House Appropriations Committee
Chairman Hal Rogers

Website address: http://appropriations.house.gov/

FY 2015 Omnibus – Transportation, Housing and Urban Development Appropriations

Legislation includes funding for vital infrastructure investments, maintains housing programs for low-income families and veterans

The Transportation, Housing and Urban Development (THUD) portion of the Omnibus prioritizes funding for infrastructure projects and programs that are essential to growing the nation's economy and commerce, as well as for programs that support the housing needs of our most vulnerable citizens.

In total, the bill provides $53.8 billion in discretionary funding – an increase of $2.9 billion compared to the fiscal year 2014 enacted level. However, when accounting for changes in various offsets and collections, the bill represents an actual, programmatic increase of only $294 million over last year. This funding will support critical investments such as staffing the nation's busy airports, maintaining roads and bridges, and providing housing assistance for low-income families and veterans.

Transportation – The bill includes $17.8 billion in discretionary appropriations for the Department of Transportation (DOT) – the same as the fiscal year 2014 enacted level and $4.8 billion below the President's request. The bill also allows DOT to access $53.5 billion in non-discretionary "obligation limitation" funding. Within this total, the legislation provides $500 million for the TIGER program, which funds competitive grants for state and local road, transit, port, and railroad construction projects.

- **Highways** – The bill provides almost $41 billion in obligation limitation funding for the Federal Highway program – the same level authorized in the MAP-21 transportation authorization legislation, which expires on May 31, 2015. This is the same as the fiscal year 2014 level. This funding will provide for critical construction and improvements to the nation's roadways to improve safety, lessen travel times, and help increase commerce to boost our economy.

- **Air –** Included in the legislation is $12.4 billion for the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), $17 million below the fiscal year 2014 enacted level. This funding will support the full operation of our air traffic control system, including the hiring and training of air traffic controllers and safety inspectors to ensure that facilities are ready and capable to serve the nation's flying public.

The bill preserves funding for FAA's Next Generation air transportation systems (NextGen) – investments that will help ease future congestion and reduce delays for millions of travelers in the U.S. In addition, $3.35 billion in "obligation limitation" funding is provided for airport construction projects. The bill rejects the Administration's proposals for new passenger facility fees.

- **Rail –** The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) is funded at $1.6 billion, an increase of $23 million above the fiscal year 2014 enacted level. The bill maintains policy reforms for Amtrak to ensure the best use of tax dollars – such as requiring overtime limits on Amtrak employees to reduce unnecessary costs, and prohibiting federal funding for routes where Amtrak offers a discount of 50% or more off normal, peak fares. **No funding is provided for high-speed rail.**

- **Transit –** The bill contains $2.3 billion for the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) – an increase of $141 million over the fiscal year 2014 enacted level. The legislation also allows $8.6 billion in state and local transit grant funding from the Mass Transit Account (of the Highway Trust Fund), consistent with MAP-21, to help local communities build, maintain, and ensure the safety of their mass transit systems.

  The legislation provides a total of $2.1 billion for Capital Investment Grants ("New Starts"), full funding for state and local "Small Starts," and funding for all current "Full Funding Grant Agreement" projects within FTA. These programs provide competitive grants for major transit investments – including rapid rail, light rail, bus rapid transit, and commuter rail – that are planned and operated by local communities.

- **Safety –** The legislation contains funding for the various transportation safety programs and agencies within DOT. This includes $830 million in both mandatory and discretionary funding for the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), an increase of $11 million over the fiscal year 2014 enacted level; and $584 million for the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, a decrease of $1 million below the fiscal year 2014 enacted level. Also included is a $9.1 million increase over the fiscal year 2014 level for the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration.

- **Maritime –** The legislation contains $186 million for the Maritime Security Program – the same level contained in the current authorization.

Housing and Urban Development (HUD) – The legislation includes a total of $35.6 billion for the Department of Housing and Urban Development, an increase of $2.8 billion above the fiscal year 2014 enacted level. However, when accounting for a decrease in offsets related to Federal Housing Administration collections, the HUD portion of the bill is actually $90 million below last year.

- **No funding is included** for any new, unauthorized "sustainable," "livable," or "green" community development programs. The bill also does not contain any new mortgage fees as proposed by the President.

- **Section 8 and Public Housing –** Included in the bill is $26.4 billion for Public and Indian Housing. This is an increase of $156 million above the fiscal year 2014 enacted level, and is $1 billion below the President's request. Within this total, the bill provides funding to continue assistance to all 2.2 million families that the Housing Choice Voucher program serves. The bill also fully funds the President's request for 10,000 new veterans' housing vouchers at $75 million.

- **Housing Programs** – Housing programs are funded at $10.35 billion, $139 million below fiscal year 2014's enacted level and $84 million below the President's request. Within this total, the bill targets $135 million to housing for the disabled and a total of $436 million to housing for the elderly.

Community Planning and Development – The bill contains $6.5 billion for Community Planning and Development programs – a cut of $110 million below last year's level. The Community Development Block Grant formula program is funded at $3 billion, $30 million below the fiscal year 2014 enacted level.

Other Provisions – The bill includes several policy provisions to ensure good government, rein in unnecessary regulations, and to keep our economy moving. Some of these provisions include:

- A prohibition on funding for the intrusive "National Roadside Survey" conducted by NHTSA;
- Provisions to protect small businesses from multiple instances of overregulation related to commercial trucking, including truck weight limitations, truck driver hours of service, and hazardous materials permitting;
- A provision requiring DOT to ensure citizens' rights to privacy when issuing vehicle safety regulations;
- A prohibition on funding for the FHA to finance mortgages seized by eminent domain;
- A prohibition on funds for a new HUD requirement that would force public housing authorities to conduct a costly and unnecessary "physical needs assessment."
- A provision limiting the salaries of public housing authority directors.

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