



**Transportation/Aviation Update**  
February 6, 2026

### NEXT WEEK

#### House

**Hearing: Surface Transportation Research.** On February 11, the Science, Technology, and Space Committee will hold a hearing titled “Accelerating Surface Transportation Research.” Witnesses will include representatives from USDOT, Texas A&M Transportation Institute, and Center for Connected and Automated Transportation, the University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute. Information on the hearing will be posted [here](#).

#### Senate

As of today, there are no transportation-related events scheduled for next week.

### THIS WEEK

#### House

**Final Passage: FY 2026 Appropriations.** On February 3, the House voted 217-214 to pass five of the last six FY 2026 appropriations bills, including the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development (THUD) bill. This followed Senate approval last week of this package on a 71-29 vote. President Trump signed the bill into law, ending the brief shutdown.

#### Senate

**Transportation Reauthorization Delayed.** In comments this week, Environment and Public Works (EPW) Committee Chair Senator Shelly Moore Capito said that the release of the Senate highway title for the next surface transportation bill will likely be delayed to March or April. In the Senate, EPW usually leads the reauthorization process with the highway title, followed by the other three committees.

**Markup: DOT Nominations.** On February 3, the Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee voted to advance to the full Senate two pending DOT nominations:

- Daniel Edwards to be DOT’s Assistant Secretary of Aviation & International Affairs (21-7 vote);
- Ryan McCormack to be DOT’s Under Secretary for Policy (20-8 vote).
  - If confirmed as Under Secretary, Mr. McCormick will play a lead role for DOT on the surface transportation reauthorization process.

**Hearing: Autonomous Vehicles.** On February 4, the Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee held a hearing titled “Hit the Road, Mac: The Future of Self-Driving Cars.” Witnesses included

representatives from Tesla, Waymo, Autonomous Vehicle Industry Association, and University of South Carolina. Information on the hearing is [here](#).

- Committee Chair Senator Ted Cruz stated that he was looking to include a statutory framework for automated vehicles (AVs) in the upcoming surface transportation reauthorization bill, adding “Every commuter has sat in traffic, staring at brake lights, wasting time they could be spending with their families or getting work done. Autonomous vehicles have the potential to change that—making traffic move faster, reducing distracted driving, and dramatically cutting car crashes. They also can bring meaningful independence for people with disabilities. But today, a confusing mix of federal and state laws makes it much more difficult to bring safer, more advanced autonomous vehicles to market. This hearing will examine how outdated regulations are holding back lifesaving technology—and what Congress can do to fix it.”

#### Department of Transportation

**DOT: Digital Infrastructure.** On February 4, DOT released a Request for Information seeking stakeholder input “on the research and development activities needed to modernize the nation’s transportation system through the application of digital infrastructure at scale. Responses will inform a coordinated national strategy for the development and deployment of Transportation Digital Infrastructure (TDI). This strategy will serve as the framework for the next generation of the transportation system across all modes (highway, rail, air, maritime, transit, pipeline) supporting multimodal operations, safety, asset management, and the accelerated deployment of new and emerging technologies.” The RFI is [here](#).

**FTA: MPO Regulations.** On February 3, FTA announced that it was terminating its rulemaking titled “Statewide and Nonmetropolitan Planning; Metropolitan Transportation Planning” which would have proposed updates to its transportation planning regulations. FTA initiated the rulemaking to update its regulations pertaining to FTA’s transportation planning requirements. The FTA Notice stated that “FTA is withdrawing this rulemaking activity because further rulemaking action does not align with agency needs, priorities, and objectives.” The Federal Register Notice is [here](#).

**FTA: Executive Director Retires.** On January 23, 30-year veteran of FTA, Matt Welbes, announced his retirement. Mr. Welbes joined the FTA during the George W. Bush Administration and served as its Executive Director for the past 18 years. During that time, he played a significant role in nearly every major FTA decision. The Executive Director is the highest-ranking career staff position and does not require the Senate to confirm a successor.

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