



## Top Stories

**6/21/17** – U.S. House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman Bill Shuster (R-Pa.) introduced the [21<sup>st</sup> Century AIRR Act](#), a bipartisan Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) reauthorization bill that would authorize a six-year reauthorization of the FAA and privatize air traffic control (ATC), among others. Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee Chairman John Thune (R-S.D.) [introduced](#) the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2017 which would reauthorize federal aviation programs through fiscal year (FY) 2021, and unlike the House bill, does not privatize ATC. The Senate bill also increases funding for the Airport Improvement Program. FAA's authorization expires Sept. 30, 2017.

**6/19/17** – The Federal Transit Authority (FTA) [notified](#) 30 states, where rail transit systems operate, that federal law requires they establish an FTA-certified State Safety Oversight (SSO) Program by April 15, 2019. If a state fails to obtain certification for its SSO Program by the deadline, FTA is prohibited by federal transportation law from obligating any funds to public transportation agencies throughout that state until certification is achieved. FTA is encouraging states to act quickly to enact any necessary legislation, statutes and regulations, particularly those states whose legislatures meet only part-time or biennially. Currently, nine states [remaining](#) that still require legislative action at the state level prior to FTA certification.

**6/15/17** – Senators John Thune (R-S.D.), Gary Peters (D-Mich.), and Bill Nelson (D-Fla.) [released](#) principles for bipartisan legislation on self-driving vehicles which include: prioritize safety; promote continued innovation and reduce existing roadblocks; remain tech neutral; reinforce separate federal and state roles; strengthen cybersecurity; educate the

public to encourage responsible adoption of self-driving vehicles. Additionally, the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Digital Commerce and Consumer Protection [released](#) a set of 14 bills all focusing on a different aspect related to autonomous vehicles. For more information, see [NCSL's Info Alert](#).

## From Congress

**6/12/17** – More than 250 bipartisan U.S. House members sent a [letter](#), led by the House Subcommittee on Highways and Transit Chairman Sam Graves (R-Mo.i) and ranking member Eleanor Holmes Norton (D- D.C), to the House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Kevin Brady (R-Texas) requesting that a “long-term solution” to the Highway Trust Fund’s solvency be included in any tax overhaul.

## From the Administration

**6/23/17** – The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) [reported](#) that motor vehicle traffic on U.S. roads increased 1.5 percent, an additional 15.2 billion miles travelled, between the first four months in 2017 compared to the same period in 2016. Additionally, motorists logged 21.7 billion miles in April, up 1.2 percent, or 3.3 billion miles from the same month in 2016.

**6/19/17** – The Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) [announced](#) they will not enforce certain sections of its “[Safety of Underground Natural Gas Storage Facilities](#)” interim final rule while it drafts a new version. The rule was published in response to the 2015 Aliso Canyon

disaster in California, during which 4.62 billion cubic feet of gas leaked from an underground storage facility.

**6/15/17** – The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration [issued](#) a final rule extending, until Jan. 1, 2019, the compliance deadline pertaining to lease and interchange of vehicle agreements between motor coach companies. The rule aims to keep unsafe carriers from striking “questionable lease arrangements” allowing them to operate under the authority of another company that does not oversee the excursions.

**6/7/17** – The Department of Transportation (DOT) [announced](#) its review of existing policy statements, guidance documents, and regulations to identify unnecessary obstacles to transportation infrastructure projects. As part of this review, DOT invited affected stakeholders and the public to identify non-statutory requirements that DOT imposes and that should be removed or revised. Comments are due by July 24, 2017.

**6/6/17** – FHWA [released](#) a FAQ document for states regarding requirements to implement a transportation asset management plan.

**5/31/17** – FHWA [announced](#) the distribution of the obligation limitation on federal-aid highway program obligations for FY 2017. A limitation on obligations acts as a ceiling on the sum of all obligations that can be made within a specified period, usually a fiscal year. A limitation is placed on obligations that can take place during a certain fiscal year, regardless of the year in which the funds were apportioned or allocated.

**5/31/17** – U.S. Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao [announced](#) that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) will award \$527.8 million in infrastructure grants to 584 airports across the nation as part of its Airport Improvement Program. The airport grant program funds various types of airport infrastructure projects, including runways, taxiways, and airport signage, lighting, and markings. Thirty-eight airports will receive additional discretionary funding to complete high-priority projects.

**5/31/17** – FTA and the Federal Railroad Administration [announced](#) \$197 million in grants to commuter railroads to help

them implement positive train control (PTC), as the Dec. 31, 2018 deadline approaches. The grants will fund 17 projects in 13 states. Twenty-seven applications were received asking for \$455 million, more than double the allocated amount. PTC is an advanced system designed to automatically stop a train before certain accidents occur, such as train-to-train collisions and derailments caused by excessive speed.

## NCSL Resources

Registration is open for [NCSL's 2017 Legislative Summit](#) taking place in Boston, Aug. 8-9.