

Memorandum

From: Capitol Transportation Consulting and Pavluchuk & Associates

To: James Corless, Executive Director

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Subject: Federal Policy Monthly Report

Over the last month, Congress has been exceptionally busy passing and advancing key legislative initiatives, including a new climate funding law, Senate appropriations proposal, and a domestic manufacturing and science law. The climate law and appropriations bill have important funding initiatives that can help support SACOG's goals.

New Domestic Climate Funding

President Biden signed the massive climate, health, and tax bill into law. This is a major accomplishment for his domestic agenda, particularly for climate policy. Overall, it would raise an estimated \$739 billion in revenue with about \$433 billion in spending to fight climate change, invest in energy and extend the Affordable Care Act and around \$300 billion going to deficit reduction. Below is an overview of some of the key climate, energy, and transportation provisions.

One important program to note for SACOG is the \$3 billion for the Neighborhood Access and Equity Program – it appears to be a mix of reconnecting communities, healthy streets (heat islands, climate-impacted infrastructure), and safety (language attached). The new grant could be used for a variety of purposes, including covering a highway, turning a highway into a boulevard, adding trails and bike lanes, installing sound barriers, providing better connections to transit, using “green infrastructure” to handle storm runoff, reducing urban heat island hot spots, building safety features and curbing air pollution. The program could fund projects that support the Green Means Go initiative.

Transportation

- \$1 billion for clean school and transit buses, garbage trucks, and other heavy-duty vehicles, prioritizing communities overburdened by air pollution
- \$3 billion to clean up air pollution at ports by installing zero emissions equipment and technology, with much of the funds going to portside communities that are breathing disproportionately high levels of toxic air pollution
- Tax credits for electric vehicles

Clean Energy Transition

- Expand access to clean energy through improvements and expansion of clean energy tax credits
- Invest \$60B in manufacturing for solar panels, batteries, and other clean energy tech

- Provide \$9B in home energy rebate programs
- Remove barriers to make solar power more accessible and affordable

Support for Low Income Communities

- \$315.5 million for air monitoring so that communities know exactly what's in the air they breathe, with specific funds for schools and those living near polluting industry
- The reinstatement of the Superfund Tax so that industry — not the public — foots the bill for cleaning up their pollution

Other Climate Provisions

- More than \$20 billion to help farmers and ranchers shift to sustainable practices like crop rotation and cover crops. (However, care will be needed to ensure the funds do not support false solutions like corn-based ethanol.)
- \$300 million for research into the climate impact of agricultural practices.
- \$50 million to advance protections for mature and old-growth forests.
- \$2.6 billion in coastal resilience grants to fund projects, including by state and tribal governments, to protect and restore coastal communities and ecosystems.
- \$250 million to implement endangered species recovery plans and address climate change impacts on key habitats.
- \$1 billion to ensure federal agencies can conduct robust environmental and NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) reviews and public engagement on large projects using federal funds or on federal lands.

Senate Appropriations Proposal

Each year, Congress passes an appropriations bill to fund key discretionary programs. The bill funds transportation programs. The bill builds on the investments made in the Bipartisan Infrastructure law by proposing additional investments in key transportation programs, including:

- \$1.09 billion for the multi-modal RAISE grant program,
- \$3.2 billion from the general fund for the Federal Highway Administration, \$715 million more than fiscal year 2022, to support additional funding for PROTECT grants for resiliency projects, tribal high priority projects, bridge formula funding, and development of the Appalachian Development Highway System;
- \$2.6 billion for Amtrak, \$269 million more than fiscal year 2022, to support Amtrak operations across 30 train routes to over 500 destinations in 46 States;
- \$200 million for the Federal-State Partnership for State-of-Good-Repair (SOGR) to fund the replacement, rehabilitation, or repair of major infrastructure assets providing intercity passenger rail service;
- \$535 million for the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvement (CRISI) program, which can be used for a broad range of safety and capital projects such as stations or platforms, rail line relocation or improvement, highway-rail grade crossing improvement projects, and planning and environmental work;
- \$2.51 billion for the Federal Transit Administration's Capital Investment Grants program, \$262 million more than fiscal year 2022, to advance eligible capital transit projects; and

- \$527 million from the general fund for Transit Infrastructure Grants (TIG), \$22.8 million more than fiscal year 2022, to advance additional investments into Bus and Buses Facilities, the Low or No Emissions Vehicle Program, Areas of Persistent Poverty, ferry programs, and research to accelerate zero emission technology

The House passed a bill earlier this summer. The House and Senate must now reconcile their bills in hopes of passing legislation before the end of the year.

Transportation Grants

The Department of Transportation continues to release funding for the various Bipartisan Infrastructure Law grants. The Department recently announced the RAISE grants, which included \$5 million in funding for SACOG's mobility zones and \$15 million for Yuba-Sutter Transit's Next Generation Transit Facility. The DC team supported the SACOG's advocacy effort to secure the planning funding from DOT.

Additional [grant opportunities](#) are upcoming, including \$100 million in SMART grants for communities to advance transportation and technology projects (September release) and various rail and transit grant opportunities (August/September releases).