

Utility & Transportation Contractors Association



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LEGISLATIVE NEWS

February
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UTCA QUICKLY GETS BACK TO WORK ON INFRASTRUCTURE BANK LEGISLATION

Legislation establishing a State Transportation & Energy Infrastructure Bank, a UTCA initiative and landmark measure, was pocket vetoed by Governor Christie. The bill was not approved before the Constitutional deadline of noon on Jan. 21st, causing the measure to die. As a result, New Jersey will not be prepared to receive new federal funds, nor can the state accept private investment, for the financing of new road, bridge, and energy related projects as was made possible under this legislation.

The Governor is not required to provide a veto message explaining this decision since it falls within the "lame duck" session of an expiring Legislature. Association representatives have reached out to the Administration for an explanation, but so far the reasoning behind the decision to allow such an important industry bill to die is unclear. Both legislative sponsors, Assemblyman John Wisniewski and Senator Bob Gordon, have reintroduced their respective

bills. Several stakeholder meetings are scheduled to address criticism of the legislation and to build a larger coalition of supporters.

UTCA REPRESENTATIVES MEET WITH SENATOR CORY BOOKER TO DISCUSS INFRASTRUCTURE ISSUES

UTCA President Harry Chowansky, Senior Vice President Scott Lattimer and CEO Bob Briant, Jr. recently met with New Jersey's newest U.S. Senator Cory Booker to discuss the challenging infrastructure issues facing New Jersey and the nation. Senator Booker is a member of the U.S. Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works and he will have a direct impact on the Senate's efforts to reauthorize the Nation's surface transportation law, MAP-21, as well as reauthorization of the Clean Water and Safe Drinking Water Acts.

Senator Booker expressed his staunch support for New Jersey's infrastructure industry and noted the economic stimulus and employment gains when federal and state government invests in public works projects. Senator Booker also mentioned that he was meeting with Governor Christie to discuss New Jersey's infrastructure needs and offered to discuss UTCA's issues with the Governor. Association staff provided the Senator with briefing materials concerning reauthorizing the State's Transportation Trust Fund, UTCA's Infrastructure Bank legislation and other issues of importance to the Association.

HOUSE AND SENATE CONTINUE CONFERENCE NEGOTIATIONS ON WRRDA

U.S. House and Senate conference members continue to negotiate the final version of the Water Resources Reform & Development Act. The Senate approved its measure last May while the House passed its bill in



Pictured from the left are, Bob Briant, Jr., Senator Cory Booker, Harry Chowansky, UTCA President and Scott Lattimer, UTCA Senior Vice President.

late October. The House and Senate bills differ in several ways. Most importantly, the Senate legislation contains a WIFIA loan component while the House measure is silent on this issue.

The most recent matter that needs to be settled is the cost of the bill. The original price-tag for the WRRDA legislation was approximately \$7-\$8 billion, however, Senator David Vitter (R-LA), ranking Republican on the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee and Conference member, is insisting that \$7 billion be added to the WRRDA measure to fund an immense levee project in Louisiana. Senator Vitter is running for Governor and the Republicans want to help support his chances to win. In response, Committee Chairwoman Senator Barbara Boxer (D-CA) wants to include \$7 billion for future unidentified projects. The cost for the WRRDA bill could potentially triple to \$21 billion and the resources to offset these increases have yet to be identified.

Once the revenue issue is resolved, other matters will be finalized including the WIFIA component of the measure and possibly Clean Water reauthorization. The Conference is expected to conclude this spring.

PRESIDENT OBAMA URGES CONGRESS TO ACT ON INFRASTRUCTURE BILLS

President Obama urged U.S. House and Senate members to act on several infrastructure funding measures pending in Congress during his "State of the Union" address to the nation recently. The President was referring to the Water Resources Reform & Development Act (WRRDA) and the reauthorization of the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21). The WRRDA legislation is currently being reconciled by a House-Senate Conference Committee while MAP-21 reauthorization hearings have just begun in Congress.

The President noted his support for both of these infrastructure funding bills, however, he did not identify any specific funding mechanism to pay for the proposals only noting that savings from closing corporate tax loopholes in the federal tax laws could be used to fund these proposals. While using increased corporate tax collections to help fund federal infrastructure construction programs is useful, it is more prudent and fiscally responsible to identify a stable dedicated revenue stream to fund the nation's investments in our transportation and waterway systems.

OMNIBUS APPROPRIATIONS BILL PASSED BY CONGRESS AND ENACTED BY PRESIDENT OBAMA

President Obama recently signed into law the \$1.1 trillion Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2014. The President's action followed votes by the House (359-67) and the Senate (72-26) in favor of the funding measure. The FY 2014 appropriations bill follows Congress's 2 year budget agreement that was reached in December 2013 and will avoid another government shutdown until September 30, 2014.

The \$1.1 trillion omnibus spending bill provides the following investments for federal infrastructure programs:

- FY 2014 Highway Program - \$40.3b (FY 2013 - \$39.6b)
- FY 2014 Public Transit Program - \$10.7b (FY 2013 - \$10.6b)
- FY 2014 Airport Improvement Program - \$3.35b (FY 2013 - \$3.35b)
- FY 2014 Clean Water SRF Program - \$1.449b (FY 2013 - \$1.451b)
- FY 2014 Safe Drinking Water SRF Program - \$906.9m (FY 2013 - \$908.7m)
- Army Corps of Engineers program - \$5.467b (FY 2013 - \$4.718b)

HOUSE BEGINS COMMITTEE HEARINGS ON THE REAUTHORIZATION OF MAP-21

The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee (T & I) began committee hearings regarding the reauthorization of the federal surface transportation program (MAP-21) that expires on September 30, 2014. Committee Chairman Bill Shuster (R-PA) has stated that he intends to have the transportation reauthorization bill marked up by his Committee and passed by the House before August of this year.

A key issue that will need to be addressed by Congress is the funding mechanism for the federal Highway Trust Fund. Currently the 18.4 cents per gallon federal gas tax generates \$35 billion per year while the federal Highway program spends approximately \$40 billion annually. Not only will new stable revenue be needed to balance the Highway Trust Fund but additional resources will need to be identified in order to increase federal investment in our transportation systems. Other key principles to be included in the reauthorization bill, as noted by Chairman Shuster, include reducing regulatory burdens, freight mobility, and enhanced flexibility for states.

SPONSORS REINTRODUCE UTCA SUPPORTED LEGISLATION IN NJ

Members of the State Legislature have brought the following measures back in the new session.

State Infrastructure Bank – new bill numbers A2268/S307
County Self-Help Fee – new bill numbers A1606/S311
Financial Statements – new bill numbers A1794/S1048
Design Build (Turnpike) – new bill numbers A1690/S401
Utility Relocation – new bill number A1709
Uniformed Traffic Control – new bill number A1530

UTCA committee members will also continue their work on important reform measures concerning police traffic control, “or equals”, and standardized bid documents.

UTCA PAC Club Needs Your Support!

UTCA continues to represent the utility and transportation construction industry vigorously before our governmental decision-makers. Over the past several years, the

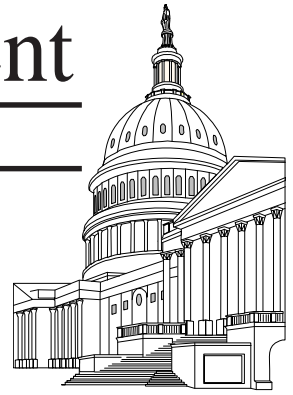
Association has been responsible for developing, drafting, and securing final passage of laws that have directly impacted our members. Each week, UTCA staff monitors thousands of existing and newly introduced legislative initiatives and energetically opposes any measure that would be harmful to our industry and your business.

In this effort, Association staff conducts numerous meetings throughout the year with members of the Legislature, their staff, and representatives of the Administration. **PAC Club funds allow UTCA representatives to attend legislative fundraisers and other special events** which provide an opportunity to discuss industry issues with key leaders.

Whether your firm is large or small, UTCA’s PAC Club program has a membership level designed to fit your financial capabilities. There are 8 different PAC Club memberships. **UTCA urges you to please use the enclosed 2014 PAC Contribution Form** that is attached and return it to the association office with your firm’s financial support.

Constructors For Good Government

Please Support Your Industry PAC



2014 Contribution Form

Contributions to Constructors For Good Government go a long way in our efforts to educate members of the Legislature and the Administration to the needs of construction. Please check the appropriate club membership for your firm. **Please remember that contributions to Constructors For Good Government are legally permissible under all State pay-to-play laws.**

Club Memberships:

President's Club - \$10,000 _____

Governor's Club - \$7,200 _____

Ambassador's Club - \$5,000 _____

Leadership Club - \$2,500 _____

Platinum Club - \$1,000 _____

Gold Club - \$500 _____

Silver Club - \$250 _____

Bronze Club - \$100 _____

COMPANY CHECKS ARE ACCEPTABLE

Enclosed is a contribution in the amount of \$ _____. **Checks should be made payable to *Constructors For Good Government*.**

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