



Monthly Legislative Report – December

December Advocacy Meetings

Office of Congressman Mike Levin (D-CA) – We met with Congressman Levin’s staff early in the month to provide an update on the Coastal Rail Resiliency Study (CRRS) and potential funding opportunities in 2024 to include Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 Community Project Funding (CPF) requests and the Federal Railroad Administration’s (FRA) Corridor ID program that could help guide intercity passenger rail development in the County.

Office of Congressman Lou Correa (D-CA) – We met with Congressman Correa’s staff to discuss update on the Streetcar. We also discussed potential projects for FY25 CPF requests.

Office of Congresswoman Young Kim (R-CA) – We met with Congresswoman Kim to discuss the status of the Appropriations process in Congress and our earmark request in the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies bill of \$4,000,000 for the SR-91 Improvement Project, and the \$3,000,000 request for the OC Loop—Segments A and B.

Office of Congresswoman Linda Sanchez (D-CA) – We met with Congresswoman Sanchez’s staff to discuss updates on the Ways and Means proposed legislative agenda for early 2024.

Office of Congresswoman Michelle Steel (R-CA) – We met with Congresswoman Steel’s staff to discuss transportation related provisions included in the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) on port logistics and supply chain. We also discussed legislative agenda for the Ways and Means committee in 2024.

Office of Senator Laphonza Butler (D-CA) – We met with Senator Butler’s staff to provide an update on the Coastal Rail Resiliency Study (CRRS).

Office of Congressman Sam Graves (R-MO) – We met with House Transportation and Infrastructure (T&I) Committee Chairman’s staff to discuss the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Authorization legislation and next steps. We also discussed the potential for Rail Safety legislation in 2024. Finally, we discussed Committee staff changes for 2024 that will likely include Abigail Wenk being promoted to Deputy Staff Director. Abby has served as Senior Advisor and Director of Member Services and Coalitions since December 2022. Corey Cooke will also be overseeing policy development in 2024. Corey has served as General Counsel for the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Republicans since January 2020, having previously served as Deputy General Counsel.

Office of Senator Alex Padilla (D-CA) – We met with Senator Padilla’s staff to discuss recent funding from the Department of Transportation to the high-speed rail project from Los Angeles to Las Vegas and other rail projects in Orange County.

FY24 Appropriations

The first spending deadline will be on January 19th. Congress enacted a “laddered” Continuing Resolution (CR) in November that split the 12 Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 spending bills into two groups with different funding extension dates, as outlined below:

- **January 19, 2024:** Agriculture; Military Construction & Veterans Affairs; Energy & Water; and Transportation, Housing & Urban Development (T-HUD).
- **February 2, 2024:** Commerce-Justice-Science; Defense; Financial Services; Homeland Security; Interior-Environment; Labor-HHS-Education; Legislative Branch; and State & Foreign Operations.

On January 7th, Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) and Speaker Mike Johnson (R-LA) announced a tentative agreement on a \$1.7 trillion funding levels for FY 24 setting the stage for a broader compromise that allow the completions of the Appropriations process for this year. The deal includes \$886 billion for defense and nearly \$773 billion for non-defense funding. The deal also includes provisions like rescinding over \$6 billion in unspent pandemic aid and over \$20 billion for IRS enforcement. We expect more details to be provided the week of January 8th.

National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) Signed into Law

On December 22nd, President Joe Biden signed the NDAA for fiscal year 2024 into law, authorizing \$886 billion in military spending. The Senate passed the bill with an 87-13 vote, following approval in the House with a 310-118 vote. The bill includes \$842 billion in discretionary funding for Department of Defense (DOD) programs, \$32.5 billion for the Energy Department’s nuclear weapons programs, and \$11.5 billion for other national security programs.

House Transportation Hearing Infrastructure on Water Resources Development Act (WRDA)

On December 13th, the House Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment, chaired by David Rouzer (R-NC) held a hearing to gather stakeholder input for the 2024 WRDA that expect to be finalized by the full House T&I Committee before May. Witnesses discussed priorities, including the Army Corps of Engineers' responsibilities and the economic importance of shipping, dredging, and the national water crisis. The hearing emphasized the need for equal consideration of water projects and acknowledged the Army Corps of Engineers' current work. More information can be found [HERE](#).

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Grants \$110 Million for Wildlife Crossings

On December 5th, The FHWA unveiled \$110 million in grants for 19 wildlife crossing projects across 17 states, including four Indian Tribes. This initiative aims to curtail wildlife-vehicle collisions causing fatalities, injuries, and economic costs exceeding \$10 billion annually. The

Wildlife Crossings Pilot Program allocates a total of \$350 million over five years for diverse projects like constructing wildlife crossings, adding fencing, and utilizing tracking tools. Notable grants include projects in Arizona, Wyoming, Colorado, Washington State, and California, addressing specific highway corridors with high wildlife-vehicle collision rates. More information can be found [HERE](#).

FHWA Opens Applications for Bridge Investment Program

On December 20th, the FHWA opened applications for over \$9.7 billion in funding under President Biden's Bridge Investment Program. Aimed at improving bridges through the "Planning" and "Bridge Project" categories, the funds address planning, repair, and replacement projects under \$100 million. This funding initiative included in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) allocates \$40 billion over five years to enhance bridge safety, meet traveler needs, and support local economies. Priority will be given to states without previous Bridge Project grants, emphasizing the program's commitment to nationwide bridge improvement. More information can be found [HERE](#).

Funding Boost for Port of Long Beach by Senator Padilla

On December 18th, Senator Padilla announced a \$283 million grant awarded to the Port of Long Beach. The funding from National Infrastructure Project Assistance (Mega) program seeks to double the rail yard's size and triple its cargo handling capacity and aims to significantly reduce reliance on truck transport. Another goal for the funding is to diminish emissions and contribute positively to environmental goals. More information is available [HERE](#).

Road Safety Initiatives in California Backed by Federal Funds

On December 13th, Senator Padilla disclosed the award of over \$139 million in federal funding to California for enhancing road safety. Through the Safe Streets and Roads for All Grant Program, the funding is aimed at reducing traffic-related fatalities and injuries and creating a safer transit environment for pedestrians, cyclists, and motorcycle riders. More information and awards are available to view [HERE](#).

Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways

On December 19th, the FHWA introduced the 11th edition of the "Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways" (MUTCD), marking the first update since 2009. The MUTCD serves as a guide for effective communication with road users about roadway usage. For more information click [HERE](#).

DOT Announces 2024 RAISE Program

On November 30th, the DOT announced the availability of \$1.5 billion in grants for the 2024 RAISE program to support significant transportation projects and assist state and local entities, including municipalities and Tribal governments, in completing important

transportation infrastructure projects. Special consideration will be given to projects in impoverished or disadvantaged areas, with a focus on climate change, racial equity, and job creation. The application deadline is February 28, 2024, with announcements due by June 27, 2024. For more information click [HERE](#).

Federal Transit Administration (FTA) announces \$343 million in Rail Funding

On November 30th, the FTA announced \$343 million in fiscal year 2024 funding to enhance accessibility in America's older and busier rail transit systems for those with disabilities and mobility needs. The All-Stations Accessibility Program (ASAP) aims to assist those reliant on rail systems for daily activities like work and school but also encourages less dependence on personal vehicles. This initiative focuses on stations built before 1990 including the installation of elevators. Applications and eligibility details are available [HERE](#) and the deadline for the program is on January 30th, 2024.

Accelerated Innovation Deployment (AID) Demonstration Grants (Fiscal Years 2023-2026)

This program aims to accelerate the adoption of innovative highway transportation technologies and practices, with a focus on faster construction of efficient and safe highways and bridges, enhanced safety, mobility, and sustainability.

Eligible Entities: State Departments of Transportation, Federal Land Management Agency, Tribal Governments.

Funding: \$10 million (FY 2023) and up to \$12.5 million (FYs 2024 - 2026).

Cost Sharing: No cost match required.

Deadline: January 23rd, 2024.

More information is available [HERE](#).