

Utility & Transportation Contractors Association



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LEGISLATIVE NEWS

July
2013

U. S. Senate & House Committees Approve Transportation Funding

On June 27th, both the U.S. Senate and House Appropriations Committees approved similar measures to fund the Fiscal Year 2014 transportation program. Funding levels originally authorized in last year's MAP 21 surface transportation law were largely supported by the committees. Of particular note is a slight increase in core highway funding which was originally programmed at \$39.7 billion in MAP 21 and is currently set at \$40.3 billion in the new appropriations. Other funding categories include supplemental bridge, transit formula programs, transit capital grants, and airport improvements, all of which remain in-tact or slightly higher. While this is an important step forward in the legislative process, both measures require approval by the full Senate and House. This vote has yet to be scheduled. UTCA will continue to work with its national affiliate, ARTBA, to urge Congress to approve the funding measures.

Environmental Infrastructure Trust Project Funding Moves Forward

The New Jersey State Legislature, in its final week of action before the beginning of the new state fiscal year, has approved legislation to fund the 2014 Environmental Infrastructure Trust financing program. The package of 4 bills, which must be approved annually, once again secured strong bipartisan support. Representatives from the Association supported the measures throughout the legislative process.

The New Jersey Environmental Infrastructure Trust will be authorized to expend up to \$780.3 million, along with any unexpended balances from previous authorizations, to provide loans for a portion of the total costs of 165 eligible environmental infrastructure projects. The Trust will use the funds appropriated to make loans to local governments and privately-owned water companies totaling \$511.9 million for 85 new clean water projects included in

the "State Fiscal Year 2014 Clean Water Project Priority List" and \$48.3 million for five ongoing clean water projects. The funding will also cover \$218.2 million for 73 new drinking water projects included in the "State Fiscal Year 2014 Drinking Water Project Priority List" and \$1.9 million for two ongoing drinking water projects.

A new provision was added this year that will help the State respond more effectively to natural disasters. The legislation will allow the Trust to establish a special "Disaster Relief Emergency Loan Fund" to provide short-term funding for environmental infrastructure projects to repair damage incurred during Superstorm Sandy and to mitigate the risk of damage arising in a future disaster. The bills currently await Governor Christie's approval, at which point they will become law.



Pictured from the left are Scott Lattimer, Joe Walsh and Evan Piscitelli at a recent UTCA Legislative Committee meeting.

Important Congressional Action On Water Infrastructure Bills

The United States Senate recently passed the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) on a bipartisan basis, the first significant action on the bill since it was last passed in 2007 over a Presidential veto. WRDA funds projects associated with the Army Corps of Engineers and the nation's waterways infrastructure. Along with

more robust funding for construction, the bill seeks to implement key policy changes designed to improve the environmental review and approval process so that projects are not unnecessarily hampered by red tape. S. 601 now heads to the U.S. House of Representatives where Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman Bill Shuster will take up the measure soon.

Representative Tim Bishop (D-NY) has reintroduced legislation that would reauthorize the Clean Water Act and amend the current law to establish a clean water trust fund. The Water Quality Protection and Job Creation Act of 2013, H.R.1877, is identical to the Congressman's bill that he introduced last year. The legislation would authorize \$13.8 billion over five years for the Clean Water SRF program and an additional \$600 million would be available for storm water management projects. Currently, the bill has 27 cosponsors on a bipartisan basis. In concert with the National Clean Water Construction Coalition, UTCA will keep the pressure on lawmakers to support these important utility construction bills.

State Legislature Passes Anti-Texting Initiative

Legislation inspired by the personal story of a UTCA member has passed both houses of the State Legislature. Assembly Bill 3873, known as "Nikki's Law", requires the Commissioner of Transportation to erect appropriate signage informing motorists that the operator of a moving motor vehicle is prohibited from text messaging. The bill is written in memory of Nikki Kellenyi, an 18-year old

National Honor Society for Business student and champion equestrian from Washington Township, New Jersey who tragically died in an automobile accident in 2012. Association representatives met with Chairman Wisniewski this fall to bring this story, and the need for action, to his attention. The measure now awaits approval by Governor Christie.

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 2013 PAC Contribution Form that is attached and return it to the association office with your firm's financial support.

Help Us Represent The Industry In
The Legislature!

Support UTCA's PAC Club

CONSTRUCTORS FOR GOOD GOVERNMENT

Constructors For Good Government

Please Support Your Industry PAC



2013 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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Please return this form with your check (**payable to Constructors For Good Government**) to the UTCA office.

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