



TGA ASSOCIATION MANAGEMENT SOLUTIONS, LLC

TO: Railway Systems Suppliers, Inc. (“RSSI”)
FROM: TGA Association Management Solutions, LLC (“TGA AMS”)
RE: Monthly Legislative Report for March 2025
DATE: April 2, 2025

KEY UPDATES

- On March 27, the Senate Banking Committee held a nomination hearing for FTA Administrator nominee Marc Molinaro
- On March 25, USDOT Office of the Secretary sent USDOT staff memo urging them to finalize as many discretionary grants by the end of March as possible so long as they are aligned with the Trump administration priorities. Secretary Duffy will be testifying before the Senate EPW Committee on April 2 to discuss the surface reauthorization bill where discretionary grant programs are expected to be a major topic of discussion
- On March 19, Amtrak CEO Stephen Gardner announced he was stepping down and leaving Amtrak. It was widely reported that Gardner was forced out by the Trump administration
- On March 14, Congress passed a continuing resolution funding the government for the rest of FY25 through September 30, 2025
- On March 11, Steven Bradbury was confirmed as USDOT Deputy Secretary
- Railroad Day on Capitol Hill, the freight rail industry’s annual DC fly-in is May 7, 2025. Register [here](#)

FY2025 APPROPRIATIONS

- On March 14, 2025, Congress passed a continuing resolution through September 30, 2025.
- See funding levels below:

	Final FY24 Approps	IJA Advance Approps FY25	House FY25	Senate FY25	Final CR FY25 Approps
USDOT RAISE/BUILD	\$345m	\$1.5b	\$0	\$550m	\$345m
USDOT MEGA	\$0	\$1b	\$0	\$0	\$0
USDOT INFRA	\$0	\$1.64b	\$200m	\$0	\$0
Amtrak NEC	\$1.14b	\$1.2b	\$1b	\$1.02b	\$1.14b
Amtrak National Network	\$1.29b	\$3.2b	\$1.12b	\$1.6b	\$1.29b
FRA CRISI	\$199m	\$1b	\$298.5m	\$375m	\$100m
FRA Fed-State Partnership	\$75m	\$7.2b	\$0	\$100m	\$75m
FRA Rail Restoration/Enhancement	\$0	\$50m	\$0	\$0	\$0
FRA Rail Crossing Elimination	\$0	\$600m	\$0	\$0	\$0
FTA CIG	\$2.2b	\$1.6b	\$755m	\$2.262b	\$2.2b

FTA Formula funds	\$13.99b	\$13.99b	\$14.28b	\$14.28b	\$14.28b
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SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

- Current STB members:
 - **Chairman Patrick Fuchs (Republican):** Former Senate Commerce Committee staffer under Chairman John Thune (R-SD) who is well versed on regulatory issues affecting the railroad industry. He has been very friendly to freight railroads and we know where he stands on the issues
 - **Michelle Schultz (Republican):** Previously spent 14 years in leadership roles with SEPTA and had a career in law before that
 - **Open Seat (Republican):** Former Chair Marty Oberman stepped down, awaiting nomination from President Trump
 - **Robert Primus (Democrat):** Career Democratic staffer on Capitol Hill, formerly served as Chief of Staff to Rep. Nanette Barragan (D-CA), Rep. Michael Capuano (D-MA), and Rep. Tony Cardenas (D-CA)
 - **Karen Hedlund (Democrat):** former Obama FRA Deputy Administrator
- On September 16-17, the STB held a public hearing to gather input on recent trends and growth strategies in the freight rail industry. Attendees included Class I executives, short lines, shippers, suppliers, labor, and other stakeholders
- On April 30, 2024, the STB [announced](#) its final rule on reciprocal switching
- On March 28, 2024, the STB [announced](#) the inaugural membership for its Passenger Rail Advisory Committee (PRAC)

RAIL SAFETY LEGISLATION/ACTION

- On March 5, the FRA released data from 2024 confirming that the year set a second consecutive all-time record-low rate of injuries and fatalities last year. See [here](#) for additional information
- On February 3, 2025, VP Vance was in East Palestine on the two-year anniversary and the [Railway Safety Act of 2025 was introduced](#)
- NTSB held a [meeting on June 25, 2024](#), with findings from its [final report](#)
- Railroad Safety Enhancement Act of 2024 [was introduced](#) on July 23, 2024 by Rep. Troy Nehls (R-TX) and Rep. Seth Moulton (D-MA)
 - Rep. Nehls has indicated he plans to work on some version of this bill again this Congress

TRUCK SIZE & WEIGHTS

- Changes to TSW remains a major threat in the 119th Congress
 - TSW Parity Bill: Rep. Mike Collins (GA-10) has a proposed state/federal parity bill that would increase federal interstate weights to match states
 - MOVE Act: Recently, a [Shipper's Coalition Press Release](#) touted this bill as a solution to a potential Longshoremen/Maritime Association strike the day before negotiations were reached
- CABT is updating white papers and background info on current legislation [here](#)

SHORT LINE 45G TAX CREDIT

- On January 25, 2025, H.R. 516, was introduced. The bill modernizes 45G by:

- Updating the credit cap to \$6,100/mile from \$3,500/mile
- Index the credit cap per mile to inflation in future years
- Allow for all short line track to be eligible for the credit

CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS

- March 27, 2025. The Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs held a Full Committee Nomination Hearing on several nominees including the Honorable Marcus Molinaro, to be Federal Transit Administrator, Department of Transportation. [Committee Link](#).
- March 26, 2025. The House T&I Committee's Subcommittee on Highways and Transit held a hearing titled, "America Builds: How Trucking Supports American Communities." [Committee Link and Testimony](#).

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION/FRA/FTA

- March 25, 2025. The American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) released their [2025 Report Card for America's Infrastructure](#) (and [here](#)). Almost half of the 18 assessed categories saw increased grades and contributed to an overall grade improvement from C- to C. The 2025 grades range from a B in ports to a D in stormwater and transit. For the first time since 1998, no Report Card categories were rated D-. Among the 18 categories assessed, eight saw grade increases. For all 11 infrastructure categories in ASCE's [2024 Bridging the Gap](#) study, ASCE estimated \$2.9 trillion of additional investment would be necessary to achieve good repair. See Executive Summary [here](#).
- March 14, 2025. A [US DOT Memo](#) has directed that grant awards on competitive award selections made after January 20, 2021 for specific priorities conflicting with those of the Trump Administration must be reviewed. Projects with executed grant agreements in place that are fully obligated are not subject to the guidance.
- March 11, 2025. A coalition of fifteen rail union groups sent a [letter](#) to US DOT Secretary Sean Duffy regarding concerns over reductions in personnel at the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA). The letter states, "The proposed staffing cuts would have devastating consequences for rail safety, increasing risks for both rail workers and the general public." The letter further noted that, "The claim in the memorandum [2/26/25 OMB Memo] that federal funds are being misallocated to "unproductive and unnecessary programs" is not applicable to FRA's personnel growth." The organizations emphasize that cutting FRA staff would hinder safety-critical functions, and that rail safety should never be compromised.
- March 10, 2025. US DOT Secretary Sean Duffy [announced](#) that the department has rescinded two memorandums issued during the Biden Administration which injected a social justice and environmental agenda into decisions for critical infrastructure projects. The US DOT press release notes, "In conflict with Congressional intent and the Administrative Procedure Act, the previous administration unilaterally released two separate memorandums, entitled "[Policy on Using Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Resources to Build a Better America](#)" and [Policy on Using Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Resources to Build a Better America](#). These Biden-era memos displaced the long-standing authorities granted to States by law, added meritless and costly burdens related to greenhouse gas emissions and equity initiatives."
- March 7, 2025. Amtrak published a white paper entitled, "[Proposals to Privatize Amtrak](#)" wherein the paper concluded, "Privatization would not change the fact that giving the United States the passenger rail system it needs will require substantial, assured, multi-year federal funding for Amtrak and intercity passenger rail." The Alliance of Passenger Rail New Entrants in Europe (ALLRAIL), which represents passenger railway operators and ticket vendors in Europe,

took issue with Amtrak's white paper on privatization. In a memo, ALLRAIL officials said that Amtrak's white paper used "very selective" language in its critique of the United Kingdom rail model.

- March 4, 2025. The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) sent a [letter](#) to US DOT Secretary Sean Duffy requesting that US DOT ensure an uninterrupted flow of federal approvals and funding to the states for federally supported transportation infrastructure projects. The letter stated, "We believe ensuring uninterrupted federal transportation funding provided to states and the associated federal approvals are fully aligned with President Trump's infrastructure vision to build more, build faster, build better, and build more beautifully." The letter continued by noting, "Additionally, we believe all federal dollars committed to state DOTs through all formula programs and executed grants represent legally binding obligations. These programs are reimbursable programs, where state DOTs pay contractors for work they have completed and then seek reimbursement from USDOT."
- March 3, 2025. Canadian National Railway Company (CN) and Iowa Northern Railway Company officially [announced/joined](#) their operations on March 1, 2025, as previously authorized by the U.S. Surface Transportation Board (STB) – STB press release [here](#). A CN press release noted, "The merging of Iowa Northern's 175 route miles with CN's nearly 20,000-mile rail network will offer single-line service to seamlessly connect grain, fertilizer, renewable fuels, and industrial markets to CN's North American network."

POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT

- Current split for the 119th Congress
Senate: **53 Republicans** – **47 Democrats**
House: **218 Republicans** – **213 Democrats**