

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

June 12, 2020


Agenda Item 7c

Tom Bulger's Report

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

Recommendation: Information

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


Therese W. McMillan

May 2020 Monthly Washington, D.C. Report



To: Therese W. McMillan, Executive Director

From: Tom Bulger, President GRI

Date: May 22, 2020

RE: Monthly Report for May2020

- House Approves Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions (HEROES) Act
- Communication with California Senate Staff and Bay Area Transportation & Infrastructure Committee Members Staff
- Coalition for America's Gateways and Trade Corridors (CAGTG) Virtual Meeting
- Recalibrating Reopening Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA)

House Approves Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions (HEROES) Act

On May 15, 2020, the House of Representatives approved the Heroes Act (H.R. 6800) on a 208 to 199 vote. The HEROES Act would provide \$3 trillion in tax cuts and spending to address the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The legislation is unlikely to pass in the Republican controlled Senate, and the White House issued a statement opposing the legislation. Legislative negotiations are ongoing.

Transportation Highlights of the HEROES Act are as follows:

- \$15.75 billion for mass transit systems. \$11.75 billion would be apportioned by formula the remainder would be at the discretion of the US Department of Transportation on an agency by agency manner via applications based on need.
- \$15 billion to aid state highway departments. Included in this amount is the requirement for sub-allocation through the Surface Transportation block grant program
- \$540 billion for revenue replacement grants to the states etc.
- \$375 billion for grants to cities and counties.

Communication with California Senate Staff and Bay Area Transportation & Infrastructure Committee Members Staff

On May 6th and May 7, 2020, we organized and participated in conference calls with MTC's Senate office staff and the Bay area's Transportation & Infrastructure Committee members staff. The purpose was to ensure that the Congressional offices were aware of the financial impacts on the Bay Area's transportation systems. Additionally, we later informed the Bay Area's Congressional Delegation the anticipated impact of the recently approved Heroes Act.

Coalition for America's Gateways and Trade Corridors (CAGTG) Virtual Meeting

On May 12, 2020, I participated in the scheduled CAGTC virtual meeting. Coincidentally, the Heroes Act bill became public prior to the meeting. The meeting therefor revolved around the specifics of the legislation as discussed primarily by Jeff Davis of the Eno Center for Transportation.

Recalibrating Reopening Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA)

As a Board member of the WMATA for Washington, D.C. or commonly referred to as METRO, I want to share how METRO plans to reopen. Currently, the Washington Metropolitan Area has not reopened as of this date.

METRO Board approved a plan to slowly integrate service on May 14, 2020. The plan aims to keep riders and employees safe while running enough service to main social distancing and more importantly earn the public's trust that the systems are safe and clean. The later is the biggest challenge as customers through local media polling are saying transit is not safe.

Hopefully, managed re-entry (tentative) can restart in the fall with all routes operating at less frequent than normal. Recovery (tentative) is estimated to start in the Spring 2021.