



National Freight Advisory Committee

Overview of Freight Proposals since MAP-21 Enactment

On July 6, 2012, the President signed into law the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21; P.L. 112-141), which reauthorized the federal surface transportation programs and laid the foundation for a significant federal focus on freight mobility. MAP-21 is set to expire on September 30, 2014.

The Administration's GROW AMERICA Act builds on the freight programs established in MAP-21. An overview of major freight activities and proposals since enactment of MAP-21 follows. The activities and proposals are also detailed in the attached comparison table. .

Overview on the Congressional Jurisdiction in the Reauthorization Process

Many Congressional committees share jurisdiction over the surface transportation reauthorization process. In the House of Representatives, the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee (T&I) has jurisdiction over the programmatic content of the bill, but the Ways and Means Committee has jurisdiction over the revenue provisions for the Highway Trust Fund (HTF) and any offsets. In the Senate, the Environment and Public Works Committee (EPW) has jurisdiction over highway programs; the Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee has jurisdiction over public transportation programs; the Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee (Commerce) has jurisdiction over the highway safety, truck safety, railroad, and freight provisions; and the Finance Committee has jurisdiction over revenues for the HTF and any needed offsets. These different committees will work together to join various legislative proposals under their jurisdictions for the final House- and Senate-passed bills.

Panel on 21st Century Freight Transportation

In October 2013, the House T&I Committee special Panel on 21st Century Freight Transportation issued a number of recommendations to safely and efficiently meet the needs of freight movement in the 21st century, following six months of reviewing the operation and needs of the Nation's freight transportation network. The recommendations focus on establishing a comprehensive national freight policy and designating a multimodal freight network, ensuring public and incentivizing private investment in freight facilities, promoting and expediting the delivery of projects that facilitate freight movement, authorizing dedicated, sustainable funding for multimodal freight Projects of National and Regional Significance through a grant process and establish clear benchmarks for project selection, identifying sustainable sources of revenue across all modes to provide investment in the national multimodal freight network, and developing specific funding and revenue options for transportation projects.

GROW AMERICA Act

The GROW AMERICA Act would make a number of amendments to the freight provisions established under MAP-21. First, it would create a two-tiered Multimodal Freight Incentive Program to fund freight projects. A Tier I grant would require a State to establish a freight advisory council and create a State freight plan, among other requirements. A Tier II incentive grant would require States to cooperate with neighboring States to analyze freight needs and

commit to spend the incentive funds on the highest priority projects on the freight plan, among other requirements.

The GROW AMERICA Act would establish a National Freight Infrastructure grant program to support multimodal freight-related infrastructure investments. Eligible projects would include multimodal capital infrastructure projects, operational improvements or equipment and would be evaluated based on the project's impact on achieving the National freight goals. Eligible projects would also need to be identified in the State freight plan.

The GROW AMERICA Act would require that State freight advisory committees approve a States' freight plan, which would include a list of freight projects identified by the State freight advisory committee.

Finally, the GROW AMERICA Act would make the Freight policy, network, plan, and data multimodal focused. It would also provide the Secretary with additional flexibility in designating the National freight network.

MAP-21 Reauthorization Act

The MAP-21 Reauthorization Act is the Senate EPW Committee's reauthorization proposal. As such, the proposal focuses almost exclusively on changes to the highway programs, with the expectation that the Senate Commerce Committee will provide proposals for a more multimodal freight program. The MAP-21 Reauthorization Act largely maintains many of the provisions established under MAP-21, with a number of minor enhancements and changes.

MOVE ACT of 2013

Rep. Albio Sires' Multimodal Opportunities Via Enhanced Freight Act of 2013 or MOVE Freight Act of 2013 defines the "national freight network" as the transportation systems most critical to the multimodal movement of freight. It directs the Secretary of Transportation to establish a national freight network for efficient movement of freight and directs the Secretary to require states to develop state freight plans for immediate and long-range planning activities and investments with respect to freight. Finally, it establishes a competitive grant program for capital investment projects that improve the efficiency of the national transportation system to move freight.

Freight Priorities Act

Sen. Booker's Freight Priorities Act would revise the National freight policy to encourage a greater emphasis on multimodal investment and add objectives and goals. The bill would also establish a multimodal freight pilot program to improve multimodal freight movement in densely populated and congested urban areas. Finally, the Act would establish a National Cooperative Freight Research Program.