

COMPASS 2017 FEDERAL TRANSPORTATION POLICY POSITIONS

REAUTHORIZATION OF FAST ACT

Begin working TODAY on reauthorization

COMPASS appreciates Congress passed a longer-term (5-year) transportation authorization bill, but there is much work to do for the next authorization in Fiscal Year 2020. Policy makers and transportation entities cannot relax and wait to begin crafting reauthorization as expiration of FAST Act approaches. There are many challenging issues that will require thoughtful and difficult decisions. A solution to the Highway Trust Fund insolvency must begin to be crafted and debated today, not tomorrow.

FEDERAL TRANSPORTATION FUNDING

Stabilization of Federal Highway Trust Fund (HTF)

COMPASS supports a permanent, long-term solution to funding the HTF and discourages temporary infusions of general fund dollars. The insolvency of the HTF is the single largest impediment to addressing the nation's transportation infrastructure challenges. Continual short-term, unpredictable funding through the use of general fund dollars hampers state and local planning and construction of transportation projects.

Federal Fuel Tax

COMPASS supports an increase in the federal motor fuels tax and indexing the fuel tax rate to inflation. The federal motor fuels tax is the most logical and readily available "user-pay" solution to stabilizing the Highway Trust Fund. The fuel tax has not been increased since 1993 and the political challenges associated with fuel tax increases have had a negative effect on the nation's transportation infrastructure investments. Indexing the fuel tax to the rate of inflation will mitigate many of the political challenges associated with funding the HTF long-term.

Funding Diversification

COMPASS supports diversifying transportation user fee concepts to fund the Highway Trust Fund. Improvements in fuel efficiency and development of alternative fuel vehicles have had a negative effect on the HTF account. Continued reliance on outdated, traditional fuel excise tax approach to funding the Highway Trust Fund is not practical. Additional user fee concepts are necessary to capture the current trends in transportation and transportation infrastructure funding.

OTHER PROVISIONS

Expand Private Investment Incentives

COMPASS supports continued expansion of incentives for private investment in roadway, bridge, and alternative transportation infrastructure. Congress should continue its focus to encourage project financing, private investment, and Public-Private Partnerships as part of the surface transportation act.

Public Transportation Programs

COMPASS supports increases in federal funding for public transportation. Congress should provide more robust growth in the federal public transportation program to help transit systems meet the mobility needs to their communities. Public transportation providers in both urban and rural areas of Idaho operate on very limited funding.

Non-Motorized Transportation

COMPASS supports continued federal support for non-motorized transportation based on local needs or desires. Encouragement to participate in, and incentives to provide, safe bicycle and pedestrian mobility options should remain a priority for Congress. Federally funded transportation projects should incorporate safe bicycle and pedestrian pathways.