



# Transfer

Surface Transportation Policy Project's Electronic Update

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## Hill News

### U.S. House Passes Bill To Restore \$4.4 Billion In Highway Funding



Bipartisan legislation which restores a minimum of \$4.4 billion in federal highway funding in Fiscal Year 2003 was overwhelmingly approved by the U.S. House of Representatives on May 14, 2002. H.R. 3694, the "Highway Funding Restoration Act", passed the House by a vote of 410 to 5. The bill, which had

317 cosponsors, including all 75 members of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, increases the guaranteed level of highway funding for fiscal year 2003 to at least \$27.7 billion, the level authorized in TEA 21.

The passage came after a compromise between the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee and House appropriators left the Revenue Aligned Budget Authority (RABA) mechanism in place, while calling for its revision in the future. The funding cut in the Bush Administration budget was largely due to RABA. For an explanation of the mechanism, see STPP's Decoding Transportation Policy and Practice at <http://www.transact.org/decoders.htm>.

For more information on H.R. 3694, [click here](#).

### \$59 Billion Rail Bill Approved By Congressional Subcommittee

The U.S. House Subcommittee on Railroads approved legislation May 9, 2002 that would provide a mix of grant and bond and loan authority totaling \$59 billion for high-speed rail and rail infrastructure projects. Transportation Committee

## In Brief...

### Internship Opportunity at STPP

This position will conduct strategic research and grassroots organizing to support the organization of the Alliance for a New Transportation Charter. See a complete job description at [www.transact.org](http://www.transact.org).

## Calendar

### House Schedule

**May 16:** [T&I](#) Over-the-Road Bus Security and Safety Act markup

**May 21:** [T&I](#) hearing on relieving highway congestion through capacity enhancements and increased efficiency (tentative)

**Date TBA:** [T&I](#) Intermodalism hearing (postponed from May 15)

### Senate Schedule

**May 15:** [Banking Committee](#) affordable housing hearing

**May 15:** [EPW](#) Transportation Planning and Smart Growth hearing  
([listen online now](#))

[Transportation and University Communities Conference](#)

June 15-18, 2002: Amherst, MA

Chair Don Young (R-Alaska) and Railroads Subcommittee Chair Jack Quinn (R-NY) introduced the Railroad Infrastructure Development and Expansion Act for the 21st Century (RIDE 21) - H.R. 2950. RIDE 21 establishes authority for states or interstate compacts to issue \$12 billion in federal tax-exempt bonds and \$12 billion in federal tax-credit bonds for infrastructure improvements for high-speed passenger railroad infrastructure over 10 years.

"RIDE 21 is an historic commitment from this Congress to improve and expand our nation's rail infrastructure and develop a viable high speed rail system," said Young. "This bill addresses the increasing needs of our passenger and freight rail systems and the growing congestion problems that hinder our other transportation systems."

For more information, [click here](#).

### **Rally in Support of Rail Held in Washington, DC**

Hundreds of citizens from across the country gathered May 8, 2002 to urge Congress to support passenger rail as an integral part of the national transportation system and to provide full funding for Amtrak in 2003 and beyond. "Rally for Rail" participants represented many businesses, labor unions, and state and local governments, as well as millions of consumers and citizens across America.



"Today's event demonstrates that people from all across America and across the political spectrum want a stronger passenger rail system in this country," said Fort Worth, Texas Mayor Kenneth Barr, chairman of the Transportation and Communications Committee of the U.S. Conference of Mayors. "We are all united in the conviction that it's time to put Amtrak on a more stable foundation for the future, and to have it play a growing role in our country's congested transportation system."

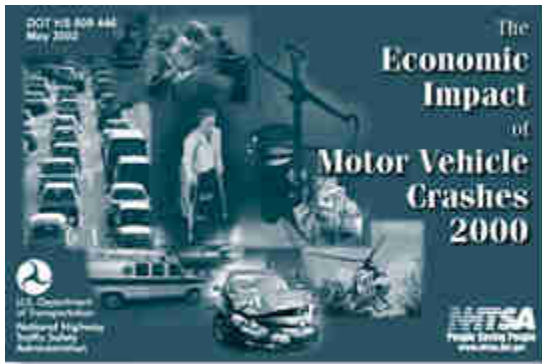
For more information, [click here](#).

**National Leadership Summit to Eliminate Racial & Ethnic Disparities in Health**  
July 10-12, 2002

**BikeFest 2002**  
August 2-4, 2002; Amherst, MA

**Pro Bike / Pro Walk 2002**  
September 3-6, 2002; St. Paul, MN

## NHTSA Details High Costs of Motor Vehicle Crashes



On May 9, 2002, U.S. Transportation Secretary Norman Y. Mineta announced that the economic impact of motor vehicle crashes on America's roadways has reached \$230.6 billion a year, or an

average of \$820 for every person living in the United States. The announcement was based on a new research study released today by the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

The new report, based on calendar year 2000 data, details how the economic costs of motor vehicle accidents has grown to a level that is 2.3 percent of the U.S. Gross Domestic Product. This total includes:

- \$61 billion in lost workplace productivity
- \$20.2 billion in lost household productivity
- \$59 billion in property damage
- \$32.6 billion in medical costs
- \$25.6 billion in travel delay costs.

To read the report, [click here](#).

## New Study Finds One in Four US Bridges Deficient

A new report from the Road Information Program (TRIP), an interest group of the transportation construction industry, finds approximately one in four of the country's major, heavily traveled bridges is deficient and in need of repair or replacement. The report



warns that federal and state funding shortfalls in 2003 could

reverse recent gains in bridge repair.

However, STPP's review of state spending patterns shows that while most states received an enormous increase in federal transportation funds in 1998 through TEA-21, only a few increased the portion of funds going to road and bridge repair. Four of the states ranked in the bottom ten by TRIP for bridge condition, (Oklahoma, Mississippi, Iowa, and Missouri), actually spent a smaller portion of their federal dollars on road and bridge repair at the end of the 1990s despite overall federal funding increases ranging from 42 to 58 percent. TRIP is recommending a 44 percent increase in federal investment in bridges.

For more information on the TRIP report, visit [www.tripnet.org](http://www.tripnet.org). For figures on state spending records, see [STPP's Changing Direction](#).

## **AASHTO TEA-21 Plan Expected to Tap General Fund For Highways**

The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) is recommending the creation of a new Transportation Finance Corporation, a federal corporation that would be able to sell tax-credit bonds to support highway, transit and railroad spending as a means for increasing spending levels during the next reauthorization period of TEA-21. The proposal, which seeks to maintain growth in federal highway and transit spending in the post-TEA-21 period, seeks to avoid calling on Congress to raise taxes directly, but instead will rely on tax spending to carry future increases in highway and transit spending. These expenditures would be financed by the 'general fund' rather than transportation taxes that are now dedicated to transportation through the Highway Trust Fund.

As outlined, the AASHTO financing plan calls for a new federally-sponsored financing agency modeled after the Federal National Mortgage Association (Fannie Mae), with the new corporation slated to raise about \$59.5 billion over six years. \$16.9 billion of the money would be set aside to create an investment fund to pay off the bond principal, approximately \$34.1 billion would go to highways, and \$8.5 billion would go to transit projects. An additional \$5 billion in federal support would be placed in a revolving fund to

support additional highway, transit, and seaport projects.

The proposal is unclear on what happens after the six-year period of TEA-21 renewal. The nearly \$60 billion provided by the new federal corporation cannot be sustained in the period after the next cycle of TEA-21, which could result in a \$60 billion hole in the baseline of funding for the successor law due in 2009.

For more information, [click here](#).

## CA Emissions Bill Delayed; Would Regulate Greenhouse Gases



The California State Assembly on May 14, 2002 delayed a final vote on a bill that would create the nation's first restrictions on carbon dioxide and other automobile emissions that contribute to global warming. A.B. 1058

was initially approved by both the state Assembly (on January 30th) and Senate (on May 2nd). Before the bill can be sent to Governor Davis for his signature, however, the Assembly must approve several amendments that were added in the Senate that would ensure that the regulations provide environmental and economic benefits without limiting consumer choice. The bill would limit CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, a combustion byproduct that can only be reduced through greater fuel efficiency or less driving. The auto industry has been turning up the pressure on key Assembly members to change their original votes and has launched a \$3 million campaign against A.B. 1058.

For more information on California's Clean Car Legislation from the National Resources Defense Council, [click here](#).

## Rural Residents Face Increased Automotive Fatality Rate

According to a recent study, people living in rural areas face a higher risk of dying a violent death -- defined as a fatal car crash or homicide by someone other than a spouse, relative or friend -- than persons who live in a city. William H. Lucy,



author of the study and professor of urban and environmental planning at the University of Virginia, focused on eight urban areas (Pittsburgh, Baltimore, Chicago, Dallas, Houston, Milwaukee, Minneapolis-St. Paul, Philadelphia and the suburbs and counties surrounding them) for three to four years to test theories that dictate where people live and how they decide what is safe.

Although homicide rates are generally higher in the cities than in rural areas, Lucy argues that the danger presented by an increased level of fatal car crashes can make rural areas more dangerous than urban areas, supporting the premise that people tend to overestimate the risks of crime while underestimating the risks of driving.

To read an article on the report, [click here](#).

## **In Other News**

### **APTA Calls For Grant Proposals**

The American Public Transportation Association (APTA) has announced their 2002 guidelines for local transit coalition grants. These small grants (under \$5,000) are to support projects and activities oriented toward federal reauthorization efforts.

For more information, [click here](#).

### **Atlanta Smog Reprieve Granted**

The Environmental Protection Agency extended Atlanta's deadline to meet federal clean air standards to 2004, stating

that nitrogen oxides generated elsewhere are drifting into metro Atlanta. Alabama is the primary source of the pollution, along with Tennessee, Kentucky, South Carolina and North Carolina. For more information, [click here](#).

### Call for Papers

A call for papers has been issued for the Fourth International Conference on Walking in the 21st Century. The deadline for proposals and abstracts is July 1, 2002. Please visit <http://americawalks.org/walk21/> for more details.

### Internship Opportunity at STPP

This position will conduct strategic research and grassroots organizing to support the organization of the Alliance for a New Transportation Charter. Activities will generally consist of gathering information to support STPP's model campaigns, assisting with outreach to add members to the Alliance and support for our grassroots network in conducting activities such as candidate education. See a complete job description at [www.transact.org](http://www.transact.org).

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Transfer is written and edited by John Goldener of the Surface Transportation Policy Project, with contributions by Barbara McCann and Nancy Jakowitsch. Readers are invited to reprint newsletter items; proper citation is appreciated. If you are not currently subscribed, please send us a note via e-mail to: [transfer@transact.org](mailto:transfer@transact.org). Be sure to include your full mailing address and name of your organization, phone and fax numbers. For comments and suggestions about Transfer's content, contact John Goldener at [jgoldener@transact.org](mailto:jgoldener@transact.org).

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