

July 2016 Monthly Report for MTC



To: Steve Heminger, Executive Director MTC

From: Tom Bulger, President GRI

Date: August 28, 2016

Re: Monthly Report for July 2016

Please note that not a lot of Federal Transportation activity occurred during this month due to Congress's recess in July until after Labor Day, Political Conventions and reelection activities.

- **Appropriations Stalled**
- **Online Sales Tax Simplification Act (Draft)**
- **New Amtrak President & CEO**
- **San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART) Secures a Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Grant**
- **Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Bus Grants**
- **President Signs Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Extension**

Appropriations Stalled

Any chance Congress had thus far of completing its annual spending bills is all but dead. Republican leaders are debating how long a stopgap spending bill will be before the end of the Federal Fiscal year on September 30, 2016. House conservatives are pushing for a Continuing Resolution that would be for six months or with a new President. Leaders in both parties were hopeful that the annual appropriations bills could be finished without the stalemates in recent years. This was based on last year's budget deal that the Republicans struck on overall discretionary funding at \$1.07 trillion for this year. However, conservatives in the House hated this deal. Senate Republicans stuck to the deal, but the appropriations process stalled when the Senate Democrats blocked the Defense spending bill.

Online Sales Tax Simplification Act (Draft)

During the week of August 22, 2016 the House Judiciary Committee Chairman Bob Goodlatte (R-Va.) released a discussion draft of a remote sales tax bill. While this is a major development, there is still a lot of work to do before the bill moves forward. However, there are initial concerns, specifically which moves away from a destination based sourcing tax and would require states to adopt to adopt a single sales tax rate.

New Amtrak President & CEO

Charles W. "Wick" Moorman has been named Amtrak's President and Chief Executive effective September 1, 2016. He is the retired Executive Chairman of the Board of Directors of Norfolk Southern Railway.

San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART) Secures a Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Grant

In July 2016, BART secured a \$6,321,688 TIGER Grant for the Gateway to Oakland Uptown Project. Total project costs are estimated to be \$28,674,490.

Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Bus Grants

On July 27, 2016, FTA announced FY 2016 Low or No-Low Emission Bus Program Projects. Central Contra Costa Transit Authority received \$2,684,311 for all-electric buses. Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority received \$2,458,305 to purchase battery electric zero-emissions buses and fast charging stations, upgrade a maintenance facility and provide workforce development on new technology buses.

President Signs Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Extension

On July 15, 2016, the President signed into law H.R.636, a 14.5 month extension of the FAA program through September 30, 2017. The legislation does not include Senate passed provisions providing for the broad preemption of state and local laws affecting the use of commercial drones. The preemption language was championed by Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.).

The FAA law sustains current most funding levels. Passenger Facility Charges (PFC'S) will remain in place, despite provisions in both renewal bills providing local airports with more flexibility in using PFC's.