

Memorandum

From: Capitol Transportation Consulting and Pavluchuk & Associates
To: James Corless, Executive Director
Date: March 24, 2025
Subject: PI Report

Advocacy Update

James was in Washington, D.C. for a leadership meeting for the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO). As part of that meeting, James, Christina Lokke and SACOG's advocacy team worked with AMPO to help shape critical transportation policy priorities for AMPO to push as part of the next surface transportation reauthorization. These policies were aimed at bringing more funding to regions. James, Christina, and SACOG's advocacy team also met with members of Congress, including staff from Senator Padilla, Senator Schiff, Representative Kiley and others. We also met with staff from the House and Senate that are drafting the next surface transportation bill.

Administration Updates

There were several updates from the Administration in recent weeks, including:

- **Grant Review Guidance:** U.S. DOT issued guidance to federal transportation agencies on next steps for managing the funding freeze on discretionary grants. The guidance laid out a process for agencies to review discretionary grants from FY22-25 that are not fully obligated and determine whether they meet the intent of the President's Executive Orders. This review includes modifying or canceling grants that include terminology on equity, climate change, justice 40, and bicycle infrastructure. Review teams are going through each grant and making recommendations on next steps. It is unclear how long this process will take.
- **New Appointees:** Stephen Bradbury was confirmed as the new Deputy Secretary of Transportation and Sean McMaster was nominated for FHWA Administrator.
- **Amtrak:** Stephen Gardner stepped down as the head of Amtrak after the White House requested through the board that he be removed. Gardner had worked at Amtrak since 2009 and served as CEO since 2022.

Congressional Updates

The Transportation and Infrastructure Committee has shared its intent to move forward with the Surface Transportation Reauthorization. They will begin accepting recommendations from organizations in April and from members in May. The Senate will also begin working on its bill in May.

This is a critical bill that funds highway, transit and planning funds that support SACOG's work. SACOG and your federal advocates have been working to finalize and advance our key priorities, including efforts to support Green Means Go.