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To: RAILCET
From: Ray Chambers
Date: December 2, 2022
Subject: Intelligence Report—APTA Intercity Passenger Rail Steering Committee Meeting

Meeting Highlights

I participated today in the regular monthly Steering Committee Meeting of the APTA Intercity Passenger Rail Committee. There was a review on of the end of session legislation; update from FRA on the implementation of the Corridor Identification and Development Program; and a conversation on program ideas for the 2023 APTA Rail Conferences.

Legislation. The Democrats are pushing hard to get an Omnibus bill through this month that would authorize new and enlarged appropriations for 2023. The Republicans would prefer a Continuing Resolution to freeze appropriations at the FY 2022 level for a period of time—possibly the entire fiscal 2023. This would create more Republican leverage in shaping the appropriations as they take control of the House in January.

The major change in Committee Leadership will be in the House. Our friend Sam Graves (R-Mo) will be Chair of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. There is a battle for Ranking Minority Member between Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC) and Rick Larson (D-WA). House Appropriations will be chaired by Kay Granger (R-TX). Rosa DeLauro (D-CT) will be House Appropriations Ranking Democrat. Mario Diez Balart (R-Fla) is term limited as Chair of the Appropriations Transportation Subcommittee. However, he is seeking a waiver from the Rules to serve another term. In the Senate Maria Cantwell (D-WA) will continue to Chair the Senate Commerce Committee that has jurisdiction over rail. Ted Cruz (R-TX) will be Ranking Member. On Senate Appropriations Patty Murray (D-WA) will be Chair and Susan Collins (R-ME) will become Ranking Member. For the first time in history the Big 4 Leaders who control House and Senate Appropriations will all be women.

The Corridor ID Pipeline. According to FRA executive David Valenstein, several Notices of Funding Opportunity (NOFOs) are expected to be released in December with 90-day deadlines for response. This includes solicitation for Corridor ID projects. Those projects that are accepted will have taken the first step to pipeline funding. The APTA Intercity Rail Committee intends to host a series of seminars on the specific projects that have been submitted . The first may be as early as January 6.

APTA Rail Conferences Program There was discussion of session ideas for the 2023 Rail Conference which will be in Pittsburg in June. I proposed a session on the USDOT Build America Bureau, its \$100 billion in TIFIA-RRIF innovative repayable finance. The question is how this can best be made to interface with the FRA Corridor ID Pipeline grants . The idea was accepted and I was asked to put together the abstract for APTA.

Agenda:

1. Opening Remarks by HS&IPR Committee Chair Chris Brady
2. Legislative Update: Rail Strike Settlement / Approps / Debt Limit / Hearings / Other
3. FRA Update
4. March 2023 HS&IPR Workshop
5. Proposed HS&IPR Steering Committee Dates for 2023 (see listing below)
6. Pipeline-focused Webinar Series
7. Session ideas / abstracts for 2023 APTA Rail Conference
8. News, Updates and Information Sharing