

First Look at the Freight-Related Aspects of the New Federal “Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST)” Act

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FAST Overview

- President Obama signed the “Fixing America’s Surface Transportation” (FAST) Act on December 4, 2015, after Congressional approval of the \$305 Billion bill
- This is the first federal bill to provide funding for more than two years since the six-year SAFETEA-LU was approved in 2005, providing increased funding certainty
- For FY 2016-2020, FAST includes funding for highways, transit, and highway motor carrier safety, as well as two new freight systems programs:
 - The Nationally Significant Freight and Highway Projects program (\$4.5 Billion through discretionary grants)
 - The National Highway Freight Program (\$6.3 billion apportioned to the states)

FY16-20 Increased Spending

■ FY2016 Spending

- 5% increase (2.1 billion over FY15) to highways
- 8% increase (\$753 million over FY15) to transit

■ FY2017-FY2020 Spending

- 2.1-2.4% increase per year to highways
- 2.1% increase per year to transit

■ MPO Planning Funds

- 4% increase over FY15 (\$443m) to FY16 (\$460m)

FAST Changes to Metropolitan Transportation Planning

- Previous requirements from MAP-21 and before carry on, with the following new/changed requirements:
 - TIP/Plan consideration of intermodal facilities supporting intercity buses, intercity bus facilities, and commuter vanpool providers
 - Strategies to reduce vulnerability due to natural disasters
 - An optional Congestion Management Plan may be developed that includes projects and strategies that reduces congestion and increases job access opportunities for low-income households
 - MPO consultation with State agencies that plan for tourism and natural disaster risk reduction
 - MPO participation should include public ports, intercity bus operators, and commuter vanpool providers
 - New TIP/Plan “planning factor” added to “Improve the resilience and reliability of the transportation system”

Source: Adapted from the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations

National Highway Freight Program

- Establishes a new National Highway Freight Program as part of the core Federal-aid Highway Program
 - this formula program is authorized at \$6.2 billion over five years
 - requires states to complete a Freight Plan and update it every five years
- Establishes a Nationally Significant Freight and Highway Projects discretionary grant program for major highway and freight projects funded at \$4.5 billion over five years
 - eligible for projects that cost a minimum of \$100 million, 30% of a state's apportioned total, or 50% of the apportioned total for the largest state in the case of multistate projects
 - 10% of funding reserved for small projects – 25% set aside for rural projects
 - federal share limited to 60% of project cost
- Establishes the National Highway Freight Network consisting of:
 - the 41,518 mile network identified during the designation of the MAP-21 primary freight network in effect the day before enactment of the FAST Act
 - Those portions of the Interstate system not included in the 41,518 mile network
 - critical rural freight corridors designated by each state (limitations and requirements apply)
 - critical urban freight corridors (limitations and requirements apply)
 - MPOs in areas over 500,000 population may designate urban freight corridors in consultation with the state
 - states designate urban corridors in areas under 500,000 population in consultation with MPOs
 - establishes a process for redesignation every 5 years but caps the increase in mileage to 3% of the total system



National Multimodal Freight Network

- FAST creates a National Multimodal Freight Network which includes:
 - a National Highway Freight Network consisting of the 41,518 primary freight network highway miles (identified under MAP-21), those portions of the Interstate system not included in the 41,518 network, critical rural freight corridors, and critical urban freight corridors;
 - the freight rail systems of Class 1 railroads;
 - public ports with at least 2 million short tons of annual trade;
 - inland and intracoastal waterways;
 - the Great Lakes, the St. Lawrence seaway and coastal and ocean routes along which domestic freight is transported;
 - The 50 airports within the United States with the highest annual landed weight; and
 - Other strategic freight assets including strategic intermodal facilities and freight rail lines of Class II and Class III railroads designated by the Under Secretary as critical to interstate commerce.
- The goal of designating a National Multimodal Freight Network is to improve network and intermodal connectivity.

Rail Provisions

- FAST creates new grant program to assist in financing the cost of improving passenger and freight rail
 - Eligible recipients include (1) a state; (2) a group of states; (3) an interstate compact; (4) a public agency or authority established by one or more states; (5) a political subdivision of a state; (6) Amtrak or another rail carrier that provides intercity transportation; (7) a Class II or Class III railroad; (8) any rail carrier or rail equipment manufacturer in partnership with at least one of the entities listed in (1) through (5); (9) the TRB; (10) a University transportation center; or (11) a non-profit labor organization representing employees of rail carriers.
 - Eligible projects include (1) deployment of railroad safety technology; (2) capital projects; (3) a highway-rail grade crossing improvement project (4) rail line relocation and improvement; (5) preparation of regional rail and corridor service development plans (6) any project the Secretary considers necessary to enhance multimodal connections
 - Limits federal share to 80%
- FAST creates a new grant program to fund capital projects that reduce the state of good repair backlog of qualified rail assets
 - For intercity passenger rail – eligible recipients include states, Amtrak, and political subdivisions of states
- FAST provides \$199 million for positive train control from the Mass Transit Account of the Highway Trust Fund for PTC implementation grants

New “Performance Management Data Support” Program

- Program to develop, use, and maintain data sets and data analysis tools
- To assist states and metropolitan planning organizations in carrying out performance management analyses, including
 - Collection and distribution of vehicle probe data
 - Collection of household travel data
 - Enhancement of existing data collection and analysis tools to accommodate performance measures, targets, and related data to better understand trip origin and destination, trip time, and mode
 - Improved performance predictions and travel models
 - Evaluation of the effects of project investments on performance

Next Steps

- TPB Staff will continue reviewing FAST legislation and related documentation for potential impacts
- Work continues under current MAP-21 requirements and regulations as long as they are in effect
- Include preliminary activities to address FAST requirements and opportunities in draft FY2017 Unified Planning Work Program