

NACE UPDATE

The almost bi-weekly newsletter for Board members & Committee Chairs

June 10, 2008- Volume 08 Number 12

(Note: Sources of information include the AASHTO Journal, NACo staff, Senate and House publications, the Federal Highway Administration, and other association news journals)

SAFETEA-LU Technical Corrections Bill Signed by President

Friday afternoon, President Bush signed into law the bill H.R. 1195, making a series of technical and substantive changes to the 2005 SAFETEA-LU surface transportation law. This legislation is intended to correct any provisions that were left out of the original bill by mistake when passed in 2005 but naturally included some other provisions. Most importantly to counties is a NACo recommended provision allowing for the expenditure of some Surface Transportation Program funds, a category in the federal highway program, on minor rural collectors in areas under 5000 population. This language had been in law since 1991 and was inadvertently left out of SAFETEA-LU. Many counties own minor rural collectors and have used this exception to the law, which generally prohibits expenditure of federal funds on minor rural collectors, to maintain and improve this classification of rural road. (Contact: Bob Fogel 202/942-4217 or bfogel@naco.org)

NACo Testifies at Highway and Transit Infrastructure Hearing

Commissioner Leo Bowman of Benton County, WA, who serves as Vice Chair of NACo's Transportation Steering Committee, testified on June 5 before the House Subcommittee on Highways and Transit. The subject matter was "Maintaining the Nation's Highway and Transit Infrastructure." Bowman told the subcommittee members that more federal resources are necessary to help rural counties maintain their surface transportation systems. He outlined counties' extensive responsibilities in this area and made a number of suggestions on how to improve federal highway law so that counties could access more federal dollars. He highlighted the role of maintenance of county roads and bridges and explained that county officials are very interested in improving the safety of their roads. He also outlined the limitations of county property tax and that general revenue is sustaining the local road system. A copy of the testimony will soon be available on the NACo website. (Contact: Bob Fogel 202/942-4217 or bfogel@naco.org)

Secure Rural Schools Vote Fails in House

On June 5, the House of Representatives failed to pass H.R. 3058, the Public Land Communities Transition Act by a margin of 218 to 193. Because the bill considered under suspension of the rules (which limits debate and amendments), a 2/3 vote was required to pass. NACo has been working with Congress to find a long-term funding solution and reauthorization since Congress passed a one-year extension of the program May of 2007. The Secure Rural Schools program expired September of 2006. NACo has supported passage of H.R. 3058 and testified in support of the measure last year in the House Natural Resources Committee. Partisan disagreements over the last minute decision to strip the bill of provisions to fully fund the Payment in Lieu of Taxes program and the funding offset identified in the bill led to the failed vote yesterday. The vote follows a statement issued by the Administration threatening to veto the bill largely due to the funding provisions contained in the bill. "The Administration strongly opposes language that would force holders of certain deepwater oil and gas leases issued in 1998 and 1999 by the

Clinton Administration to either renegotiate the terms of the leases or pay an excessive fee. This provision is likely to result in significant delays in lease sales in the event that the provision is litigated." The defeat of H.R. 3058 on the floor of the House represents another disappointing failure of the federal government to meet the needs of county government, rural schools, forested communities. We call upon Congress and the Administration to set aside their partisan differences and to find a common sense solution that will avoid denying a quality education to millions of rural school children. Today, we urgently ask that the Members of the House of Representatives support the Emergency Supplemental appropriations package passed last week by the Senate, which contains \$400 million for a one-year extension of Secure Rural Schools payments. Contact your Members of Congress in support of SRS reauthorization. (Contact: Ryan Yates 202/942-4207 or ryates@naco.org)

Congress Approves Budget Resolution, but There's No Guarantee of Full Highway Funding

Congress last week approved a budget blueprint for Fiscal Year 2009. But while the resolution would allow appropriators to fully fund highway authorizations, the \$3.2 billion shortfall in the Highway Trust Fund could result in a program cut of \$13.5 billion in October. The budget resolution is non-binding, but it sets the maximum spending levels for federal funding programs. In the case of transportation, the budget resolution would allow for appropriators to fully fund the authorized levels for highways and transit enacted in the Safe, Accountable, Flexible and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) legislation in 2005. It rejects an Administration proposal to reduce highway funding levels by \$1 billion to reflect a negative Revenue Aligned Budget Authority (RABA) calculation, and to further cut the program by another \$1 billion, based on the contention that SAETEA-LU levels have already been attained.

The resolution would also provide for \$3.9 billion in funding for the Airport Improvement grant program in FY 2009, increasing to \$4.1 billion by FY 2011.

Although an allowance must be made in the budget resolution to allow appropriators to fund the highway program at SAFETEA-LU levels, there is no assurance that will be possible for FY 2009, given the looming shortfall in the Highway Trust Fund.

In February, the President's budget forecast a \$3.2 billion shortfall in the revenue needed in the Highway Trust Fund to support the \$42 billion federal-aid highway program authorizations in FY 2009. Because highway project funding is spent over a period of several years, the reduction of \$3.2 billion in cash necessitates an actual federal program reduction of \$13.5 billion. Since February, the situation has worsened because of the decline in travel and fuel tax receipts to the Trust Fund. An updated revenue estimate in July appears likely to produce an even larger shortfall. Appropriators will soon begin action on the FY 2009 spending bills, and will have to consider reducing FY 2009 spending unless Congress acts to fix the Highway Trust Fund shortfall. "This is an urgent issue for every state," said AASHTO Executive Director John Horsley. "Not only will states be forced to delay needed projects, they will also be losing hundreds of thousands of jobs." To resolve the shortfall, Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D-MT) and Ranking Member Charles Grassley (R-IA) have proposed a package of measures that would reimburse \$5 billion to the Highway Trust Fund from the general fund. This includes more than \$3 billion in reimbursement for emergency relief funding spent from the Highway Trust Fund, which has historically been funded by the General Fund for large emergencies. Since this Highway Trust Fund remedy must be attached to a revenue title,

the best opportunity to move the legislation before June 30 would be to attach it to a bill extending the current aviation taxes, which will expire June 30 unless action is taken by Congress.

National Sign Maintenance and Management Workshop Set for October

ATSSA – in partnership with the FHWA and NACE – will host a [National Sign Maintenance and Management Workshop](#) in Addison (Dallas County), Texas, Oct. 20-21. Twenty exhibitors will display the latest in sign technology during the two-day event, which will also feature many informative workshops, including discussions on new retroreflectivity requirements, sign management and maintenance research methods, funding, and implementation perspectives at the city, county and state levels. The workshops will be led by guest speakers from the federal, state and local levels, as well as industry professionals who specialize in a wide variety of signage issues. Preliminary information regarding this event, including names of guest speakers and timelines for workshops and exhibit hours, is available by [clicking here](#).

Notice of Proposed Rulemaking Announced

FHWA has announced a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) to amend the regulations at 23 CFR part 924 Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) to incorporate the new statutory requirements of SAFETEA-LU and to provide State and local safety partners with information on the purpose, definitions, policy, program structure, planning, implementation, evaluation, and reporting of HSIP. You can access the docket by following this link:

<http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2008/pdf/E8-8742.pdf>

The comment period is 60 days long and remains open until June 23, 2008.

Pavement Preservation Resource Information Available

Jon Rice, NACE Northeast Regional Vice President and NACE representative on the Pavement Preservation Expert Task Group (PPETG) has advised that this University of Texas Pavement Preservation Center site has useful information for all in addressing pavement preservation issues. Visit it today.

<http://www.utexas.edu/research/tppc/conf/pps/videopps2007.html>

Transportation Construction Management Conference to be held

The First International Conference on Transportation Construction Management is being held September 9-11, 2008, in Orlando, Florida at the Doubletree Hotel at the Entrance to Universal Orlando, Orlando, Florida . Please join FHWA, TRB, AASHTO, Industry, and international participants in discussing innovative approaches in managing construction projects. Participants will learn how other agencies are integrating construction management concepts early in the project delivery process to align public expectations, contracting agency goals and contractor commitments. Conference web site: <http://www.2008tcmconference.volpe.dot.gov/>

National Workshop on Highway Asset Management and Data Collection being held.

North Carolina DOT and North Carolina State University are hosting a National Workshop on Highway Asset Management & Data Collection from September 24-26, 2008 in Durham NC.

This event is sponsored by TRB, AASHTO, USDOT, and FHWA.

Registration is open. For more details visit

<http://www.itre.ncsu.edu/NCassetMgmtConf/index.html>

National Workshop on Highway Asset Management & Data Collection

An efficient and accurate inventory of an agency's assets, along with the means to assess their condition and model their performance, is critical to enabling an agency to make informed investment decisions in a Transportation Asset Management (TAM) environment. Today, new technologies provide fast and improved ways to gather, process, and analyze data. The key is to identify the important information elements and assess how much of it is needed to make informed decisions. The workshop and equipment showcase is the forum to find the latest in technology for managing highway assets. Four focus areas (Pavements, Bridges, Roadside Appurtenances, and Geotechnical and Drainage) have been identified as the leading areas for inventory and analysis. Below is a description of each area for the workshop:

Pavements

The Pavements group will focus on surface distresses, roughness, rutting, and texture or friction. A 130-mile test course located near Raleigh, NC provides a location with varied roadway classifications, road geometry, pavement and shoulder type, conditions, and types of data elements, terrain, and vegetation. Both urban and rural roadways are included in this test course.

Geotechnical and Drainage

The Geotechnical group will showcase and evaluate technologies available for assessment of existing Infrastructure components. On a network level, the area of interest includes slope stability through remote sensing technologies. On a project level, areas of interest include smart foundation and health monitoring, settlement of bridge approach slabs, unknown foundation evaluation, buried metals, MSE walls deformation monitoring, and drainage issues.

Bridges/Roadside Appurtenances

The Bridges group will focus on devices for field data collection and entry, and assessment technologies for deck, superstructure, and substructure including underwater inspection. These technologies may be used for assessing maintenance needs, probable bridge component life fracture critical bridge details, component strength, material characteristics and deterioration, remote sensing, and health monitoring. Varied conventional and innovative technologies will be showcased, demonstrated and evaluated at this workshop. Gathering inventory and condition data on a network basis for multiple roadside assets can be extremely time consuming. The Roadside Appurtenances group will highlight vendor technologies that collect roadway data such as pavement markings, signs, guardrail and shoulder conditions. Vendors will be invited to inventory and assess the condition of targeted sections of a test track, and then showcase their results as compared to actual ground conditions.

Dates:

September 24-26, 2008

Location:

Sheraton Imperial
Hotel & Convention Center
Durham, NC

www.sheratonrtp.com

For general information, contact Terry Canales, PE NCDOT at 919-733-2210 or tcanales@dot.state.nc.us

AAA Foundation's United States Road Assessment Program Expands Program Aims to Focus Road Improvements and Enforcement on Highest Risk Road Segments

The AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety's United States Road Assessment Program (usRAP) announced plans to expand its pilot program into Illinois, Kentucky, New Mexico, and Utah. The usRAP program maps the relative risk of road segments based on available crash using a unique protocol first tested in Europe's EuroRAP program. These risk maps are then used by state and local road agencies to guide strategic investments in highway infrastructure and the allocation of enforcement resources, as well as benchmark progress over time. Designed to foster collaboration, usRAP is now active in eight states. The long-term plan envisions expanding the pilot into a fully operational program across the country, which will lead to fewer deaths and serious-injury crashes on our nation's road network.

"We are delighted to be collaborating with these state departments of transportation to enhance their road safety efforts," said Peter Kissinger, President and CEO of the AAA Foundation. "Working together we can make a difference and reduce the risks to the motoring public."

In the recently completed usRAP pilots in Florida and New Jersey, both state Departments of Transportation pilot tested usRAP to enhance ongoing safety management programs, which included confirming the location of high crash road segments and identifying road segments for comprehensive engineering studies. Those pilots also provided guidance for state police to better target enforcement strategies, as well as the enhancement of federally-required state reports to identify the five percent of public roads that have the most serious traffic safety needs.

The usRAP program is very timely as recent Federal mandates have placed new emphasis on evidence-based safety management and transparency of the decision-making process on all public roads. "These tools will be invaluable for state, county, and local engineers across the country looking to maximize the safety benefits from their limited resources," said Roger Wentz, President and CEO, American Traffic Safety Services Association. "We think that usRAP is such a valuable tool that we recommend it as the data standard for planning the effective use of Highway Safety Improvement Program funds."

Pilot programs have already been completed Florida, Iowa, Michigan, and New Jersey. Similar mapping already exists throughout much of Europe and Australia.

IOWA COUNTY HIGHWAY COMMISSIONER

Iowa County (population 23,500) is seeking a Highway Commissioner who will oversee all aspects of the county highway operations, including maintenance of approximately 1,200 lane miles, supervision \$6.5 million budget and workforce of 45 employees. Key talents include superior management skills, proven innovation and creativity, initiative, fiscal acumen and proficient interpersonal skills.

Qualifications include Bachelor's degree in engineering with training in public administration, and 5-7 years transportation engineering, construction and maintenance experience. Included in that experience must be 2-3 years supervisory experience and 2-3 years public sector experience,

or any combination thereof. Preference for working knowledge of maintenance operations of state and/or county highways. Valid Wisconsin motor vehicle operator's license required.

Salary is based upon candidates' qualifications. Current range is \$54,662 to \$64,022. A generous comprehensive benefits package is provided.

Employment application and job description which includes a more detailed list of duties and qualifications is available at the **Iowa County web site at www.iowacounty.org** or available at the Iowa County Personnel Dept./ 222 N. Iowa Street Ste 102/ Dodgeville, WI 53533, or can be requested at (608) 935-0302. Deadline for **required application** is 4:30 p.m. Friday, July 18, 2008. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

UPCOMING TRB WEBINAR: INSTALLATION AND DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS FOR CULVERT REHABILITATION

http://www.trb.org/news/blurb_detail.asp?id=9105

TRB will conduct a web briefing or "Webinar" on Friday, June 20, 2008, from 2:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. EDT that will explore culvert design information and best practice installation processes for transportation engineers and maintenance personnel. The webinar will examine case studies and best practice processes for rehabilitation of culverts, and will include information on structural and hydraulic design. Participants must register at least 24 hours in advance of the start of the Webinar, space is limited, and there is a fee for non-TRB Sponsor employees.

10TH INTERNATIONAL BRIDGE AND STRUCTURE MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE

http://www.trb.org/news/blurb_detail.asp?id=8542

TRB is sponsoring the 10th International Bridge and Structure Management Conference on October 20-22, 2008, in Buffalo, New York. The objective of the conference is to bring together practitioners, administrators, and researchers from around the world to exchange information on the development, implementation and utilization of effective bridge and structure management practices. Issues expected to be addressed included design and implementation of bridge management systems; application of bridge management in transportation agencies; bridge preservation, maintenance, and deterioration rates; application of prioritization and optimization routines; and more.

COLOR EFFECTIVENESS OF YELLOW PAVEMENT MARKING MATERIALS: FULL REPORT

http://www.trb.org/news/blurb_detail.asp?id=8795

TRB's National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) Web-Only Document 125: Color Effectiveness of Yellow Pavement Marking Materials explores the range of chromaticity coordinates that observers classify as yellow and white under daytime and incandescent illumination. A summary of the report described in Web-Only Document 125 was produced as NCHRP Research Results Digest 328.

COLOR EFFECTIVENESS OF YELLOW PAVEMENT MARKING MATERIALS: SUMMARY

http://www.trb.org/news/blurb_detail.asp?id=9100

TRB's National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) Research Results Digestion 328: Color Effectiveness of Yellow Pavement Marking Materials explores range of chromaticity coordinates that observers classify as yellow and white under daytime and incandescent illumination. The full report of the project described by NCHRP Research Results Digest 328 was produced as NCHRP Web-Only Document 125.

METHODOLOGY TO PREDICT THE SAFETY PERFORMANCE OF RURAL MULTILANE HIGHWAYS

http://www.trb.org/news/blurbs_detail.asp?id=9099

TRB's National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) Web-Only Document 126: Methodology to Predict the Safety Performance of Rural Multilane Highways explores a methodology designed to predict the safety performance of various elements considered in the planning, design, and operation of nonlimited-access rural multilane highways.