



Item #10-3-7

Government Relations & Public Affairs Committee Information

February 25, 2010

Federal Advocacy Update

Issue: Update on federal budget and legislation.

Recommendation: None; this will be an informational report and discussion.

Discussion: SACOG's federal advocate, Mike Miller, prepared the attached memo with updates on appropriations, stimulus legislation, and the authorization bill. As of this writing, Congress could not reach consensus on a second round of stimulus legislation. A small but significant part of that legislation included an extension of the Highway Trust Fund. As a result, the Department of Transportation is halting operations effective March 2. Staff will give the latest updates on these issues at the committee meeting.

Approved by:

Mike McKeever
Executive Director

Attachment

Key Staff: Rebecca Sloan, Director of External Affairs & Member Services, (916) 340-6224
Erik Johnson, Government & Media Affairs Coordinator, (916) 340-6247

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1130 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Suite 300
Washington, D.C. 20036
202.331.8500
202.331.1598 fax

Date: February 24, 2010
To: Sacramento Area Council of Governments
From: Mike Miller
Re: Federal Update

Appropriations. Appropriations requests for all delegation members – House and Senate – have passed with the exception of Rep. Thompson whose deadline is this Friday. All request forms related to SACOG’s Blueprint request have been submitted in a timely manner to the regional delegation. Representatives of SACOG met with House and Senate delegation offices earlier this month to discuss SACOG’s FY 2011 federal agenda.

The first indication regarding our delegation’s FY 2011 earmark requests will come in mid-March when the House Appropriations Committee deadline for Member requests arrives. To date SACOG has received strong indications from several delegation Members that Sacramento Blueprint is a top priority for FY 2011.

Jobs/Stimulus Legislation. Today the Senate passed Sen. Reid’s version of a jobs and stimulus bill which would provide a temporary fix to Highway Trust Fund issues. It is unclear how the Senate version of the bill will be received in the House. The main feature of the bill is a \$15 billion payroll tax relief provision for businesses hiring new workers. The Senate version is thought to also provide relatively significant benefits to California and three other states regarding highway construction funding – these provisions have already drawn the attention and ire of many on Capitol Hill.

Transportation Authorization. In December Congress extended SAFETEA-LU through September 2010. The Senate recently took action aimed at extending the existing legislation through the end of 2010, but several key House Members – including House Transportation and Infrastructure Chairman Oberstar – have voiced strong opposition to allowing authorization to be extended past September 30. The Obama Administration has signaled support for the December extension.
