

**Metropolitan Transportation Commission and Association of Bay Area Governments
Joint MTC Legislation Committee and ABAG Legislation Committee**

March 13, 2020

Agenda Item 9a

Tom Bulger's Report

Subject: February 2020 Report from Washington, D.C. advocate.

Recommendation: Information

Attachments: Attachment A: Tom Bulger's Report – February 2020



Therese W. McMillan

February 2020 Monthly Washington, D.C. Report



To: Therese W. McMillian, Executive Director

From: Tom Bulger, President GRI

Date: February 22, 2020

RE: Monthly Report for February 2020

- **United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (Build) Grants Announced**
- **Passenger Ferry Grant Program Announced**
- **State of the Union**
- **Autonomous Vehicles (AV's) House Hearing**
- **Administration's Infrastructure Proposal**
- **MTC / ABAG Washington, D.C. Trip Details**

Coming and Going

United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (Build) Grants Announced

On February 19, 2020 the USDOT published a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) in the Federal Register. The notice by the USDOT includes \$ 1 billion in Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 discretionary grant funding through the BUILD.

BUILD awards will not exceed \$25 million, with no state awarded more than \$100 million. USDOT expects to award half of the \$1 billion to rural areas.

The deadline to submit applications is May 18, 2020.

Passenger Ferry Grant Program Announced

On January 30, 2020 the USDOT Transit Administration announced a \$30 million FY 2020 competitive grant funding program for passenger ferry projects. The announcement encourages applicants to demonstrate rural opportunities.

The deadline for applying is March 30, 2020.

State of the Union

In the President's State of the Union Address he endorsed the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works legislation (S.2302) for the federal-aid highway program. The surface transportation reauthorization is pending three other Senate committee inputs – the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs' section, the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation's section and the Senate Committee on Finance's section – in addition to inputs from the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and the House Ways and Means Committee.

Autonomous Vehicles (AVs) House Hearing

On February 11, 2020, I attended a House Committee on Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Consumer Protection and Commerce related to autonomous vehicles. Jeffrey P. Tumlin, Director of the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency testified. His three main recommendations were:

1. Congress should require event data recorders in autonomous vehicles;
2. Congress should ensure that every safety incident involving autonomous vehicle is documented in a national database; and
3. State and local governments should not be preempted from taking AV vehicle safety actions to protect the public from risks while AVs are tested.

Administration's Infrastructure Proposal

On February 10, 2020, the White House released the Administration's FY 2021 budget. Included in this announcement is a ten-year \$810 billion reauthorization proposal with an additional \$190 billion in FY 2021 for a total of \$1 trillion over ten years. The budget document acknowledges that the Highway Trust Fund cannot support this level of federal investment. Instead the Administration stated that they will work with Congress to figure out how to pay for increased surface transportation investments. They also stated an interest in ending the General Fund bailouts to the Highway Trust Fund which began during the Bush Administration.

MTC / ABAG Washington, D.C. Trip Details

Progress is well underway with scheduling numerous Congressional, Administration and local/regional government interest groups meetings. "Save the Date" announcements to invitees for the annual California Congressional Transportation Reception on March 31, 2020 in the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Room will be sent the week of February 24.

Coming & Going

DeLania Hardy has departed as the Executive Director of the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations. The announcement was made on February 12, 2020. Bill Keyrouze is the acting Interim Executive Director.