



Policy Update

August 26, 2021

House to Consider Surface Reauthorization & Infrastructure Bill by September 27 (Before September 30 Deadline) – On August 24, the US House of Representatives approved a procedural measure (a rule) that would permit the House to take up and pass the Senate-passed Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) by September 27. The measure resulted from a compromise agreement reached between Speaker Pelosi, moderate Democrats who wanted an immediate vote on the infrastructure bill, and progressive Democrats. Progressives wanted the IIJA vote to take place after the Senate completed action on a separate \$3.5 trillion American families social spending and climate package, which would likely be up for a vote later this fall. Speaker Pelosi brokered the agreement between the two factions and is committed to generating House Democratic support for its passage. As part of the plan, the House also approved (deemed passed) a budget resolution, allowing committees to begin work on the \$3.5 trillion package. If the agreement is adhered to and the IIJA passes the House, it would allow President Joe Biden to sign it into law before the federal surface transportation extension expires on September 30.

House Deems a Budget Resolution Approved – By a party-line vote of 220 to 212, the House of Representatives approved a rule that automatically passed the budget blueprint that was passed in the Senate earlier in August. Now it is up to the standing committees, like House Transportation and Infrastructure, to get to work in constructing its piece of the reconciliation bill. (Senate committees have begun their work.) Specifically, the budget resolution gives the House T&I Committee a directive to report changes in laws under its jurisdiction that increase federal deficits by \$60 billion over the next ten fiscal years. Infrastructure Committees in the Senate have also been given similar directives - EPW \$67 billion, Banking \$332 billion, and Commerce \$83 billion. Each committee that receives reconciliation instructions marks up and approves legislation consistent with its reconciliation directives. The House Budget Committee collects these “reconciliation submissions” from each committee that receives instructions, packages them together without change into one bill, and reports that bill to the House. The Senate Budget Committee does the same thing in the Senate. Both chambers debate and, possibly, amend the reconciliation bills. Each chamber must pass the same reconciliation bill before the President can sign it. There are many competing transportation interests that are vying for a piece of the spending pie. AMPO has been in discussion with the committees to add resources for MPO transportation planning.