



**Transportation/Aviation Update**

March 24, 2023

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**THIS WEEK**

**House**

**Hearing: IJJA Implementation.** On March 28, the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee will hold a hearing entitled “Reviewing the Implementation of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act,” focusing on the Biden Administration’s approach to implementing the law. Witnesses will include representatives from the American Association of State Highways and Transportation Officials, National Stone, Sand, and Gravel Association, Associated Builders and Contractors, and American Road and Transportation Builders Association. Testimony and video will be posted [here](#).

**Hearing: Supply Chain.** On March 28, the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee will hold a hearing entitled “Maritime Transportation Supply Chain Issues.” Witnesses will include representatives from World Shipping Council, Ports America, American Cotton Shippers Association, and Port of Long Beach, California. Testimony and video will be posted [here](#).

**Hearing: TSA FY 2024 Budget.** On March 28, the Homeland Security Appropriations Subcommittee will hold a hearing on the FY 2024 budget for the Transportation Security Administration. The sole witness will be TSA Administrator David Pekoske. The hearing notice is [here](#).

**Hearing: Ohio Train Derailment.** On March 28, the Energy and Commerce Committee will hold a hearing entitled “Government Response to East Palestine: Ensuring Safety and Transparency for the Community.” Witnesses will include the EPA Regional Administrator, Ohio EPA, and Columbiana County General Health District. Information on the hearing is [here](#).

**Hearing: DOT Inspector General.** On March 28, the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development Appropriations Subcommittee will hold a hearing with the Inspector Generals of DOT and HUD testifying. Testimony has already been posted [here](#).

**Hearing FAA Reauthorization.** On March 30, the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee will hold a hearing entitled “FAA Reauthorization: Harnessing the Evolution of Flight to Deliver for the American People.” This will be the fourth hearing on the FAA reauthorization and will focus on new entrants and developing technologies in the U.S. aviation system.

- There will be two panels; the first panel will include representatives from Wing, Chula Vista Police Department, WakeMed Health and Hospitals, and University of Alaska, Fairbanks. A second panel will include representatives from BETA Technologies, Joby Aviation, Helicopter Association International, and a community advocate. Testimony and video will be posted [here](#).

### Senate

**Hearing: Advanced Aviation Technologies.** On March 29, the Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee will hold a hearing entitled “Advancing Next Generation Aviation Technologies.” The hearing will examine advances in R&D that will support the next generation of commercial aircraft as well as the resources, infrastructure and regulatory framework necessary to apply innovative and sustainable aviation technologies. Witnesses will include representatives from FAA, NASA, GE Aerospace, ZeroAvia, and Universal Hydrogen. Testimony and video will be posted [here](#).

### LAST WEEK

#### House

**Hearing: Airline Passenger Experience.** On March 23, the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee held a hearing entitled “FAA Reauthorization: Navigating the Comprehensive Passenger Experience.” Witnesses included representatives from Airlines for America, Airports Council International-North America, Paralyzed Veterans of America, and National Air Traffic Controllers Association. Information on the hearing is [here](#).

**Hearing: Advanced Air Mobility.** On March 23, the Science, Space and Technology Committee held a hearing entitled “Advanced Air Mobility” The Future of Unmanned Aircraft Systems and Beyond.” Witnesses included representatives from Oklahoma State University, NASA Aeronautics Research Institute, and Commercial Drone Alliance. This hearing focused on [The National Drone and Advanced Air Mobility Act](#), a draft bill that would provide for a coordinated federal initiative to accelerate civilian unmanned aircraft systems and advanced air mobility research and development to strengthen economic and national security. Additional information on the hearing is [here](#).

**Hearing: FY 2024 Maritime Budget.** On March 23, the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee held a hearing on the President’s FY 2024 budget proposal for federal maritime programs, as well as implementation of the Shipping Reform Act of 2022. Witnesses included

the Administrator of the Maritime Administration and Chairman of the Federal Maritime Commission. Information on the hearing is [here](#).

### Senate

**Markup: FAA Administrator Nomination.** On March 22, the Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee was scheduled to hold a markup on the nomination of Phil Washington to be the next FAA Administrator. The hearing was postponed. By the end of the week, Mr. Washington announced that he was withdrawing his name from consideration as FAA Administrator.

- The Committee approved on a voice vote S. 66, the NOTAM Improvement Act, legislation to create a task force to propose improvements to the pilot alert system that experienced a major outage in January. The House passed a similar bill, H.R. 346 in January.

**Hearing: Rail Safety.** On March 12, the Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee held a hearing on rail safety and the Norfolk Southern derailment in Ohio. The first panel of witnesses included Senators Sherrod Brown (D-OH), J.D. Vance (R-OH), Ohio Governor Mike DeWine (R), and a resident of East Palestine. The second panel included the Chair of the National Transportation Safety Board, CEO of Norfolk Southern, and representatives from Western Reserve Joint Fire Department, and Ohio State SMART-TD. Information on the hearing is [here](#).

**Hearing: DOT FY 2024 Budget.** On March 23, the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development Appropriations Subcommittee held a hearing on the President's FY 2024 budget proposal. Transportation Secretary Buttigieg was the sole witness. Testimony and video of the hearing are [here](#).

### Department of Transportation

**FTA: Emergency Relief Availability.** On March 27, FTA is announcing the availability of more than \$212 million in Emergency Relief grants for FTA grant recipients affected by major disasters in calendar years 2017, 2020, 2021, and 2022. The FTA notice is [here](#).

**FAA: Airport Slot Waivers.** On March 22, FAA issued a Federal Register Notice that airlines operating at the three New York City area airports and Reagan Washington National Airport can apply for a slot waiver, allowing airlines to temporarily turn in up to 10 percent of their approved slots between May 15 and Sept. 15 in an effort to reduce delays. FAA said the waiver flexibility was done in response to "post-pandemic effects on air traffic controller staffing at the New York Terminal Radar Approach Facility." The Notice is [here](#).

**FRA: High Speed Rail.** On March 22, FRA issued a Notice to encourage development of high-speed rail (HSR) system projects intended for operations over 160 miles per hour by establishing a streamlined process for reviewing domestic sourcing and workforce plans. Specifically, the FRA Notice summarizes its intent to invite HSR project sponsors to voluntarily submit for review, in

advance of receipt of DOT funding, their domestic sourcing and workforce plans. The Notice is [here](#).

**DOT: SMART Grant Awards.** On March 21, DOT announced the award of the first round of grants of more than \$94 million for 59 projects through the Strengthening Mobility and Revolutionizing Transportation (SMART) Grants Program. The competitive grant program will provide state and local governments \$500 million over five years to leverage technology to create safer, more equitable, efficient, and innovative transportation systems. Details on the grant awards is [here](#).

**DOT: Letter on Budget Cuts.** On March 9, DOT responded to a request from Rep. Rosa DeLauro (D-CT), Ranking Democrat on the House Appropriations Committee, as she asked about the impact of possible budget cuts to FY 2022 levels. In the DOT response, Secretary Buttigieg highlighted the impact of such funding reductions on the FAA and aviation safety, FTA's Capital Investment Grant program, Amtrak, and rail and pipeline safety. A pdf of the letter is [here](#).

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