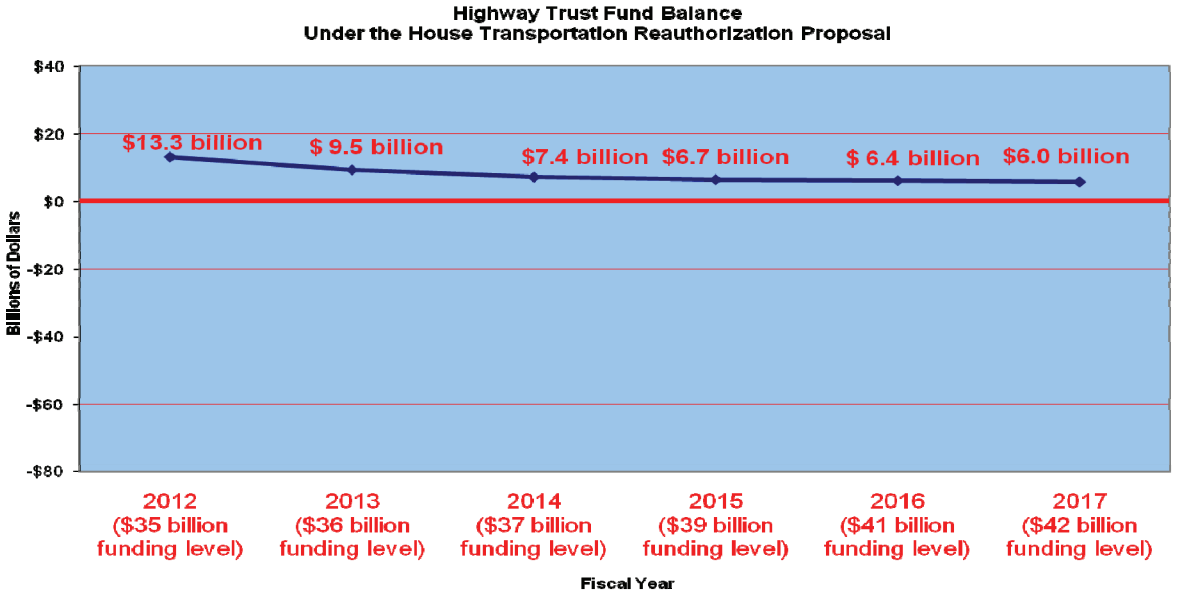
However, if fiscal stability is not restored to the Highway Trust Fund, we risk losing it. In 2010, the Trust Fund brought in $35 billion in revenue, but $50 billion in spending was authorized. Over the past three years, Congress has had to transfer approximately $35 billion from the General Fund into the Highway Trust Fund to keep it solvent. Continued spending at this unsustainable rate will ensure the Trust Fund goes broke in 2013. Driving the Trust Fund into bankruptcy may result in once again having to rely on general federal revenues and the unpredictable annual appropriations process for transportation funding. This will eliminate the necessary stability the Trust Fund provides states and transit agencies.

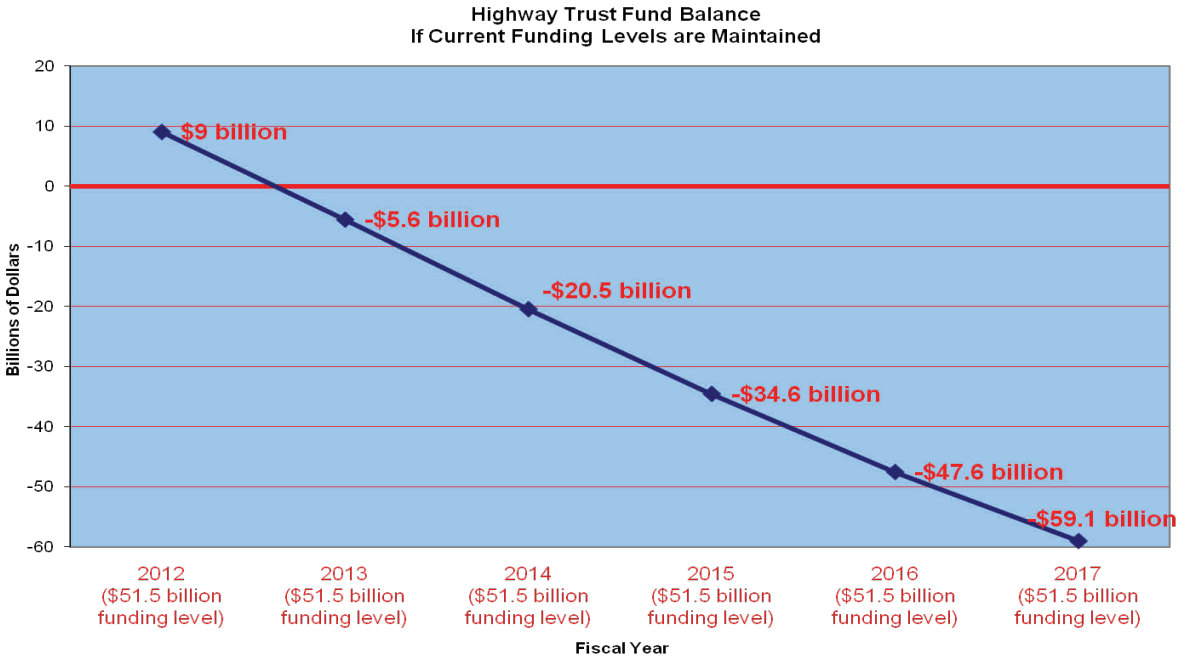
This proposal puts the "trust" back into the Trust Fund by ensuring that the nation is not spending money it does not have and aligning transportation expenditures with revenues. It authorizes approximately $230 billion over six years from the Highway Trust Fund — funding levels consistent with the amount of revenue being collected — and allows the Trust Fund to stay solvent well into the future.

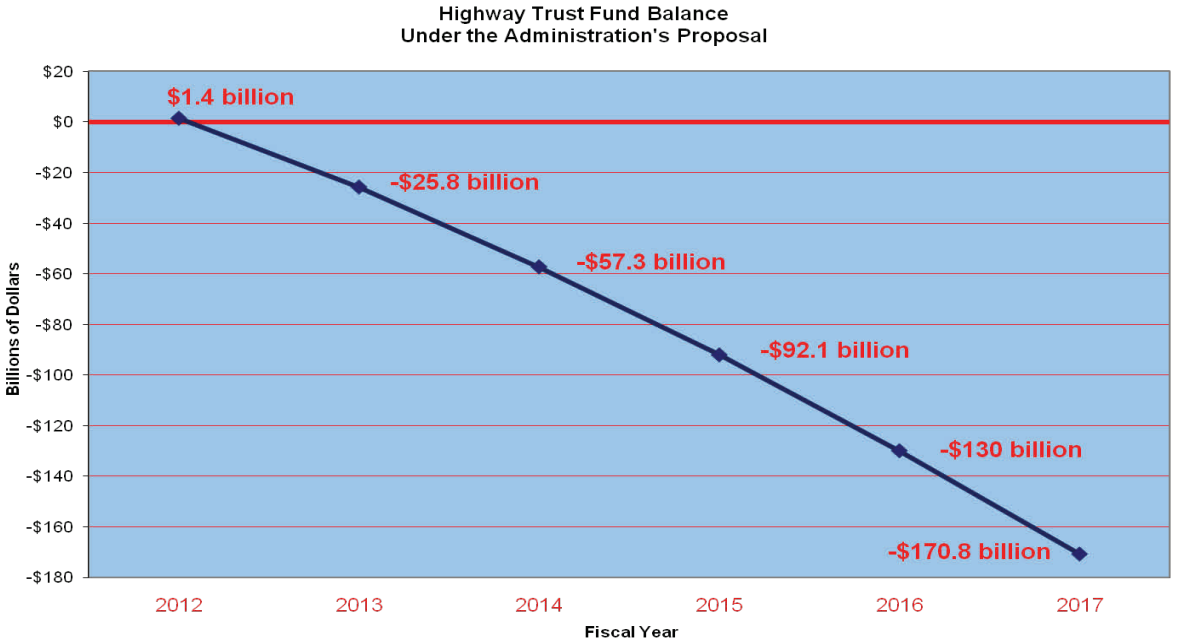
Other options simply are not fiscally responsible or realistic. Neither Congress nor the Administration will support an increase in the gas tax. The Trust Fund cannot support a two-year bill at current spending levels, as some have proposed. Even extending funding for one year at current levels would require a 50% cut in 2013 to keep the Trust Fund solvent.

We must maintain the long-term viability of the Highway Trust Fund and ensure that the federal government stops spending money it does not have.

See charts on the following page for a comparison of Trust Fund solvency under various proposals.


Highway Trust Fund Balance
Under the House Transportation Reauthorization Proposal
$40
$20
$0
-$20
-$40
-$60
-$80
Billions of Dollars
$13.3 billion
$ 9.5 billion
$7.4 billion
$6.7 billion
$ 6.4 billion
$6.0 billion
2012 ($35 billion funding level)
2013 ($36 billion funding level)
2014 ($37 billion funding level)
2015 ($39 billion funding level)
2016 ($41 billion funding level)
2017 ($42 billion funding level)
Fiscal Year


Highway Trust Fund Balance
If Current Funding Levels are Maintained
20
10
0
-10
-20
-30
-40
-50
-60
Billions of Dollars
$9 billion
-$5.6 billion
-$20.5 billion
-$34.6 billion
-$47.6 billion
-$59.1 billion
2012 ($51.5 billion funding level)
2013 ($51.5 billion funding level)
2014 ($51.5 billion funding level)
2015 ($51.5 billion funding level)
2016 ($51.5 billion funding level)
2017 ($51.5 billion funding level)
Fiscal Year


Highway Trust Fund Balance
Under the Administration's Proposal
$20
$0
-$20
-$40
-$60
-$80
-$100
-$120
-$140
-$160
-$180
Billions of Dollars
$1.4 billion
-$25.8 billion
-$57.3 billion
-$92.1 billion
-$130 billion
-$170.8 billion
2012
2013
2014
2015
2016
2017
Fiscal Year

Maximizing Existing Revenue

As federal spending is realigned with available revenues, the impact of our limited resources must be maximized. This proposal will increase the value of infrastructure resources in a number of ways, including better leveraging existing federal funds and adopting policies that will attract private sector investment.

Private sector interest in infrastructure investment is considerable, and encouraging the private sector to responsibly partner with federal and state governments can significantly enhance the amount of available federal revenue. While public-private partnerships cannot address all of our infrastructure needs, significant changes in existing programs and policy will propel private sector investment.

This proposal builds upon and improves the successful Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) loan program. The measure dedicates $6 billion to the TIFIA program resulting in $60 billion in low interest loans to fund at least $120 billion in transportation projects. Providing additional funding for TIFIA will help meet demand for credit assistance for transportation projects and enable increased leveraging of Highway Trust Fund dollars with state, local and private-sector funding.

Under this initiative, existing lanes on the Interstate Highway System remain toll-free, however states will have the ability to toll new capacity on the Interstate System. States will also have greater flexibility to toll non-Interstate highways.

The proposal rewards states that create and capitalize state Infrastructure Banks to provide loans for transportation projects at the state and local level. The percentage of federal highway funding that a state can dedicate to a State Infrastructure Bank will be increased from 10 percent to 15 percent and states will receive a specific amount of funding that can only be used to fund State Infrastructure Banks.

This initiative also unlocks existing revenue sources that are not being fully utilized for their intended purpose. The Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund is supported by cargo fees and is critical for dredging and harbor channel improvements. Despite growing maritime infrastructure needs, these funds are not being used to maintain our ports. This proposal ensures that these funds are properly used to improve the nation's harbors.

This measure improves the underutilized Rail Rehabilitation and Improvement Financing (RRIF) Program by creating a faster and more predictable application process and allowing more flexibility in loan terms. While RRIF was created to allow for loans and loan guarantees to help improve the nation's rail infrastructure, the slow process for approval and constricting terms have stunted its potential. This proposal ensures the program is able to help address the nation's growing rail infrastructure needs at a time when the economy is continuing its recovery.

These initiatives will allow federal dollars to work more effectively and generate additional revenue for infrastructure investment. Better leveraging of resources is a key component of this proposal and will ensure greater value per dollar compared to previous transportation bills.

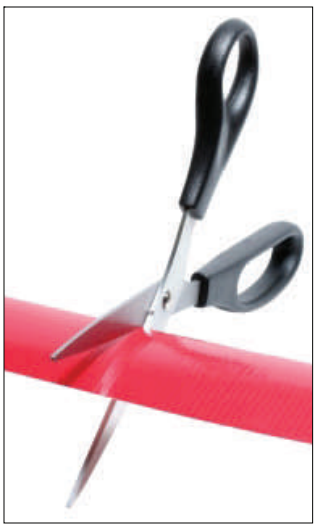
Streamlining Project Delivery & Cutting Red Tape

Government bureaucracy and red tape in the approval and permitting process cause infrastructure projects to be needlessly delayed. According to the Federal Highway Administration, highway projects can take up to 15 years to complete. While state and local governments deal with the seemingly endless review process, transportation capacity and safety improvements stall, construction costs escalate, and job creation remains on hold.

For example, after a series of fatal accidents on a roadway in Toulumne County, California, a project was proposed to widen the roadway by no more than two feet in any location, construct 2,000 feet of new guardrail, replace two culvert pipes, and resurface the road. This project took over seven years just to complete the environmental reviews and permit approvals. Unfortunately, during that seven year period there were additional serious accidents on the roadway that could have been avoided.

Project reviews are necessary to help protect the environment, but a more reasonable process is essential to using our resources more effectively. It can be done. When a design flaw caused the collapse of the I-35W bridge in Minnesota in 2007, the replacement was contracted to be completed in just 437 days and was completed significantly ahead of schedule using innovative contracting methods and a streamlined environmental review process.

This proposal employs lessons from these and other examples to streamline and condense the project review process by cutting bureaucratic red tape, allowing federal agencies to review transportation projects concurrently, setting hard deadlines for federal agencies to approve projects, and delegating more decision making authority to states.



Efficient Environmental Reviews

- Condenses the final environmental impact statement and combines it with the record of decision.
- Provides a single system to review decisions and reduce bureaucratic delay by requiring concurrent reviews and setting deadlines for approvals.
- Classifies projects in the right-of-way as categorical exclusions under NEPA.

Clarifies Eligibility for Pre-Construction Activities

- Allows for acquisition of land during NEPA where the transaction itself does not cause a change in the area's land use or cause adverse environmental effects.
- Encourages corridor preservation to reduce project costs, delays, and impacts on communities.
- Allows detailed design prior to NEPA completion at state expense, making such work eligible for federal reimbursement only if the project is subsequently approved.

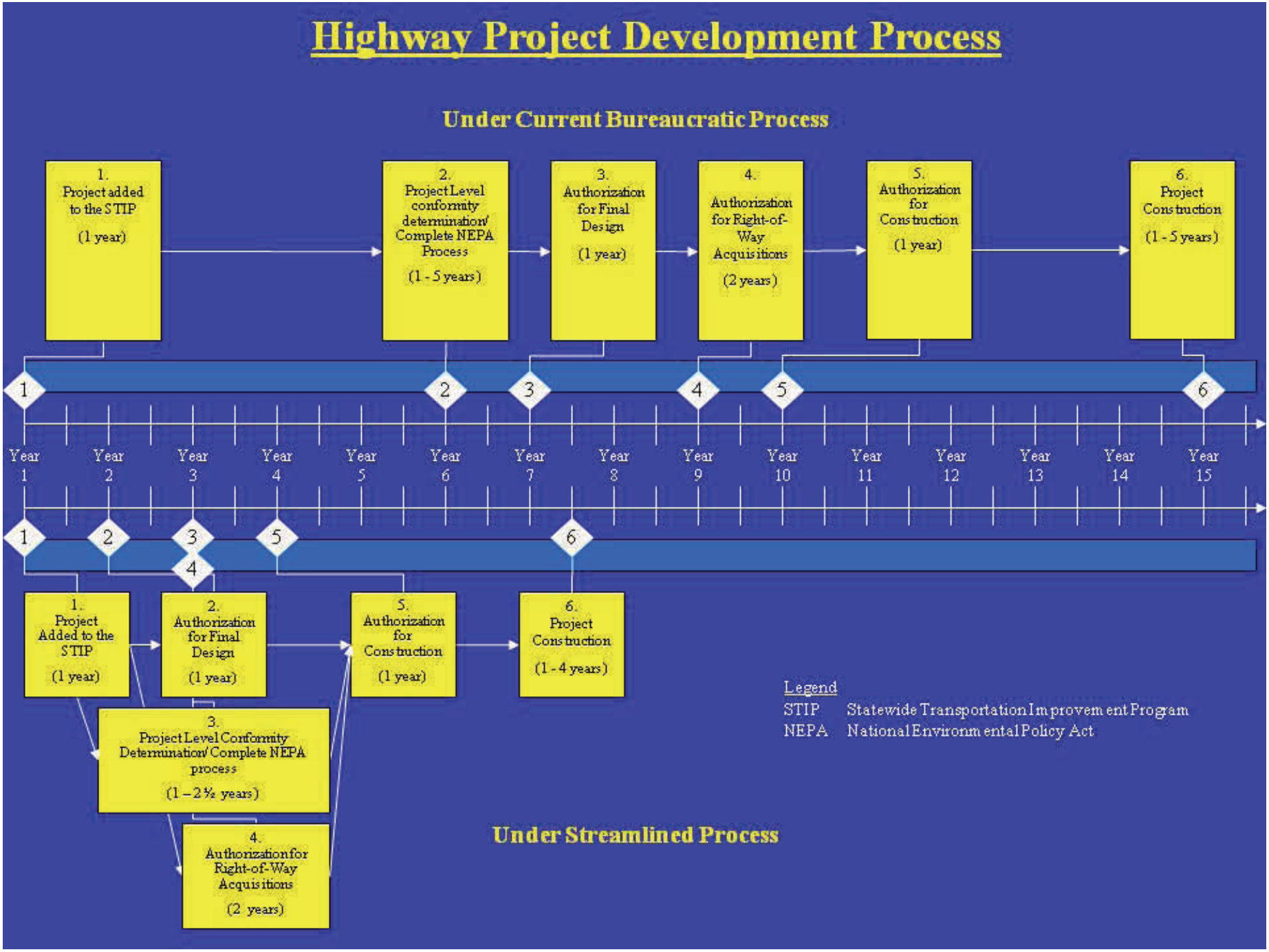
Promotes Integrated Planning and Programmatic Approaches

- Builds on the efforts in section 6001 of SAFETEA-LU and allows environmental decisions made in the planning process to be carried forward into the NEPA process.
- Clarifies authority for programmatic approaches (rather than project-by-project reviews).

By cutting the project review process time in half, we can ensure environmental protections remain in place while investing infrastructure resources in a much more effective manner.

 See chart on the following page for a comparison of the current bureaucratic process and the streamlined process under the proposal.

Highway Project Development Process



Program Reform & Reducing the Size of Government

We can also increase the value of our infrastructure resources by cutting the size of government.

Currently, there are over 100 federal surface transportation programs, dozens of which were created over the last 50 years to address issues beyond the original programmatic goals. Many of these programs are duplicative or do not serve a national interest; they simply add to the massive federal bureaucracy. Dollars that could be directed to infrastructure must instead be diverted to keep numerous programs operational.

This proposal reforms surface transportation programs by consolidating or eliminating approximately 70 programs that are duplicative or do not serve a federal purpose. Rather than applying spending cuts evenly across all existing programs, this proposal identifies programs that serve similar purposes, such as the Indian Reservation Roads Program and the Transit on Indian Reservations Program, and consolidates them into a Tribal Transportation Program. The proposal also identifies programs that do not serve a federal interest, such as the National Historic Covered Bridge Preservation Program and the Nonmotorized Transportation Pilot Program, and eliminates them.

Furthermore, states will no longer be required to spend highway funding on non-highway activities. States will be permitted to fund such activities if they choose, but they will be provided the flexibility to identify and address their most critical infrastructure needs. However, this additional flexibility will not be unchecked. States will be held accountable for their spending decisions through new performance measures and transparency requirements.

Many of the programs that will be consolidated or eliminated in this proposal were created during a period when it was common to spend more than was collected in transportation revenue. We can do more with less and create infrastructure jobs by targeting federal funding to programs and projects that have regional and national impacts and eliminating programs that do not.

See the following page for a chart representing current surface transportation programmatic bureaucracy.

Current Surface Transportation Programs & Bureaucracy

FTA

- Metropolitan & Statewide Planning (5303, 5304, 5305)
- Urbanized Area Formula Grants (5307)
- Clean Fuels Grant Program (5308)
- Major Capital Investments (New Starts) (5309(d))
- Major Capital Investments (Small Starts) (5309(e))
- Fixed Guideway Modernization (5309)
- Bus and Bus Facilities (5309, 5318)
- Formula Grants for Special Needs for Elderly Individuals and Individuals with Disabilities (5310)
- Nonurbanized Area Formula Grants (5311)
- Rural Transit Assistance Program (5311((b)(3)))
- Public Transportation on Indian Reservations (5311(c))
- Transit Cooperative Research Program (5313)
- National Research & Technology Program (5314)
- Job Access and Reverse Commute Program (5316)
- New Freedom Program (5317)
- Alternative Transportation in Parks and Public Lands (5320)
- Alternatives Analysis (5339)
- University Transportation Centers Program (TEA-21 5505)
- Over the Road Bus Program/Over the Road Bus Accessibility (3038)
- National Fuel Cell Technology Development Program (SAFETEA-LU 3045)

NHTSA

- State and Community Highway Safety Grants (Sec. 402)
- Highway Safety Research and Development (Sec. 403)
- Occupant Protection Incentive Grants (Sec. 405)
- Safety Belt Performance Grants (Sec. 406)
- State Traffic Safety Information System Improvements (Sec. 408)
- Alcohol-Impaired Driving Countermeasures Incentive Grant Program (Sec. 410)
- National Driver Register (Chapter 303 of 49 USC)
- High Visibility Enforcement (Sec. 2009 of Act)
- Motorcyclist Safety (Sec. 2010 of Act)
- Child Safety and Child Booster Seat Safety Incentive Grants (Sec. 2011 of Act)
- Administrative Expenses for Programs under Chapter 4 of 23 USC

FMCSA

- Motor Carrier Safety Grants (49 USC 31104(a))
- Administrative Expenses (49 USC 31104)
- Commercial Driver's License Program Improvement Grants (49 USC 31313)
- Border Enforcement Grants (49 USC 31107)
- Performance and Registration Information System Management Grant Program (49 USC 31109)
- Commercial Vehicle Information Systems and Networks Deployment (4126 of Act)
- Safety Data Improvement Grants (Sec. 4128 of Act)
- Commercial Driver's License Information System Modernization (49 USC 31309)
- Chapter 55 of 49 USC, Intermodal Transportation (GF)

FHWA

- Interstate Maintenance Program (Sec. 119 & 104(b)(4))
  - Interstate Maintenance Discretionary Program (Takedown) (Sec. 118(c))
- National Highway System (Sec. 103 & 104(b)(1))
  - Alaska Highway (Takedown) (Sec. 104(b)(1)(A))
  - Territorial Highway Program (Takedown) (Secs. 1118 of Act & 104(b)(1)(A))
- Bridge Program (Sec. 144)
  - Bridge Setaside for Designated Projects (Takedown) (Sec 144(g))
  - Off-system Bridges and Completion of Warwick Intermodal Station (Setaside of NLT 15%) (Sec 144(g)(3)(A))
- Surface Transportation Program (Sec. 133 & 104(b)(3))
  - On-the-Job Training/Supportive Services (Takedown) (Sec. 140(b))
  - DBE Training (Takedown) (Sec. 140(c))
- Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (Sec. 149 & 104(b)(2)
- Highway Safety Improvement Program (Sec. 148 & 104(b)(5))
  - Elimination of Hazards and Installation of Protective Devices at Railway-Highway Crossings (Takedown) (Sec. 130)
    - *Protective Devices at Railway-Highway Crossings (50% Setaside) (Sec. 130(e))*
  - High Risk Rural Roads (Setaside) (Sec. 148(f))
- Appalachian Development Highway System (Sec. 170 & Subtitle IV of 40 USC)
- Recreational Trails Program (Sec. 206)
- Metropolitan Planning (takedown from various programs)
- Emergency Relief (permanent authorization from GF)
- Federal Lands Highways Program
  - Indian Reservation Roads (Sec. 204)
  - Park Roads and Parkways (Sec. 204)
  - Refuge Roads (Sec. 204)
  - Public Lands Highways (Sec. 204)
    - Public Lands Discretionary (34% Setaside) (Sec. 202(b))
    - Forest Highways (66% Setaside) (Secs. 202(b) & 134 of STURAA)
- National Corridor Infrastructure Improvement Program (Sec. 1302 of Act)
- Coordinated Border Infrastructure Program (Sec. 1303 of Act)
- National Scenic Byways Program (Sec. 162)
- Construction of Ferry Boats and Ferry Terminal Facilities (Sec. 147)
- Puerto Rico Highway Program (Sec. 165)
- Projects of National and Regional Significance (Sec. 1301 of Act)
- High Priority Projects Program (Sec. 117 and Sec. 1702 of Act)
- Safe Routes to School Program (Sec. 1404 of Act)
- Deployment of Magnetic Levitation Transportation Projects (Sec. 1307) STA
- Highways for LIFE (Sec. 1502 of Act)
- Highway Use Tax Evasion Projects (Sec. 143)(Sec. 1115)
- Operation Lifesaver (Setaside from STP in 2005)
- Rail-Highway X-ing Hazard Elim. in High Speed Rail Corridors (Sec. 104(d)(2)) (STP Takedown in 2005)
- Equity Bonus Program (Sec. 105)
- Revenue Aligned Budget Authority (Sec. 110)
- Transportation, Community, and System Preservation Program
- Indian Reservation Road Bridges (Sec. 202)
- Truck Parking Facilities
- Freight Intermodal Distribution Pilot Grant Program
- Delta Region Transportation Development Program
- Work Zone Safety Grants
- Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act Amendments (Secs. 601-609)
- Value Pricing Pilot Program (Sec. 1012(b) of ISTEA)
- National Historic Covered Bridge Preservation
- Additional Authorization of Contract Authority for States with Indian Reservations (Sec. 1214(d)(5)(A) of TEA-21)
- Nonmotorized Transportation Pilot Program
- Grant Program to Prohibit Racial Profiling
- Transportation Projects (ssambn to make specified allocations)
- Denali Access System Program
- Surface Transportation Research Program (Secs. 502, 503, 506, 507, 509, 510 and Secs. 5201, 5203, 5204, 5309, 5501-5504, 5506, 5511, 5512, 5513 of Act)
- Training and Education (Sec. 504 and Sec. 5211 of Act)
- Bureau of Transportation Statistics (Sec. 111 of Title 49)
- University Transportation Research (Secs. 5505-5506 of Title 49)
- Intelligent Transportation Systems Research (Subtitle C of Title V of Act)

Short-Term Alternatives: Long-Term Failure

A multi-year bill that stabilizes the Highway Trust Fund is the responsible approach to investing in our nation's transportation infrastructure and providing the essential stability for states to plan major projects.

Proceeding with a short-term bill instead of a multi-year proposal will have the following impacts:

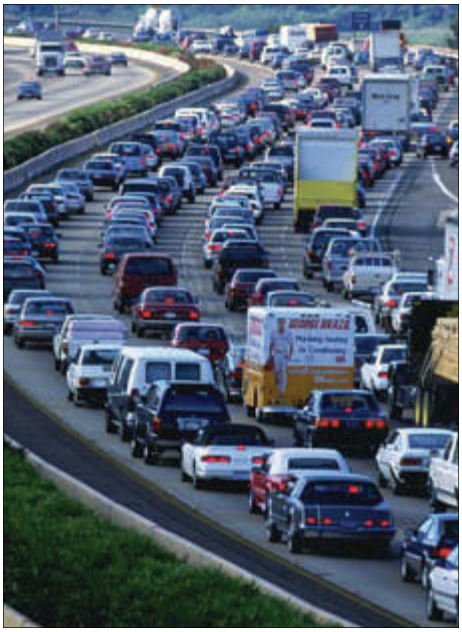
- The Highway Trust Fund will remain on a path to insolvency.
- States will not have the funding stability they need for long-term project planning.
- Federal infrastructure programs and policies will go without reform and the already bloated federal bureaucracy will continue to expand.
- The project approval process will continue to be bogged down in bureaucratic red tape.
- Existing federal resources will not be leveraged for maximum value.
- Opportunities will be missed to build upon programs that work well, such as TIFIA, and improve programs that don't, such as RRIF.
- Duplicative and non-essential federal programs will be continued, wasting tax dollars.
- Funds in the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund will continue to be withheld from investment in harbor channel maintenance.

Federal Highway Program

Fifty years ago the goal of the Federal Highway Program was to fund road construction projects that facilitated interstate travel and interstate commerce. After the Interstate Highway System was largely completed, the Federal Highway Program began to fund a broader range of projects. Today there are more than 50 programs run by the Federal Highway Administration that fund projects ranging from graffiti removal to planting of wildflowers.

This proposal will eliminate approximately 40 Federal Highway Administration programs and focus our limited federal resources on projects that have regional or national significance. Federal approvals and processes are streamlined to ensure projects are expedited, and administrative overhead is reduced through programmatic reform, increasing the amount of funding available for projects.

State Flexibility and Accountability



- States will maintain the opportunity to fund the broad range of eligible projects under the current Surface Transportation and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality programs, but they will not be required to spend a specific amount of funding on specific types of projects, such as transportation museums or landscaping.
- More than 90 percent of Federal Highway Program funding will be distributed through formula programs to state departments of transportation, allowing state and local transportation officials to prioritize projects rather than bureaucrats in Washington D.C.
- States are provided the maximum amount of flexibility in choosing what projects to fund with their federal highway dollars, but will be held accountable for those choices through performance measures and transparency requirements.

A Focus on the National Highway System

- The new Federal Highway Program focuses primarily on the National Highway System – a 160,000 mile system of roads that includes the Interstate Highway System and other roads important to the nation's economy, defense and freight mobility.
- More than half of the funding provided for the Federal Highway Program is directed to funding projects on the National Highway System.

Highway Safety

- The proposal continues the Highway Safety Improvement Program and allows funding to be used on safety projects on virtually any road.

Improved Leveraging of Resources

- In order to better leverage our limited federal resources, the Federal Highway Program funds the TIFIA program at $1 billion a year and distributes funding to states to capitalize State Infrastructure Banks. This keeps the federal financing bureaucracy at a minimum and maximizes states' financial capabilities.

Federal Transit Programs

The federal transit programs must do more with less. Current program funding levels are not sustainable, and this proposal focuses on policies and programs that most effectively contribute to public transportation services that meet the needs of commuters, transit-dependent individuals, and occasional transit riders.

Private Sector Partnering

- Removes current barriers that prevent the private sector from offering public transportation services.
- Provides incentives to vanpools and intercity bus operators to participate in federally-supported transit services.
- Requires that private intercity and charter bus operators be given reasonable access to federally-funded transit facilities.
- Encourages and rewards public-private partnerships when building new rail transit systems.

Focuses on Formula Programs

- Repeals discretionary programs that are unpredictable and not transparent, and focuses available funding on formula programs that provide stable and predictable funding to states and local transit agencies.
- Increases the percentage of available formula funds for transit programs that benefit suburban and rural areas, and programs that support transit services for the elderly, disabled, and transit-dependent.

Streamlines and Simplifies

- Consolidates and simplifies human service transportation programs from three separate programs to one.
- Streamlines the New Starts and Small Starts competitive grant program, cutting project development time in half.

Improves Transit Safety

- Strengthens the rail transit safety oversight program without creating a new federal transit safety bureaucracy.

Demands Better Performance

- Emphasizes and incentivizes improved performance by establishing performance management targets for all formula grant programs and incentivizing higher ridership through incorporating performance factors in apportionment formulas.

Highway & Motor Carrier Safety

Since 2005, highway fatalities have steadily declined from 43,510 to 33,808 in 2009. There also has been a dramatic reduction in severe and fatal crashes involving large trucks and buses in recent years with fatalities from crashes dropping from 5,116 in 2007 to 3,619 in 2009.

Reauthorization of the highway and motor carrier safety programs will continue the progress made in recent years by incorporating performance measures into each state's highway safety plan. Each state is required to establish quantifiable targets for each performance measure. This will help states target the most effective highway and motor carrier safety activities and hold states accountable for how they spend their federal funding.

NHTSA Safety Programs

- Focuses funding on NHTSA's highway safety grant program that distributes money to states through a formula for highway safety activities.
- Clarifies that states can use highway safety grant funding for initiatives to increase seat belt use, prevent impaired driving, and improve motorcycle safety.
- Changes the distribution formula for NHTSA's highway safety grant program so states that have laws and programs designed to increase seat belt use, prevent impaired driving, or improve the safety of young drivers receive more funding.
- Holds states accountable by requiring them to spend federal funding in areas where they are not meeting performance goals.

Motor Carrier Safety Programs

- Ensures that federal regulations keep unsafe trucks and buses off the road while allowing companies that operate in a safe and responsible manner to continue to do so.
- Prevents companies that have been shut down for violating safety standards from reincarnating as new carriers to avoid compliance.
- Consolidates grant programs and institutes new performance measures to focus state motor carrier safety efforts on reducing the number of crashes and fatalities involving large trucks and buses.
- Establishes annual inspection programs for buses.
- Requires the Secretary to establish a clearinghouse of positive drug and alcohol test results by commercial drivers.
- Requires the Secretary to prescribe regulations to establish minimum training requirements for commercial drivers.

Hazardous Materials Transportation

The Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration oversees the safe and secure shipment of nearly 1.4 million daily movements of hazardous materials, including such common products as paints, fuels, fertilizers, alcohols, chlorine, fireworks, and batteries that are essential to the general public and local economies.

This proposal advances safety, efficiency, and accountability in the transportation of hazardous materials and promotes the nation's economic health through certainty and uniformity in the regulation of those materials.

Promotes Regulatory Certainty and Transparency

- Requires regulations to be cost-effective and based on science, not overly burdensome, and take into account the economy, private industry, and jobs.
- Establishes regulatory certainty through notice and comment rulemaking.
- Promotes efficiency by incorporating safe special permits into regulations.
- Requires program review to improve administration of motor carrier permitting.

Creates Uniformity to Grow Business and the Economy

- Eliminates differing state requirements for notification, enforcement, and permitting that hinder the free-flow of commerce and do not increase safety levels.
- Establishes uniform training and enforcement among the states.
- Ensures the nation's expert on hazardous materials transportation remains its international representative.
- Eliminates overlapping federal jurisdiction.
- Protects economic growth by preempting unreasonable burdens on commerce.

Reduces Regulatory Burdens

- Bans certain regulations whose cost-effectiveness is unproven.
- Ensures no new user fees will be imposed on the industry.
- Eliminates unnecessary package inspections that burden commerce.
- Ensures penalties are fairly imposed on those entities responsible for violations.

Promotes Accountability and Saves Money

- Allows flexibility and requires accountability in managing grant programs.
- Eliminates wasteful earmarks.

Rail Transportation

Government must do more with less and leverage its federal investments to the fullest extent. Additionally, regulatory overreach and misguided spending programs are crippling our economy, stifling job creation, and wasting our limited federal resources. This proposal streamlines the project delivery process, reduces regulatory burdens, and promotes accountability and responsibility while maintaining the highest commitment to rail safety.

Doing More With Less and Leveraging Federal Investments

- Creates a faster and more predictable application process for Rail Rehabilitation and Improvement Financing (RRIF) loans.
- Increases access to the RRIF program by providing more flexible loan terms.
- Makes high-speed rail projects eligible for RRIF loans.

Streamlining Project Delivery

- Expedites project review which reduces costs to project sponsors.
- Increases coordination among federal agencies and allows for review of projects concurrently.
- Creates greater certainty by establishing hard deadlines for agency action and decisions.
- Delegates more decision making authority to the states.
- Expands classes of projects excluded from extensive environmental review.

Reducing Regulatory Burdens

- Increases the opportunity for the successful implementation for Positive Train Control (PTC) by changing the implementation deadline, providing clear direction for rail carriers, and allowing for technology neutral solutions, while maintaining our commitment to safety.
- Improves the rulemaking process at the Federal Railroad Administration to protect against overly-burdensome regulations and red tape.

Reforming Amtrak and the High-Speed Rail Program

- Places limits on Amtrak's use of federal funds to focus it on providing better service.
- Ensures high-speed rail projects are truly high-speed in their definition and design.
- Cuts Amtrak's operating subsidy by 25 percent in FY 2012 and 2013.
- Leverages private sector dollars and expertise for high-speed rail project financing.
- Requires transparency in project funding application evaluation and selection.

Promoting Accountability and Saving Money

- Repeals the Capital Investment Grants to Support Intercity Passenger Rail Program to prevent the Administration from continuing to give federal funds to low-speed rail projects, saving $1.1 billion in FY 2012 and FY 2013.
- Eliminates the congestion grants set aside program in the Intercity Passenger Rail grants program, currently authorized at $100 million per year in FY 2012 and 2013.
- Terminates Capital Grants for Rail Line Relocation, a program whose authorization expired in FY 2009 but continues to receive appropriations.

Maritime Transportation

Waterborne trade at our nation's ports is vital to the American economy, and millions of jobs throughout the country are dependent upon the commercial shipping industry. This proposal will reform and streamline maritime programs and policies to remove impediments to this cheap, safe and environmentally-friendly form of transportation.

Ensures Dedicated Funds Go to Infrastructure Programs

- The Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund (HMTF) provides funds for the United States Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) to carry out the dredging of navigation channels to their authorized depths and widths. The HMTF is based upon a user fee collected from shippers that utilize the nation's coastal ports. Unfortunately, we do not invest all of these fees back into harbor maintenance. In FY 2010 the HMTF grew by $1.3 billion, but only $828.6 million was spent. If the status quo continues, the HMTF is estimated to have a balance of $6.93 billion at the end of FY 2012.
- This proposal ties HMTF expenditures to revenues and ensures that we invest funds collected for harbor maintenance as intended.

Streamlines Project Delivery & Federal Bureaucracy

- Expedites permits administered by the Corps to help address backlogs that increase project costs, which are eventually borne by U.S. consumers and shippers.
- Streamlines the study process for Corps navigation projects
- Ensures that policies and projects among departments sharing jurisdiction of the maritime transportation system are coordinated and streamlined.

Encourages Private Sector Investment and Leverages Non-Federal Funding

- Encourages short-sea shipping by prohibiting double-taxation of vessels shipping goods between domestic ports. Our entire freight transportation network will be better utilized under this initiative.
- Allows non-federal project sponsors that have already arranged financing to contract with the Corps to expedite studies for navigation projects.
- Stimulates domestic shipbuilding and creation of maritime jobs by expanding the allowable use of tax-deferred Capital Construction Fund accounts.
- Clarifies provisions relating to credit for work carried out by non-federal sponsors of Corps projects.
- Ensures that ports seeking to deepen channels are not penalized for trying to attract the larger vessels becoming more common in shipping. This provision will help the U.S. remain globally competitive.

Summary of Proposal

Highway, Transit and Highway Safety Programs

Transportation Reauthorization Bill Funding

- Provides $230 billion over six years from the Highway Trust Fund – consistent with the amount of revenue deposited into the Highway Trust Fund during that time frame.

Better Leverage Existing Resources

- Funds the TIFIA program at $1 billion per year and provides incentives for states to create and capitalize State Infrastructure Banks.

Surface Transportation Program Reform

- Consolidates or eliminates nearly 70 duplicative programs or programs not in the federal interest.
- No longer requires states to spend highway funding on non-highway activities, but permits states to fund those activities if they so choose.

Streamlining the Project Delivery Process

- Cuts bureaucratic red tape by allowing federal agencies to review transportation projects concurrently, delegates project approval authority to states, and establishes hard deadlines for federal agencies to make decisions on permits and project approvals.
- Expands the list of activities that qualify for Categorical Exclusions – an approval process that is faster and simpler than the standard process.

Federal Highway Program

- Distributes nearly all federal highway funding to state DOTs through formula programs designed to preserve existing highways, build new highway capacity, and address congestion, freight mobility, and highway safety.
- Focuses the Federal Highway Program on the Interstate Highway System and the National Highway System – the highways that facilitate interstate travel and commerce.

Transit

- Removes current barriers that prevent the private sector from offering public transportation services, provides more focus on transit programs that benefit suburban and rural areas, and improves transit options for the elderly and disabled.

Highway and Motor Carrier Safety

- Ensures that federal regulators keep unsafe trucks and buses off the road while allowing companies that operate in a safe and responsible manner to continue to do so.
- Incentivizes states to enact laws that prevent impaired driving, increase seatbelt use and improve the safety of younger drivers.

Passenger and Freight Rail Programs

Better Leveraging of Federal Funds

- Leverages private sector dollars and expertise.
- Eliminates unnecessary grant programs.

Improves Current Programs

- Reforms underperforming programs, such as the Railroad Rehabilitation and Improvement Financing (RRIF) Program, to enhance participation.
- Promotes transparency and accountability in rail programs.

Streamlines Rail Project Delivery

- Reduces red tape by allowing concurrent reviews of rail projects, setting hard deadlines for decisions by agencies, and increasing coordination among agencies.
- Delegates more authority to the states.
- Expands the use of categorical exclusions for certain classes of projects.

Enhances Rail Safety

- Ensures positive train control is properly implemented in the safest manner.

Promotes Regulatory Reform

- Requires rail regulations to be based on reasoned cost/benefit analysis and the best available science, and to consider effects on jobs and the economy.

Maritime Transportation Programs

Restores Trust to the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund

- Ties Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund to revenues, ensuring fees paid by shippers go to channel maintenance.

Expedites Permit Processing

- Permanently extends the Corps of Engineers' Section 214 program. Permit backlogs impact the timeliness and cost of these investments - costs ultimately borne by U.S. consumers and shippers.

Expedites Navigation Studies

- Allows non-federal project sponsors to contract with the Corps to expedite their study for an enhanced navigation project.
- Exempts navigation projects from having to participate in reconnaissance phase of a project study.

Provides Equity for Deepening Projects

- Ensures that ports requesting the construction of deeper channels are not penalized for attempting to attract larger vessels.

Provides Incentives for Domestic Waterborne Transportation

- Eliminates double-taxation on shippers engaged in coast-wise or short-sea shipping.
- Expands the allowable use of Capital Construction Fund accounts to expand the U.S. flagged fleet and spur domestic shipbuilding.

Notes

House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee

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