

**Transportation/Aviation Update**

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*Steven O. Palmer, Vice President**David Haines, Director*

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**NEXT WEEK**

***Floor Debate: COVID-19 Relief Legislation.*** Next week, the House and Senate are expected to begin debate on the FY 2021 Budget Resolution. Once adopted, this will lead to a fast-track process, known as budget reconciliation, which is a procedure used to expedite consideration of President Biden's \$1.9 trillion COVID-19 relief legislation. President Biden's proposal included \$20 billion for public transportation agencies. The White House Fact Sheet on the proposal is [here](#).

**House**

***Hearing: COVID Safety.*** On Thursday, February 4, the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee held a hearing entitled "Protecting Transportation Workers and Passengers from COVID: Gaps in Safety, Lessons Learned and Next Steps." The hearing was originally scheduled for last week but was postponed. Witnesses have not yet been announced. Information on the hearing is [here](#).

**Senate**

***Floor Vote: Nomination of DHS Secretary.*** On January 26, the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs voted 7-4 to approve the nomination of Alejandro Mayorkas to be the next Secretary at the Department of Homeland Security. The full Senate is expected to vote to confirm Mr. Mayorkas on Tuesday, February 2.

***Floor Vote: Nomination of DOT Secretary.*** On January 27, the Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation voted 21-3 to approve the nomination of Pete Buttigieg to be the next Secretary of Transportation. The full Senate is expected to vote on his nomination on Tuesday, February 2.

**THIS WEEK****White House**

***Executive Order: Climate Change.*** On January 27, President Biden signed an Executive Order (EO) intended to address climate change. The full EO is [here](#). While many of the provisions reach far beyond transportation, highlights include:

- Creates a White House task force to direct greenhouse gas reduction policies that will assemble 21 federal agencies and departments, including DOT, to address greenhouse gas policy;
- Directs federal agencies, including the U.S. Postal Service, to purchase zero-emission power and vehicles to “lead by example”;
- Calls for a sustainable infrastructure initiative with the White House Council on Environmental Quality and Office of Management and Budget working to ensure that federal infrastructure investment reduces climate pollution; and
- Establishes the White House Office of Domestic Climate Policy led by the first-ever National Climate Advisor.

**Executive Order: Buy American.** On January 25, President Biden signed an EO focused on strengthening the federal government’s Buy American rules and standards around procurement policy. (This is different than Buy America rules, which govern highway, transit, and rail grants). Among other provisions, the EO calls for replacing the federal fleet with electric vehicles, manufactured in the United States. The EO is [here](#).

#### Government Accountability Office

**Report: Air Traffic Management and Drones.** On January 28, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) issued a report entitled “FAA Could Strengthen Its Implementation of a Drone Traffic Management System by Improving Communication and Measuring Performance.” The FAA is working with industry and public stakeholders to develop a traffic management (UTM) system for unmanned aircraft systems (UAS), also known as drones. To develop and implement UTM, FAA has conducted tests and is working on a UTM implementation plan. GAO has advised FAA that it needs to better communicate with stakeholders on timing of its testing and implementation of the traffic management plan for drones. The report is [here](#).

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