

Freight-Related Provisions of the House Surface Transportation Authorization Act

Funding and Financing

Funding Levels

A total of \$500 billion in funding would be provided under the STAA over six years. This includes \$337.4 billion for highway programs, \$99.8 billion for transit, as well as an additional \$50 billion for high speed rail not funded out of the Highway Trust Fund. Compared to previous authorizations, a larger share of funding would go toward non-highway modes.

National Infrastructure Bank

The National Infrastructure Bank will finance highway, transit, rail, and intermodal freight projects, with priority for large capital projects that have significant national or regional economic benefits. The bank will provide grants and credit assistance as well as bonding authority to projects under the Metropolitan Mobility and Access, Projects of National Significance, and High-Speed Rail initiatives.

Intermodal Planning and Coordination

Intermodalism

An Office of Intermodalism led by an Under Secretary of Intermodalism will be established within the Office of the Secretary. The Under Secretary will administer the Metropolitan Mobility and Access and Projects of National Significance programs and National Infrastructure Bank. STAA will also revitalize the DOT Council on Intermodalism.

National Transportation Strategic Plan

The Under Secretary for Intermodalism will be responsible for developing and implementing a long-range multimodal National Transportation Strategic Plan that will have state long-range plans as its foundation. The plan will include nationally and regionally significant projects submitted by states and selected by US DOT based on their ability to create national economic benefits, improve mobility by increasing transportation options for passengers and freight, and create intermodal links.

Multi-state freight corridor planning

In addition to requiring state freight plans under the Freight Improvement Program, FIP allows US DOT to designate up to 10 freight corridor coalitions nationwide and make grants to these organizations, which will develop multimodal corridor-level plans that identify projects based on state and metropolitan plans and investment programs.

Highway Programs

Critical Asset Investment Program

This program, which will focus on bringing the National Highway System and bridges on the NHS and federal-aid highway system into a state of good repair, will consolidate the primary highway preservation programs: Highway Bridge, Interstate Maintenance and National Highway System. CAI requires US DOT to work with states to establish state-specific performance

targets to reduce deck area of structurally deficient bridges on the Interstate and National Highway Systems and reduce lane miles on the Interstate and National Highway Systems that are in poor or fair condition.

Freight Improvement Program

A new freight program will provide states funding by a yet-to-be-identified formula for highway freight projects, including projects on freight routes, access to freight-related facilities, truck parking, and freight planning. Funding will be focused on the NHS and secondary freight routes, generally local roads that carry relatively heavy volumes of freight that will be inventoried and designated by the state. To receive this funding, each state will be required to develop a freight plan and establish a freight advisory committee. DOT will establish quantifiable performance measures on speed and reliability of freight movement and work with states to set state-specific targets for each measure.

Projects of National Significance

This program, funded at \$25 billion over six years, will consolidate Projects of National and Regional Significance and a number of other existing programs into a single grant program focused on improving freight mobility by funding high-cost projects with significant national economic benefits. Projects will be selected through an open, competitive process based on national economic, mobility, and safety benefits. In addition to direct grant funding, DOT and a National Infrastructure Bank will provide grants, loans, federal credit support, bonding authority, and other financial tools to states to finance these nationally significant projects.

Metropolitan Mobility and Access

This new program, funded at \$50 billion over six years, will provide funding to metropolitan areas over 500,000 that develop a metropolitan mobility plan that lays out a comprehensive congestion-reduction strategy and identifies a system of projects that include system operations improvements, demand management, and new road and transit capacity. Ten metro areas will split 40 percent of the funding, while the other 60 percent will be split among the other metro areas. In addition, US DOT and the National Infrastructure Bank will be empowered to provide grants, loans, federal credit support, bonding authority, and other financial tools.