Funding allocation and program eligibility

Presentation to the Future of the Interstate Highway System TRB Study Committee

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Topics

- Authorization process
- Program funding formulas
- Program eligibility and transferability
- Key issues and considerations
Know your audience

- Or at least know what people think of your audience
What do I mean by that?

- Congressional approval ratings
- Congress “more popular than” or “less popular than” polls
Key terms to understand

- Apportioned vs allocated
- Core programs
- National Highway System – includes the Interstate System
Authorization bills

- Modify existing programs
- Add new programs
- Eliminate programs
- Change program requirements
Authorization bill impacts on specific programs

- Authorize the amount of funding for a fiscal year
- Describe how the funds are to be distributed (apportioned by formula or allocated)
- Determine the length of availability of the funds
- Prescribe how the funds are to be used
Current “core” or “apportioned” programs

- Apportioned annually (does not need to wait for appropriations action)
- National Highway Performance Program (NHPP)
- Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG)
- Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ)
- Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)
- National Highway Freight Program (NHFP)
Funding formula highlights

- Prior to MAP-21
- MAP-21 and the FAST Act
- Donor vs donee debate
Types of formula factors

- Lane or center lane miles on specific road classes
- Contributions to the HTF
- Vehicle miles traveled
- Number of road fatalities
- Population
- Severity of pollution
Program eligibility

- Historically tied to program purposes

- Consolidation of programs over time has led to broader flexibility
Current program purpose

- NHPP – support condition and performance of the NHS (which includes the Interstate); construction of new facilities on the NHS; and support performance targets

- STBG – broad eligibility and flexibility to address State and local transportation needs

- CMAQ – improve congestion conditions and air quality

- NHFP – improve efficient and productive movement of freight on the National Highway Freight Network (NHFN); improve safety and state of good repair on NHFN
Transferability provisions

- NHPP – 50% (except set-asides)
- STBG – 50% of State share may be transferred, not local government suballocation
- HSIP – 50% (except set-asides)
- CMAQ – 50% (except set-aside for PM)
- NHFP – 50% (except set-asides)
Key issues for consideration

- How to capture the imagination of public and policy makers?

- Try to avoid appearance of picking “winners” and “losers” – provide a compelling reason for recommendations on the distribution of funds

- Develop a sustained campaign to “sell” your recommendations to lawmakers and the public
Patience and Wisdom
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