

AASHTO Review of
FY 2018 Omnibus Appropriations Package
March 22, 2018

After the enactment of the [Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018](#) on February 9, 2018, which significantly increased budget caps that govern the annual appropriations process, the House released its 2232-page omnibus package for FY 2018 last night. This will need to clear both the House and Senate by Friday, March 23, 2018, in order to avoid another short-term Continuing Resolution that extends FY 2017 funding levels.

Because of the non-defense spending cap increasing from \$519 billion to \$579 billion for FY 2018 under the budget deal, the Transportation-HUD component is increasing from \$57.7 billion last year to \$70.3 billion for FY 2018. This increase also reflects the budget deal's explicit commitment to put \$10 billion towards infrastructure in FY 2018.

- The text of the bill can be found [here](#) (the transportation title begins on page 1565).
- The report language that accompanies the bill text can be found [here](#).
- A one-page summary of the Transportation-Housing and Urban Development sections of the bill produced by the House Appropriations Committee can be found [here](#).

OVERVIEW

- All FAST Act funding commitments supported by the Highway Trust Fund are met for FY 2018
 - \$44.2 billion in Federal Highway Administration programs
 - \$9.7 billion in Federal Transit Administration formula programs
 - \$845 million in Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration programs
 - \$747 million in National Highway Traffic Safety Administration programs
- For transportation, the \$10 billion infrastructure designation from the budget deal is translated into additional program funding as follows:
 - \$2.565 billion for Federal-aid Highway Programs
 - \$864 million for transit formula programs
 - \$1 billion in Airport Improvement Program discretionary grants
 - \$2.565 billion for transit Capital Investment Grants program, up from \$2.413 billion last year
 - \$1.5 billion for TIGER discretionary grants, up from \$500 million last year
 - \$1.942 billion for Amtrak, up from \$1.495 billion last year
 - \$863 million for rail grant programs, up from \$98 million last year
 - These increases are composed of both FAST Act-authorized annual increase from the Highway Trust Fund and additional General Fund dollars from the appropriations package; as such, only a portion of these increases come from the \$10 billion infrastructure commitment across a wide range of asset classes
- Includes a six month extension of FAA programs, through September 30, 2018

HIGHWAYS

- \$44.2 billion of obligation limitation for FAST Act contract authority programs
- \$2.525 billion in additional general fund dollars available until September 30, 2021, composed of:
 - \$1.98 billion in highway funding distributed to the states by formula (in the same ratio they receive Federal-aid Highway Obligation Limitation).
 - This funding can be used for “construction” projects eligible for funding under the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program.
 - 53 percent of this funding is “suballocated” by population using the formula established in the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program.
 - \$300 million for federal lands and tribal transportation
 - \$20 million for Puerto Rico and other territories
 - \$225 million for a new discretionary grant program for bridges in states that have less than 100 people per square mile, with a focus on cost savings achieved through bundling of multiple projects
- Does not include a new rescission of highway contract authority for FY 2018; however, the bill also does not address the \$7.6 billion rescission set for July 2020 under the FAST Act
- Requires states to facilitate installation of broadband infrastructure, commonly referred to as “dig once,” by:
 - Identifying a broadband utility coordinator at a state agency
 - Establish a process for registration of broadband infrastructure entities interested in access to rights-of-way, and notify such entities of projects in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program each year
 - There is no federal funding for these activities, but there is also no requirement to install broadband infrastructure
- Continues to allow states to repurpose old earmarks that are at least 10 years old, with no more than 10 percent of funds obligated
- Continues flexibility to use the Clearview font on highway signs
- Adjusts truck size and weight limits for North Dakota and New Hampshire
- Designates I-57 in Arkansas and Missouri
- Allows toll revenue flexibility for certain facilities in West Virginia, Maryland, and Kansas

TRANSIT

- \$9.7 billion in obligation limitation for FAST Act contract authority programs
- \$834 million in additional general fund dollars available until expended, composed of:
 - \$400 million in Section 5337 State of Good Repair formula grants
 - \$400 million in Section 5339 Bus and Bus Facilities formula and discretionary programs
 - \$30 million in Section 5340 High Density State formula grants
 - \$4 million in bus testing
- \$2.645 billion for Capital Investment Grants
 - \$1.5 billion for New Starts projects
 - \$716 million for Core Capacity projects
 - \$401 million for Small Starts projects
- \$5 million for FTA training and technical assistance
- \$150 million for Washington Metro

RAIL

- \$1.942 billion for Amtrak
 - \$650 million for Northeast Corridor
 - \$1.292 billion for National Network
 - \$2 million for the State-Amtrak Intercity Passenger Rail Committee
- \$813 million in FAST Act intercity rail grants
 - \$543 million in Consolidated Rail grants, up from \$68 million last year
 - \$250 million in State of Good Repair Partnership grants, up from \$25 million last year
 - \$20 million in Restoration and Enhancement grants, up from \$5 million last year
- \$25 million in credit subsidy for the Railroad Rehabilitation and Improvement Financing (RRIF) program
- Allows use of highway CMAQ dollars on state-supported passenger rail routes

AVIATION

- FAA programs are extended by six months, from March 31, 2018, to September 30, 2018
- \$18 billion for Federal Aviation Administration programs, a \$1.6 billion increase from last year
- \$1 billion of general fund dollars added for the Airport Improvement Program, but only for discretionary grant programs prioritizing nonprimary, non-hub, and small-hub airports
- \$155 million in Essential Air Service subsidies, up from \$150 million last year
- No increase in Passenger Facility Charges