



Transportation Update

December 21, 2018

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Next Week

The schedule for next week is unclear at this point. If the Congress does adjourn, the House and the Senate will return on Thursday, January 3, 2019 to begin the first session of the 116th Congress.

This Week

Floor Vote: FY 2019 Continuing Resolution. This week, the Senate approved a continuing resolution that would extend funding for the seven remaining FY 2019 appropriations bills, including the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development bill through February 7, 2019. Last night the House added several provisions, including funding for the border wall. The Senate will now vote on the House version of the bill last today. It is expected to be defeated; it is then possible that the Senate and perhaps the House will pass a clean CR. If nothing can be agreed to by midnight tonight, there will be a partial government shutdown beginning tonight. It will include all non-essential employees of the Department of Transportation (DOT) and Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Among those employees considered essential are FAA air traffic controllers and Transportation Security Administration screeners. All employees at the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration would continue to work, as they are paid through the Highway Trust Fund, which is not subject to appropriations.

House

Floor Vote: Vehicular Terrorism. On December 20, the House passed H.R. 4227 on a vote of 388-2. The bill requires DHS to develop a strategy to prevent vehicular terrorism. The bill now goes to the President.

Department of Transportation

Inspector General: Report on PFCs. On December 18, the DOT Inspector General (IG) issued a report on the use and FAA oversight of passenger facility charges (PFC). The IG concluded that most public agencies comply with PFC program requirements, but FAA could use available tools more effectively to strengthen its oversight.

FAA: Nominations to Drone Advisory Committee. On December 20, the FAA issued a notice seeking nominations to the Drone Advisory Committee. The committee is intended to provide an open venue for the FAA and stakeholders to identify and recommend consensus-based resolutions for issues related to integration of unmanned aircraft into the National Airspace System. This solicitation does not affect current members. Nominations are due to the FAA by January 9, 2019.

DOT: Notice of Funding Availability INFRA Grants. On December 21, the Office of the Secretary of Transportation issued a Notice of Funding Availability for the Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) discretionary grant program. The program provides Federal financial assistance to highway and freight projects of national or regional significance. DOT is seeking applications under the program's FY 2019 funding, which has not yet been completed. The application deadline is March 6, 2019, and DOT expects to make selections in the summer of 2019.

Government Accountability Office

Report: Alternative Methods for Collecting Airports' Passenger Facility Charges. On December 20, the GAO issued a report that examined alternate methods not linked to the airline ticket could be used to collect PFCs.

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