



National Association County Engineers

A.R. Giancola, P.E. Executive Director
25 Mass. Ave NW Suite 580, Washington, DC 20001
Phone: (202) 393-5041 Fax: (202) 393-2630
Email: nace@naco.org Web: www.countyengineers.org

NACE UPDATE

The almost bi-weekly newsletter for Board members, Committee Chairs, and Members
June 30, 2009- Volume 09 Number 17

(Note: Sources of information include the AASHTO Journal, NACo staff, Senate and House publications, the Federal Highway Administration, and other association news journals)

Obituary

It is with great sadness that we report the sudden death of Jim Sorenson, Construction & System Preservation Team Leader, Office of Asset Management, Office of Infrastructure, FHWA. Jim was a tireless champion for maintenance, pavement preservation, and asset management and a great friend of local government. His forceful personality, dedication, and perseverance toward excellence were unmatched. We will miss him.

House Highways and Transit Subcommittee Approve Surface Transportation Authorization Bill

A House Transportation subcommittee approved a six-year, \$450 billion surface transportation authorization June 24, but some of the biggest issues remain outstanding. The Highways and Transit Subcommittee approved the bill on a unanimous voice vote, clearing it for a full committee markup that Chairman James Oberstar (D-MN) would like to hold in July, but only after resolving some fundamental revenue and distribution questions.

The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee has now posted online the full text of the 775-page draft surface transportation reauthorization bill that its Highways and Transit Subcommittee will mark up today. The PDF document is available for download here: http://transportation.house.gov/Media/file/Highways/HPP/OBERST_044_xml.pdf

During the markup, panel members discussed their concerns, including the distribution of federal gas tax dollars among states. The donor-donee state issue has delayed past transportation bills, and its resurrection comes to the chagrin of Oberstar, who has vowed to move his "transformational" bill despite Senate and White House objections. "It troubles me greatly that this equity issue is inequitable in itself," Oberstar told reporters after the hearing. The formula for distributing money to states "needs to be evaluated," Oberstar said, adding that he was not sure exactly how to address the issue. The Highway Trust Fund, which pays for road and bridge work, draws the majority of its funding from an 18.4 cents per gallon federal motor fuel tax. Some states receive more in road and transit funding than they contribute through the gas tax, while others receive less. But Oberstar suggested the argument from donee states misses the larger point and has a basic flaw: not all people pay the gas tax only in the state where they live. Oberstar cited "en route states" that may collect gas tax dollars from traveling non-residents. He

suggested that the Government Accountability Office study in depth Highway Trust Fund contributions and where exactly they come from.

Current law guarantees each state will receive at least 92 percent of their contributions. Several members from donor states offered and then withdrew an amendment that sought to express the sense of Congress that the 92 percent minimum rate or return should be maintained.

Larger Questions Remain

While donor state members appear ready to fight for a greater funding share, the bigger question of where those funds come from remains unanswered. Highways and Transit Subcommittee Chairman Peter DeFazio (D-OR) told reporters after the markup that he has made financing suggestions to the Ways and Means Committee, including an oil futures trading tax, bond initiatives, and a per-barrel oil tax. DeFazio has proposed a 0.2 percent tax on all oil futures transactions, which he said would raise \$190 billion over the transportation bill's six-year life. That funding could account for the entire spending increase the new measure seeks over current law's \$286 billion level.

The House Ways and Means Committee will hold a June 25 hearing on the financial needs of the Highway Trust Fund. The panel will hold another hearing in July to consider the Transportation Committee proposals, Oberstar said.

At the same time as the Ways and Means hearing, the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee also will hold a hearing on the Highway Trust Fund, with testimony from Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood. Transportation stakeholders are anxious for details of the administration's plan to pump up to \$17 billion into the Highway Trust Fund while also reforming programs, but LaHood is unlikely to discuss the specifics, an administration official told BNA.

During the House markup, subcommittee members who spoke on the issue were unanimous in supporting Oberstar's plan to move the bill regardless of the White House. All but two of the panel's 45 Democratic members signed a June 24 letter to Obama opposing the 18-month proposal. Senate lawmakers, facing a busy agenda and lagging behind House progress on the authorization, generally support the extension.

12 Total Amendments Offered, Withdrawn

Republican subcommittee members had agreed to hold off on amendment votes until the full committee. More than 30 amendments were filed from Republicans, according to a GOP committee aide, but only 12 were offered during the markup. "There are more issues out there that were not raised today," the aide said. In addition to the rate of return amendment, several other Republican members offered and then withdrew amendments after securing pledges from DeFazio and Oberstar to address their concerns. While the amendments offered were not voted on, they signal some of the myriad issues that could come up again when the full committee tackles the measure. The panel discussed but did not vote on the following amendments:

-an amendment from Rep. Jerry Moran (R-KS) and Aaron Schock (R-IL) allowing states to use up to five percent of Critical Asset Investment program funding for bridges not on the federal-aid

highway system, a network of major roads that includes the Interstate Highway System; -an amendment from Rep. Gary Miller (R-CA) to strike language requiring land use and housing costs be considered in transportation plans, part of the administration's "livability" initiative; - another Miller amendment to make permanent the Surface Transportation Project Delivery Pilot Program, which was opened to five states under current law but would be expanded to all states, while remaining a pilot program, under the committee draft; -an amendment from Rep. Henry Brown (R-SC) to add increased tourism access and reduced emergency evacuation time to the criteria used to select projects under the Projects of Regional and National Significance program; -an amendment from Rep. Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV) granting a truck weight limit exemption, up to 126,000 pounds, for a 12-mile stretch of Interstate 77 to aid coal transportation; -an amendment from Reps. Mario Diaz-Balart (R-FL) and Connie Mack (R-FL) to maintain current law's allowance of states to transfer up to 50 percent of their federal funds within various highway programs; -an amendment from Rep. Charles Dent (R-PA) to add hydrogen blend fuels to the bill's scope of "clean fuel vehicles"; -a Mack amendment to strike prevailing wage requirements under the Davis-Bacon Act on any highway or transit projects; -an amendment from Rep. Mary Fallin (R-OK) to raise the funding thresholds that trigger a required state financial management plan and project management plan; -another Fallin amendment to exempt certain agriculture industry trucks from some hours of service, inspection, and weight limit regulations; and -a Schock amendment to require geographic equity in the distribution of Projects of National Significance funding, similar to language applied to a \$1.5 billion discretionary program created under the economic stimulus package.

NACE Applauds High Risk Rural Roads Letter Circulated by U.S. Rep. Arcuri

NACE as a member of the Roadway Infrastructure Safety Coalition (RISC) has been privileged to be working with U.S. Rep. Michael Arcuri (D-NY) on raising awareness for increased funds for high risk rural roads in the next transportation authorization. On June 17, 2009, Rep. Arcuri circulated a Dear Colleague letter to other Members of Congress, encouraging them to sign on to a letter urging the leadership of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee to increase funds for high risk rural roads. [Click here](#) to read the letter and see which Members of Congress signed on.

States Warned Another Crisis Is Imminent with the Highway Trust Fund

U.S. Deputy Transportation Secretary John Porcari sent a letter last week to state departments of transportation advising them of an impending cash shortfall in the Highway Trust Fund's Highway Account and stating that the Federal Highway Administration could begin to ration state repayments as soon as early August. As occurred last summer when a looming shortfall in the trust fund became apparent, Porcari advised states that FHWA might have to shift to weekly or biweekly payments in the event that state reimbursement requests exceed the cash available in the Highway Trust Fund. Typical procedure is for FHWA to reimburse states the same day for bills submitted on federally supported projects.

AASHTO Reports 1,500 Projects Underway Nationwide

All state departments of transportation have succeeded in meeting the June 30 deadline for obligating half their highway economic recovery funds, according to testimony at a House oversight hearing Thursday. As of June 19, 1,500 projects were already underway in 45 states. Those projects will create or sustain 50,000 jobs federal officials reported.

According to testimony by Acting Deputy Administrator of the Federal Highway Administration Jeff Paniati, as of June 24, 5,000 projects valued at \$15.7 billion have been approved by the agency, representing 59 percent of total funds. He also noted that 15 states have obligated 80 percent of their funds, and Maine has obligated 100 percent.

AASHTO Executive Director John Horsley said, "When faced with the challenge to put recovery dollars to work extremely quickly, the state DOTs stepped up and delivered as promised. States are also putting recovery projects into economically distressed areas. For example, Arkansas will deliver 84 percent of its highway recovery jobs to distressed areas; Michigan, 77 percent. Transportation investment is leading all sectors in the nation's recovery effort."

The economic recovery act provided \$48 billion for transportation investments out of a total recovery package of \$787 billion. Of the \$27.5 billion for highways, \$26.81 billion was apportioned to the States. Nearly one-third of the funding is directed specifically to cities and counties. All highway funds must be obligated by March 2, 2010.

Recovery Act: 120-Day Progress Report for Transportation Programs

On June 25, 2009, the U.S. House of Representatives' Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure held a hearing to examine progress to date on implementing the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. A summary of the subject matter, witness testimonies, and a video of the hearing are available online. [\[More\]](#)

Visit Our Local Roads Matter! Campaign Headquarters

Our nation's local roads are critical to every facet of our lives. Safe and efficient roads and bridges are necessary for economic vitality, to revitalization, to schools, to trade, to healthcare, to business, in times of crisis, to families and to our overall quality of life. To visit the NACE Local Roads Matter Campaign site visit <http://countyengineers...org/LRM/index.html> or click on the Local Roads Matter button on the left side of this page. A needs assessment brochure is available at the following link [NACE Needs Assessment brochure](#).

Former Illinois County Engineer selected as a Top Ten

Nabi R. Fakroddin, P.E., S.E., F.ASCE, senior project manager for HNTB Corporation/Illinois Tollway, was named a 2009 Top Ten Public Works Leader of the Year by the American Public Works Association (APWA). He was presented with the award on Wed., June 24 at Chicago Metro Chapter's Award Luncheon at Carlisle in Lombard, IL.

"Nabi is an engineering manager whose advice is actively sought and whose opinion is highly regarded," said John P. Kos, P.E., director of transportation and operations for DuPage County, Ill. "He is a talented engineer, a first-rate manager and has been an excellent steward of the public trust throughout his career."

Fakroddin has more than 50 years of engineering experience in the planning, design, construction and maintenance of roads and bridges throughout the state of Illinois. A Senior Project Manager with HNTB Corporation, he is currently assigned to the Illinois Tollway Program Management Office, providing project management for the \$6.3 billion congestion-

relief program. He is responsible for the review and approval of bridge design plans prepared by consultants for structural adequacy and conformance to Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) and Illinois Tollway policies.

Prior to his involvement with HNTB Corporation, Fakroddin served as Principal/Associate with Smith Engineering Consultants, where he established a structural department for the civil engineering firm, which later transformed into a major structural design firm. Fakroddin's career in the public sector began with the Illinois Department of Transportation in Springfield, Ill., in 1957 working for the Bureau of Bridges and Bureau of Local Roads. Fakroddin then moved on to become the superintendent of highways in Warren County, and then finally retired as director of Transportation of Kane County in 1997. During his career he helped recruit and train young engineers not only to be good bridge designers, but also encouraged them to acquire their professional licenses. Among the awards Fakroddin has received over the years County Engineer of the Year from Illinois Association of County Engineers.

Strengthening Interjurisdictional Coordination on Transportation and Related Land Use

The Rudin Center for Transportation Policy and Management at New York University has released a report that explores initiatives to coordinate land use and transportation planning.

[\[More\]](#)

FHWA Traffic Incident Management (TIM) Self Assessment Web Conference

Thursday, July 30th, 2009 at 2:00 p.m. Eastern. Please join a panel discussion on the Traffic Incident Management (TIM) Self Assessment (SA) at a Web conference on Thursday, July 30th, 2009 at 2:00 p.m. Eastern. Panelists will present a discussion of the TIM SA process, success stories and best practices, cumulative results of the survey, the role in strategic performance metric measurements, and potentially new criteria to capture incident performance collection activities. In addition, FHWA will present a demonstration of the new TIM Self Assessment automated tool. For more information and to register, click on the following link:

https://www.nhi.fhwa.dot.gov/resources/webconference/web_conf_learner_reg.aspx?webConfID=17432

ARRA/FHWA Midwestern States In-Place Recycling Conference

Please find the following link with the announcement, registration and sponsorship form for the ARRA/FHWA Midwestern States In-Place Recycling Conference, August 11 - 13, 2009, in Bloomington, Minnesota, at the Minneapolis Airport Marriott.

<http://www.pavementpreservation.org/recyclingworkshop/> If you have questions about the Minnesota seminar, please contact Jason Dietz at 703-404-6350 or Jason.Dietz@fhwa.dot.gov.

June 2009 issue of Concrete Pavement

Please follow this link to read this online newsletter: <http://www.pavement.com/PPP/2009/PPP-01-2009.html> **In this issue:**

Now is the Time for Concrete Overlays

Tips for Selecting an Overlay Strategy

Resources Provide Strategies, Techniques, and Tips for Concrete Overlays

Senate Confirms Key Transportation Officials

Iwasaki Named Caltrans Director

Shatnawi Appointed to New Caltrans Division
International Conference Covers Sustainable Concrete Pavements
Website Helps States Meet Financial Challenges
Transportation Department Releases \$140 million in Regular Grants
National Highway Instate Offers Precast Concrete Pavement Training

Sign assessment/replacement spec for ARRA

The subject FHWA guide specification is **now** posted on our website:
http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/roadway_dept/night_visib/sectionzzz/

Impact of Shoulder Width and Median Width on Safety

TRB's National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) Report 633: Impact of Shoulder Width and Median Width on Safety explores crash prediction models and accident modification factors for shoulder width and median width on rural four-lane roads. [\[More\]](#)

Cost Analysis of Alternative Culvert Installation Practices in Minnesota

The Center for Transportation Studies at the University of Minnesota has released a report that explores state wide fish passage concerns related to culvert road crossings on public waters and the cost comparison between conventional and alternative culvert designs. [\[More\]](#)

UF/TRC Workshop on Roundabouts, August 18, 2009 (Sheraton Orlando North Hotel)

The Transportation Research Center (TRC) at the University of Florida is hosting a Workshop on Roundabouts on August 18, 2009 from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm at the Sheraton Orlando North Hotel <<http://www.photowebusa.com/sheraton/maitland/>> in Maitland, Fla.

The workshop has been developed for transportation professionals interested in learning the latest in roundabout design and operations. Six Professional Development Hours (PDHs) will be offered. Workshop presenters include Ken Sides, city of Clearwater, Fla.; Michael Wallwork, Alternate Street Design, P.A.; Mark Doctor, FHWA; Dan Burden, Glatting Jackson Kercher Anglin, Inc./ Walkable Communities, Inc.; Lee Rodegerdts, Kittelson & Associates, Inc.; Rahmi Akcelik, Akcelik Pty Ltd; Aaron Elias, the University of Florida; and Milton Carrasco, Transoft Solutions. Workshop Web site: http://trc.ce.ufl.edu/Roundabouts_Workshop_2009.html

A block of sleeping rooms for the workshop is now available at the Sheraton. Room rate is \$79/night. The group rate is available until July 30, 2009. Registration Fees: Early-birds \$195 USD (register by July 15, 2009) Regular or on site \$245 USD (if on site, with credit card only) Workshop Sponsors \$145 USD.

Sponsorship Opportunities Available! There are various sponsorship levels which will provide your company a discounted workshop registration rate and more. Your generous contribution will help to support this workshop and future technology transfer activities. More sponsorship information is available at http://trc.ce.ufl.edu/Roundabouts_Workshop_2009.html

Questions? For more information on the workshop, registration and sponsorship opportunities, contact Ines Aviles-Spadoni at 352-392-9537, Ext. 1409 or at iaviles@ce.ufl.edu<<mailto:iaviles@ce.ufl.edu>>.

**ENJOY OUR NATION'S BIRTHDAY ON JULY 4TH ! DRIVE
SAFE**