



## Top Stories

**2/23/17** – The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) [released](#) an updated list of pilot, air traffic controller, law enforcement and citizen reports of potential encounters with unmanned aircraft systems (UAS). There were 1,274 reports of UAS sightings to FAA air traffic facilities from February through September of 2016, compared to 874 for the same period in 2015. Additionally, the agency posted an updated list of the number of UAS registrations by city, state and zip code, part of numerous Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests, available [here](#).

**2/21/17** – The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) released the Traffic Volume Trends for December 2016, which [indicated](#) that cumulative travel for 2016 increased by 2.8 percent, 87.5 billion vehicle miles more than 2015.

**2/21/17** – In a [letter](#) to the National Ethanol Conference, President Donald Trump indicated his support for renewable fuels. The president also emphasized the administration's work on eliminating regulations.

**2/10/17** – The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) [notified](#) the transit system in the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia, that effective immediately it will withhold 5 percent of Fiscal Year 2017 transit formula funds until a new State Safety Oversight Program (SSOP) is certified for Washington Metro Area Transit Authority (WMATA) rail operations. The governments had previously been [notified](#) in February, 2016 that failure to obtain a certified SSOP by Feb.9, 2017 may result in the withholding of federal funds.

**2/3/17** – The White House [released](#) interim guidance on regulatory requirements to agencies for issuing new rules in

response to an earlier executive order [issued](#) in late January. The guidance specifies what types of new regulations would require, at least two prior regulations to be identified for elimination. The guidance also states that the cost of the planned regulation must be offset by the elimination of existing costs associated with at least two prior regulations.

**1/31/17** – The Senate confirmed, [93-6, Elaine Chao](#) to be the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Transportation. Secretary Chao formerly served as the Deputy Secretary of Transportation from 1989-1991, and as the U.S. Secretary of Labor from 2001-2009.

## From Congress

**2/14/17** – The House Oversight and Government Reform Committee approved three regulatory reform measures, the "[Searching for and Cutting Regulations That Are Unnecessarily Burdensome \(SCRUB\) Act](#)," would authorize an appropriation of up to \$30 million to help establish a nine-member body that would assess which regulations are outdated or unnecessarily burdensome and would sunset after five years with a goal of reducing 15 percent of rules. The "[Regulatory Integrity Act](#)," would require agencies to disclose actions and public communications surrounding pending rules, and would prohibit agencies from using those communications to lobby the public for support. The "[Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs \(OIRA\) Insight, Reform and Accountability Act](#)," would establish a working group within OIRA to review regulations, streamline processing and aid small businesses with compliance.

## From the Administration

**2/17/17** – The FTA [deferred](#) a pending \$647 million Full Funding Grant Agreement for the Peninsula Corridor Electrification Project until the administration develops the President’s Fiscal Year 2018 budget. The deferral comes after all 14 Republicans in California’s congressional delegation [called](#) for the Caltrain funds to be halted until a full audit is completed on high-speed rail.

**2/14/17** – The Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS) [reported](#) that domestic airlines posted record low rates in 2016 for flight cancellations, mishandled luggage and bumped passengers. Flight cancellations are down to 65,861 in 2016, from 89,884 in 2015.

**2/10/17** – FAA [reported](#) that the U.S. helicopter overall accident rate fell to 3.19 accidents per 100,000 flight hours in 2016, compared to 3.67 accidents in 2015. Additionally, the fatal accident rate fell to .51 accidents per 100,000 flight hours in 2016, down slightly from .52 in 2015.

**2/7/17** – FHWA [published](#) a report on congestion pricing projects, and other studies funded through the Value Pricing Pilot Program, the Congestion Reduction Demonstrations and Urban Partnership Agreements.

**2/3/17** – BTS [released](#) the Transportation Statistics Annual Report 2016, the 21st edition of this congressionally mandated report presents key transportation indicators along with an overview of the transportation system. It also includes data and statistics on passenger travel, freight movement, transportation and the economy, system reliability, safety, energy use and environmental impacts.

**2/7/17** – The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) [concluded](#) that a broken axle on a grain car was the cause of the Casselton, N.D., train accident in which 476,000 gallons of crude oil spilled and ignited. The incident started when a train carrying grain derailed onto another track due to a broken axle on one of its cars, the train carrying crude oil was unable to stop in time before colliding with the derailed cars of the grain train. The NTSB recommended that regulators ensure all freight trains carrying crude oil maintain an adequate buffer between cars containing hazardous material and a train’s cab.

**1/31/17** – FHWA [published](#) an FAQ, providing updated guidance concerning the Emergency Relief Program, which enables FTA to provide assistance to public transit operators in the aftermath of an emergency or major disaster.

**1/13/17** – FHWA [identified](#) 55 routes to serve as the basis for a national network of “alternative fuel” corridors, as required by the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act in its report entitled National Electric Vehicle Charging and Hydrogen, Propane, and Natural Gas Fueling Corridors. In addition, the agency [issued](#) guidance to the Federal-aid Divisions regarding the signing of Alternative Fuels Corridors that have been designated by FHWA.