

# Info Alert

## National Conference of State Legislatures Office of State-Federal Relations

September 16, 2014

### **TRANSPORTATION ALERT: U.S. DOT Releases TIGER Grant Awards; Amtrak Reauthorization Bill Introduced in the U.S. House**

#### **TIGER Grant Awards for 2014**

On September 12, the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) [announced](#) 72 transportation projects throughout the country that will receive funds as part of the [Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery \(TIGER\) program](#) for 2014. DOT awarded a total of \$600 million to projects across the states, nearly \$100 million more than what was awarded in 2013.

The TIGER Program, originally established through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, awards grants for capital investments in surface transportation projects on a competitive basis.

According to U.S. DOT Secretary Anthony Foxx, this year's awards focused on projects that would assist people in reducing their commute time to work. Some of the larger projects that received the grant money include \$24.9 million to the city of Richmond, Va. to create a bus rapid transit system; \$25 million for a bridge project connecting Maine and New Hampshire; and \$20 million for upgrades to a commuter-heavy station in Boston. [A full list of the projects can be found on DOT's website.](#)

#### **Amtrak Reauthorization**

On September 11, the U.S. House of Representatives' Transportation & Infrastructure Committee (T&I) introduced a bipartisan bill to reauthorize the passenger rail program. The [Passenger Rail Reform and Investment Act \(PRRIA\)](#) would fund the Amtrak program for four years at 40 percent less than current authorization levels to bring it in line with spending that has recently been appropriated by Congress for rail programs.

The reauthorization would establish a new capital grant program at \$300 million annually, \$150 million of which would be dedicated to the Northeast Corridor states, as those states have the most heavily traveled Amtrak routes in the country. The bill also includes provisions to boost private-sector involvement and increase transparency in the national passenger rail program.

NCSL strongly supports a dedicated source of federal funding for passenger rail service and sent a [letter](#) in 2013 to the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee leaders expressing this support and urging the committee to reauthorize PRRIA. The T&I Committee will hold a [markup](#) of the introduced bill on Wednesday, September 17.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns regarding the announcement please do not hesitate to contact NCSL staff [Ben Husch](#) (202-624-7779) or [Melanie Condon](#) (202-624-3597).

### **Additional Resources**

[Complete List of 2014 TIGER Awardees](#)  
[PRRIA Reauthorization Information Packet](#)  
[NCSL's Our Nation's Rail System Policy Directive](#)