



New Transportation Bill

New transportation bill, Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21), was passed by the US House of Representative and the US Senate on June 29, 2012 and signed by President Obama on July 6, 2012.

On Friday afternoon, June 29, 2012 the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate approved the final conference report on the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21). The bill will reform and reauthorize the various surface transportation programs through 2014. MAP-21 replaces SAFETEA-LU (Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users), originally a four year bill passed in 2005, and extended nine times since its expiration in 2009. President Obama signed the Act into law on July 6th.

The final bill that came out of a bipartisan effort is designed to “slash red tape involved in obtaining permits [for transportation projects] and eliminate government waste,” according to House Speaker John A. Boehner (R-OH). MAP-21 extends federal highway, rail and transit programs for 27 months. Both parties touted the bill as perhaps the largest jobs measure of the year.

The information provided in this article is taken either from the *Joint Explanation of MAP-21 Provided by the Conference Committee* report or from a list of highlights from MAP-21 that was posted on the U.S. Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works website, such as the bullets below:

- ✓ rizes the Federal-aid highway program at the Congressional Budget Office’s baseline level—equal to current funding levels plus inflation—for two fiscal years.
- ✓ MAP-21 consolidates the number of Federal programs by two-thirds, from about 90 programs down to less than 30, to focus resources on key national goals and reduce duplicative programs.
- ✓ Eliminates earmarks.
- ✓ Expedites project delivery while protecting the environment.
- ✓ Creates a new title called “America Fast Forward,” which strengthens the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Program (TIFIA) program to leverage federal dollars further than they have been stretched before.
- ✓ Consolidates certain programs into a focused freight program to improve the movement of goods.

In recent years, much of the discussion in the transportation sector has centered on ‘performance measures.’ Performance measures provide an identifiable way of tracking improvements in our mobility needs. MAP-21 follows through on that ideal

(Continued on page 6)

Newsletter Contents

New Transportation Bill
Page 1

Notes From the Top
Page 2

Announcements & Events
Calendar
Page 3

Spotlight Article
Page 4

DOTD On The Go
Page 5

From the Capital...
Page 6



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Notes from the Top
by Donna Lavigne

As always, it's been a busy Spring. We, here at the DOTD Public Transportation Section, have been conducting training, doing site visits to our providers and outreach to our underserved parishes, and preparing for the annual conference that will be held in September. For more on the site visits, outreach and past training, see the 'DOTD on the Go' section in this newsletter. For future training, see the Calendar of Events.

Our staff has been preparing for a visit from FTA. As some of you know, our Federal Transit Administration partners come see us every three years to review our performance. FTA will be visiting us July 16-18, 2012. They will be looking at how we manage the public transportation program in our state... we are looking forward to their input.

We are excited about the rollout of STTARS (Statewide Transit Tracking and Reporting System) to all of our Section 5310 E&D providers across the state. We have training opportunities set up for July 9th and 10th and again on July 23rd and 24th across the state. This will be an opportunity for our E&D providers to start doing online reporting for their trips and for their vehicle maintenance. This will drastically cut down on the amount of paperwork necessary by those providers.

We have some news to report to all of our Section 5311 Rural providers.

Our program manager Debra Lang and assistant program manager Sheila Robinson both retired in June. We advertised both positions and are conducting interviews during July. We hope to have some new faces to introduce at the September Public Transportation Conference. We wish Debra and Sheila a wonderful retirement.

Speaking of the conference, the dates and place are set. The 2012 Conference will be held September 5-7 at the Belle of Baton Rouge. The Belle of Baton Rouge is located in downtown Baton Rouge at 103 France Street. The theme of the conference is "We'll

Take You There." We have a preliminary agenda and other material available on our website at www.dotd.la.gov/intermodal/transit

The big news this spring is the passage by both the US House of Representatives and the US Senate of a new bipartisan national transportation bill: Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21). The bill has some changes that will affect public transportation. Please see the lead article for more details.

We look forward to seeing all of you at the 2012 Public Transportation Conference and want to thank you for all that you do to serve the transportation needs of the citizens of Louisiana. 



**From all of us here at the
DOTD Public Transportation Section
We hope you have a wonderful and
productive Summer and we look
forward to seeing you at the annual
Public Transportation Conference in Ba-
ton Rouge, September 5-7, 2012**

Events Calendar

APTA Conferences

Multimodal Operations Planning
Workshop

July 30-Aug 1, 2012 Baltimore, MD

Sustainability & Public Transportation
Workshop

August 5-8, 2012 Philadelphia, PA

State Public Transportation Partnership
Workshop

August 14-16, 2012 Chicago, IL

Annual Meeting

Sept 30-October 3, 2012 Seattle, WA

For more information: www.apta.com

Other Upcoming Conferences/Training:

NTI Courses:

Bus Procurement Workshop

July 31-August 1 Boston, MA

For information: www.ntionline.com

Transportation Safety Institute Classes

Courses are offered around the country
on various topics throughout the year.

For more information, please visit:

www.tsi.dot.gov

LADOTD Annual Public Transportation
Conference

September 5-7, 2012 Baton Rouge, LA

Hotel: Belle of Baton Rouge

For more information:

www.dotd.la.gov/intermodal/transit





Spotlight on...



Terrebonne ARC Invites FTA to Bus Safety & Security Review

On March 6, 2012, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Office of Safety and Security, conducted a site visit to the Terrebonne ARC. The visit was part of FTA's Transit Bus Safety and Security Program Voluntary Onsite Review. FTA approached Terrebonne ARC to participate in the voluntary program site visit to look at issues related to bus safety and security.

FTA is mandated with enhancing safety and security for bus transit passengers and employees across the nation. Part of FTA's mission is to provide effective and targeted technical assistance to the transit community. In cooperation with its partners - the American Public Transit Association (APTA), the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA), and the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) - FTA has revitalized and re-engineered the Bus Safety and Security Program. Key program elements include:

- ✓ A technical assistance website (<http://bussafety.fta.dot.gov>)
- ✓ Orientation seminars co-sponsored with state Departments of Transportation
- ✓ Voluntary onsite safety, security, and emergency preparedness reviews of individual transit agencies

The three program elements are mutually supportive and work in concert to provide information and technical assistance to participating agencies. The most dynamic element is the voluntary onsite review. In this forum, participating agencies have an opportunity to appraise their safety, security and emer-

gency preparedness infrastructure. The review assesses and identifies industry best practices through an evaluation of the 6 key functions outlined in the "Roadmap to Excellence" (available on the Bus Program technical assistance website):

- ✓ Management
- ✓ Operations and Maintenance
- ✓ Human Resources
- ✓ Safety Activities
- ✓ Security Activities
- ✓ Emergency/All-Hazards Management

Onsite reviews are completely voluntary, are not compliance-based, and are conducted at no cost to the participating agency. Every completed review is a building block in FTA's continuing effort to work in partnership with the transit industry to support achievement of our safety, security, and emergency preparedness mission. FTA specifically mentioned in their final report to the Terrebonne ARC that their partnership in this program provides valuable insight into the needs of the transit bus industry and supports FTA's mission to provide effective and targeted technical assistance to the transit community.

Since the review was centered on safety, security and emergency preparedness, none of the recommendations are presented here. However, the Terrebonne ARC final report included high level recommendations and was considered an outstanding example of a well implemented bus safety and security program. Congratulations go to the Terrebonne ARC for JOB WELL DONE! 



One of the DOTD PT Section's mandates is to provide information and technical assistance to transit providers



in Louisiana to assist them in meeting their requirements for FTA funding. These activities come in many different formats and venues. DOTD PT provides numerous training courses, workshops, and training material as well as a website and an annual conference. To keep all of our constituents up to date on DOTD PT's activities, DOTD On The Go features just a few selected items each quarter.

DOTD Conducts Site Visits

As noted in our previous newsletters, part of the outreach and assistance that DOTD provides to the Rural Public Transportation (Section 5311) and Elderly and Disabled (Section 5310) providers, are site visits from the Program Managers. They have been out conducting numerous site visits during the first quarter of 2012. Rural Provider visits included River Parish Transit Authority and St. Tammany/LACT. The E&D Program Manager visited Maison De Williams which is a new agency application... welcome to the program.

In addition, Bus Safety and Security visits were conducted at the following agencies: St. John ARC, Vermillion ARC, Vermillion COA, Lafourche COA, Lafourche ARC, Evangeline COA, and St. Mary CAA.



DOTD Outreach to Underserved Parishes

As most of you know, one of DOTD's primary goals is to provide some form of public transportation in all 64 parishes. It is a goal listed in the Louisiana Vision 2020 Plan. To further this goal, DOTD has been conducting educational visits to all of the parishes in Louisiana that do not currently have some form of public transportation services. Extensive outreach was conducted in 2011 and continues in 2012. During the 2nd quarter of this year, DOTD met with representatives from Grant, Acadia, Lafourche, Ascension, West Feliciana, and Iberville Parishes.

DOTD Workshops

During the second quarter of 2012, the DOTD helped sponsor a workshop on FTA Real Estate Requirements. The course provided grantees information on the FTA requirements associated with acquiring right-of-way for their projects.

In The Spotlight

If your agency or someone within your agency deserves recognition for a job well done, or has already received recognition or an award, please let us know. Email or send a brief description, photos, and contact information to Donna.Lavigne@la.gov or to Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development/Public Transit Section, attn: Donna Lavigne, P.O. Box 94245, Baton Rouge, LA 70804. 

Contact Information Announcement

In our attempt to keep everyone informed of special events, workshops, conferences, and important information regarding public transportation in Louisiana, DOTD PT maintains a Contact Database. If information about your organization - new phone number, new director, new address or email - has changed, please help us keep our database current. Email your updated information to: publictransportation@la.gov

Thanks for your Help!

(Continued from page 1)

with the following "Performance Management" changes (also taken from the highlights document listed above):

Performance Measures & Targets in MAP-21

- ✓ The bill establishes an outcome-driven approach that tracks performance and will hold states and metropolitan planning organizations accountable for improving the conditions and performance of their transportation assets.

State & Metropolitan Transportation Planning

- ✓ MAP-21 improves statewide and metropolitan planning processes to incorporate a more comprehensive performance-based approach to decision making. Utilizing performance targets will assist states and metropolitan areas in targeting limited resources on projects that will improve the condition and performance of their transportation assets.

As mentioned earlier, MAP-21 consolidates many federal surface transportation programs including some involving public transportation. MAP-21 also strengthens several existing programs such as safety oversight and shifts many of the earmarks and discretionary programs to formula programs to provide more stability for public transportation agencies trying to upgrade and improve aging infrastructure and vehicles.

Many of the existing programs remain intact; however, several programs such as JARC and New Freedom are combined with others. The JARC program is incorporated with both the Urban (5307) and Rural (5311) transit programs to provide more flexibility to those longtime existing programs. The Section 531 New Freedom program is being consolidated with the Section 5310 program grant for the Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities. The consolidated program will continue to ensure support for non-profit providers of transportation, and it will continue to make available funds for public transportation services that exceed



the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

MAP-21 also calls for the US DOT Secretary to establish a National Public Transportation Safety Plan to improve the safety of all public transportation systems that receive Federal funding. The Act also calls for the Secretary to develop minimum performance standards for vehicles used for public transportation and develop training programs for employees who conduct safety audits.

For more information on MAP-21 please see either the full text of the new bill at:

<http://goo.gl/wNB2a>

Or see the joint explanatory statement from the conference committee at:

<http://goo.gl/EALxe> 



From Capitol Hill...

Friday, June 29, 2012 was a big day on Capital Hill. Congress approved legislation that will extend federal highway programs through 2014, a low interest rate on student loans for one year, and the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) for five years. The transportation bill was passed by a 373-52 vote in the US House of Representatives and passed by a 74-19 vote in the US Senate. President Obama signed the MAP-21 Act into law on July 6th. 