



Policy Update

5/5/2021

CONGRESS

Earmark Announcement - Senate Appropriations Committee – Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman Patrick Leahy (D-VT) announced a process for appropriation committee earmarks for Senators who wish to participate. The Chairman issued [a press release](#) outlining the committee rules for submitting earmarks. The Committee will use existing rules under the standing rules of the Senate which include:

- No Member financial interest.
- Request must be in writing.
- Every Member request will be posted online by the Committee after a bill is marked up in Committee.
- Earmarks must be publicly available 48 hours before the full Senate will consider a bill on the floor of the chamber.
- Senators may raise an objection to a conference report (final agreed to bill) that includes an earmark that was not in either a House or Senate original bill.
- There is a 1% cap on the amount of funds made available for earmarks, similar to the House cap.
- Earmarks for for-profit entities are banned.
- Members must post their request on their own websites.

House Appropriations Committee Promises Transparency – The deadline for earmark request submissions has been reached and all submissions can be found [here](#).

Transportation Hearing - On May 6th the House Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines, and Hazardous Materials will hold a hearing entitled: “When Unlimited Potential Meets Limited Resources: The Benefits and Challenges of High-Speed Rail and Emerging Rail Technologies.”

Witnesses will include:

- The Honorable John Porcari, Former Deputy Secretary of USDOT
- Ms. Rachel Smith, President & CEO, Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce
- Mr. Phillip Washington, CEO, Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority
- Ms. Danielle Eckert, International Representative, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers
- The Honorable Carbett “Trey” Duhon III, Judge, Waller County, Texas
- Mr. Andy Kunz, President & CEO, U.S. High Speed Rail Association
- Mr. Carlos Aguilar, President & CEO, Texas Central High-Speed Rail
- Mr. William Flynn, CEO, Amtrak
- Mr. Josh Giegel, CEO & Co-Founder, Virgin Hyperloop
- Mr. Andres de Leon, CEO, Hyperloop Transportation Technologies
- Mr. Michael Reininger, CEO, Brightline Trains
- Mr. Wayne Rogers, Chairman and CEO, Northeast Maglev

Infrastructure Bill Back and Forth Continues - Congress and the president continue to negotiate what an infrastructure package could look like. The President continues to meet with members of Congress in hopes of reaching a bipartisan agreement. Republicans remain opposed to tax increases to pay for infrastructure investments. We are looking forward to the release of House and Senate reauthorization bills in the next several weeks.