

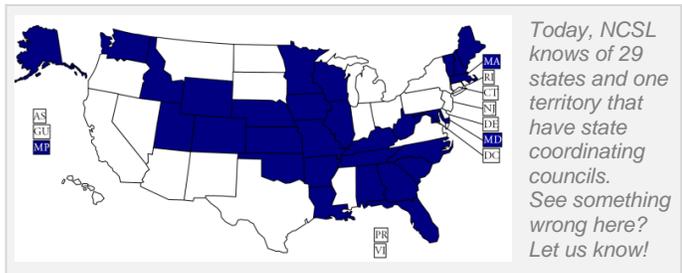


WHAT'S UP WITH STATE COORDINATING COUNCILS?

Did you know that by one estimate some 44,000 levels of government—plus thousands of nonprofit agencies and private companies—provide or pay for transportation services, each with its own rules?

In this complex, often fragmented and inefficient system, services can overlap in some areas and be entirely absent in others. Where services do exist, inconsistent approaches and eligibility requirements across agencies and providers can make services difficult to understand and navigate for real-life users.

To help solve this problem, at least 29 states and the Northern Mariana Islands have state-level “coordinating councils” where government agencies and stakeholder group work together to make transportation services more effective, efficient and accessible.



NCSL has been tracking state coordinating councils for years, and we’re planning to release a major update in the next few months. If you are connected to the council in your state, let us know! We’d love to check in with you as we research these critical efforts across the states.

LEGISLATURES WRAPPING UP

Of the 46 states holding legislative sessions in 2014, 14 have already adjourned for the year and seven more are expected to wrap up by the end of April. By the time our next issue reaches you in July, only California and seven states that meet year-round will still be in session.

2014 LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY

State legislatures play a key role in facilitating access to transportation for people who have mobility challenges due to age, income or disability. This year, states have already considered well over 100 relevant bills.

Here are some of the enacted measures so far.

GEORGIA. Among other provisions, **Senate Bill 298** allows people to submit a doctor’s prescription rather than an affidavit with an application for a disabled parking decal.

MISSISSIPPI. Thanks to **House Bill 1275**, a non-emergency medical transportation program for dialysis patients is now extended until July 2016.

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CONTACT

Jaime Rall
 NCSL-Denver
 303-856-1417
jaime.rall@ncsl.org

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State Legislative Activity (cont. from page 1)

NEW JERSEY. Adopted in March, [Assembly Concurrent Resolution 65](#) commends nonprofits and volunteers for providing transportation assistance to people with mobility challenges and urges nonprofits, state entities and the insurance industry to support volunteer driving.



WASHINGTON. [House Bill 2318](#) provides that nonprofit brokers of non-emergency medical transportation for Medicaid clients are not liable for subcontractors' industrial insurance premiums if certain requirements are met. [House Bill 2463](#) concerns special parking privileges for people with disabilities. Among other provisions, it extends the period of validity for temporary parking placards and incorporates many of the [recommendations of the disabled parking work group](#) to reduce the misuse of disabled parking placards and special license plates. Both bills have been signed into law.

WEST VIRGINIA. [Senate Bill 523](#) allows the secretary of the Department of Veterans Assistance to award grants for the transportation of veterans to veterans' hospitals from their homes or local veterans' assistance offices. Previously, the department was authorized to pay volunteers \$75 a day to take veterans to veterans' hospitals (see this [NCSL report](#) for details).

INDIANA COUNTIES GET MORE WAYS TO PAY FOR TRANSIT

Indiana [Senate Bill 176](#), enacted in March, now gives six counties in central Indiana more ways to pay for transit projects. The legislation allows eligible counties to pay for approved projects with local option income taxes that are already available under current law for other purposes. It also authorizes interlocal agreements, public-private partnerships and bonding for transit projects, and aims to keep projects sustainable by requiring counties to cover a portion of ongoing operating costs with fares and other alternative revenues. This seems to be the latest in a trend of state actions to give local entities more flexibility in how they raise and spend transportation revenue.

IDAHO LAUNCHES STATEWIDE ONE-CALL, ONE-CLICK SERVICE

A new statewide transportation resource directory [debuted](#) on the steps of the Idaho Statehouse on March 18. [My Idaho Ride](#) helps users find the best options to fit their travel needs with one call or one click. The new service—funded by the federal [Veterans Transportation and Community Living Initiative](#)—was primarily designed to aid veterans and their families with transportation to medical appointments, work, education and other services, but is also available to the general public.

N.H. LATEST TO RAISE GAS TAX

New Hampshire's [Senate Bill 367](#), which [awaits the governor's signature](#), is likely to make it the first state to raise gas taxes in 2014 sessions. The bill increases the tax by 4.2 cents per gallon, with the revenues to be used for roads and bridges. Last year, six states and D.C. also enacted bills to raise or reform gas taxes. For details, see [NCSL's Transportation Funding and Finance Legislation Database](#) and the February [NCSL Transport Report](#).

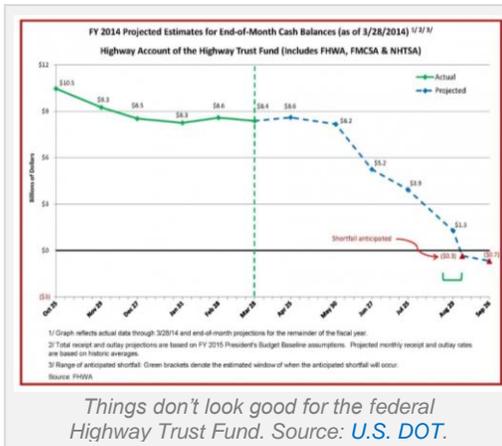
NATIONAL NEWS

Highway Trust Fund Faces Insolvency

The current federal surface transportation law—the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act, or **MAP-21**—is due to expire on Sept. 30, 2014. But the latest updates to the U.S. Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT)

Highway Trust Fund ticker

indicate that the fund's Highway Account may fall short before then.



If the balance gets too low, the U.S. DOT will likely use “cash management strategies” such as slowed reimbursements to states to keep the account solvent. The fund’s Mass Transit Account is anticipated to have a balance of about \$1 billion at the end of FY 2014. Now that Congress is back from recess, it may be reviewing **contingency plans** or **short-term fixes** to prop up the fund in case a long-term bill isn’t enacted in time.

Senators Agree on Reauthorization Principles

Leaders of the **Senate Environment and Public Works Committee** and its Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee **announced** on April 10 that they had agreed on principles to reauthorize federal surface transportation spending at current levels plus inflation for six years. The senators noted, however, that their agreement does not include a funding mechanism, which falls under the jurisdiction of the **Senate Finance Committee**. To fully fund surface transportation spending for the next six years, the Finance Committee would need to find about \$96 billion in extra revenues.

Senate Committee OKs Higher Transit Benefits

On April 3, the Senate Finance Committee **approved** the Expiring Provisions Improvement Reform and Efficiency (EXPIRE) Act. Known as “tax extenders,” the bill would reauthorize a number of tax breaks that expired at the end of 2013. Among other provisions, the bill would **make the limit on pre-tax transportation benefits for transit (or vanpools) the same as for parking**. Before Jan. 1, 2014, commuters could set aside up to \$245 a month to cover either transit or parking costs through plans managed by their employers. In January, the transit benefit fell to \$130 per month while the parking benefit rose to \$250. The bill would also make the new \$250 limit for transit retroactive to Jan. 1, 2014, and extend it through 2015.

Feds Double the Funding for Tribal Transit

Last month, the U.S. DOT **provided** \$30 million to American Indian and Alaska Native tribes for transit investments, double the amount available in previous years. Of this, \$5 million was awarded in competitive grants to 42 tribes in 19 states for **projects** to improve transit service. The other \$25 million was allocated by **formula** to eligible tribal recipients for FY 2014.

Changes in Federal Leadership

Two federal leaders recently announced they would be stepping down. **U.S. Representative Tom Petri** (R-Wis.),



chair of the House Subcommittee on Highways and Transit, plans to retire at the end of the 113th Congress, and **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius** resigned from her post. The secretary sits on the **Federal Interagency Coordinating Council**

on Access and Mobility (CCAM), a federal body that works to improve transportation access and efficiency.

TRANSIT RIDERSHIP UP, PER CAPITA DRIVING DOWN

New estimates from the U.S. DOT suggest that per capita vehicle miles traveled (VMT) dropped slightly in 2013, for the ninth straight year of decline. Total miles traveled nationwide increased by just 0.6 percent compared to 2012, still falling well below pre-recession levels. Meanwhile, Americans took more than 10 billion trips by public transportation in 2013, the most since 1956. Shifts in travel trends are contributing to shrinking gas tax revenues and, according to the [State Smart Transportation Institute](#), have started to change the way some state transportation agencies are planning for future travel needs. For more on whether Americans really are making a transportation shift, and what that may mean for transportation funding and spending, check out this [recent NCSL blog post](#) and [webinar](#).

NEW NCSL RESOURCES



[SUSTAINABLE STATE TRANSPORTATION FUNDING AND SPENDING \[WEBINAR ON DEMAND\]](#). View this new [webinar](#) about big-picture trends and the ever-important details of state efforts to keep transportation budgets sustainable and transparent into the future.

[ARE AMERICANS MAKING A TRANSPORTATION SHIFT? MAYBE, MAYBE NOT.](#) Is the U.S. really experiencing a sea-change in how we travel? Or is it all in the eye of the statistician? Dig into the issue with this April [blog post](#).

[STATE TAX ACTIONS 2013.](#) Tax reform was a theme in state legislatures in 2013, and transportation taxes were a key area for reform efforts. Read more in this [report](#).

[NCSL ON-SITE PRESENTATIONS.](#) NCSL can come to you! We offer [on-site expert presentations and technical assistance](#) on transportation access and mobility topics.

[TRANSPORTATION ACCESS AND MOBILITY LEGISLATION DATABASE.](#) This regularly updated [online database](#) tracks state bills that aim to help people who face transportation challenges due to income, disability or age.

[OTHER NCSL TRANSPORTATION NEWSLETTERS.](#) NCSL also publishes the monthly [Transport Report](#) and [Federal Transportation Update](#). To subscribe, e-mail [Jaime Rall](#).

CALENDAR

- [Mobility Management and Meeting Dialysis Transportation Needs \[NCMM Webinar\]](#), May 1, 3 pm ET.
- [APTA 2014 Bus and Paratransit Conference](#), Kansas City, Mo., May 4 – 7, including a half-day NCMM workshop on performance measures.
- [2014 North American Conference on Elder Mobility](#), Detroit, Mich., May 11 – 14.
- [Public Transportation Research \[Center for Transportation Excellence Webinar\]](#), May 13, 3 pm ET.
- [Performance Measures in Mobility Management \[NCMM Webinar\]](#), May 22, 2 pm ET.
- [CTAA EXPO 2014](#), St. Paul, Minn., June 8 – 13, including a two-day [special conference](#) on mobility management.
- [Getting from A to B: Connecting Individuals to Transportation Resources in Your Community \[Easter Seals Project ACTION Webinar\]](#), June 25, 2 pm ET.
- [NCSL 2014 Legislative Summit](#), Minneapolis, Minn., Aug. 6 – 22, including a one-day [event](#) on traffic safety.
- [21st National Conference on Rural Public and Intercity Bus Transportation](#), Monterey, Calif., Oct. 26 – 29.
- [International Paratransit Conference](#), Monterey, Calif., Oct. 29 – 31.

OTHER NEW RESOURCES

COMMUNITY TOOLS TO IMPROVE TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS FOR VETERANS, MILITARY SERVICE MEMBERS AND THEIR FAMILIES. A new TRB [report](#) offers ways to enhance local transportation options for veterans, military service members and their families by building on the concepts of transportation coordination and mobility management.

MEDICAID EXPANSION AND PREMIUM ASSISTANCE. This CTAA-commissioned [report](#) explains the Medicaid program's non-emergency medical transportation benefit and highlights its importance for the millions of chronically ill Americans who rely on it to get to life-sustaining medical services.

COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION MAGAZINE: THE RURAL TRANSIT REALITY. The latest [edition](#) of CTAA's magazine explores changes and challenges for rural transit.

RIDES IN SIGHT DATABASE. ITN America has launched a new [database](#) of senior transportation options in local communities throughout the United States.

2013 PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION RIDERSHIP REPORT. Fresh [data](#) from APTA indicates that Americans took 10.7 billion trips on transit in 2013—the highest ridership in 57 years.

2013 STATUS OF THE NATION'S HIGHWAYS, BRIDGES AND TRANSIT. This biennial federal [report](#) details the conditions, performance and investment needs of the nation's surface transportation infrastructure.

NATIONAL CENTER FOR MOBILITY MANAGEMENT (NCMM) WEBINARS. [Recordings and resources](#) are now available for these NCMM webinars: "Non-Emergency Medical Transportation: Emerging Research and Trends," "Quest for Funding: Getting Creative," and "Inclusive Planning and Design in Mobility Management."



FINAL FTA CIRCULAR: URBANIZED AREA FORMULA PROGRAM. This federal [circular](#) and [summary](#) explain recent changes to FTA's largest grant program, which provides funds for public transit in urbanized areas.

How to Get the NCSL *Getting There* Newsletter

More than 2,500 federal, state, local and private sector stakeholders across the country and around the world receive this newsletter each quarter.

To get NCSL's *Getting There* newsletter in your inbox, email jaime.rall@ncsl.org with your contact details.

Past issues (including our previous incarnation, the Transportation Coordination Quarterly) are online at <http://www.ncsl.org/default.aspx?tabid=20687>.

Special thanks to the Federal Transit Administration and the U.S. Department of Labor, whose support makes this newsletter possible.