Analysis of the 2015 House Surface Transportation Reauthorization Plan: The Surface Transportation Reauthorization and Reform Act of 2015

Background

The "Surface Transportation Reauthorization and Reform Act of 2015," or STRRA, would reauthorize the federal highway and public transportation programs from FY 2016-21. House Transportation & Infrastructure (T&I) Committee Chairman Bill Shuster (R-Pa.) and Ranking Member Peter DeFazio (D-Ore.) led the development of the bipartisan legislation. The T&I Committee overwhelmingly passed the legislation October 22.

Overall Observations

While the measure would hold highway and public transportation investment to roughly current levels, it attempts to compensate for that status quo investment by including a number of policy reforms and new initiatives aimed at unmet needs. The STRRA would provide dedicated funding for freight improvements, increase state flexibility in how federal funds are utilized, accelerate the delivery of transportation improvements through environmental review process reforms, and emphasize roadway infrastructure safety.

While the T&I Committee does not have jurisdiction over the Highway Trust Fund's (HTF) revenue stream or expenditure authority, the trust fund revenue shortfalls that have impeded the reauthorization process and plagued federal surface transportation investment over the last eight years are central to the STRRA's construction. The proposal would set highway and transit authorization levels for six years, but includes a separate provision that would prohibit the Secretary of Transportation from distributing the final three years of authority to the states unless subsequent legislation is enacted that ensures the HTF has sufficient resources to support these investment commitments.

The STRRA does not yet include any new trust fund revenues and, as such, its first three years of surface transportation authorizations are just as unsupportable as are its final three years. It is widely expected, however, the House will in some manner embrace the three-year trust fund plan approved by the Senate in its "Developing a Reliable and Innovative Vision for the Economy (DRIVE) Act" last July.

The combination of Senate approval of the DRIVE Act and the release of a House reauthorization plan makes clear the commitment in both chambers to completing a multi-year surface transportation bill in 2015. A comprehensive summary of the House STRRA proposal follows and a similar analysis of the DRIVE Act is available in the government affairs section of the ARTBA web site, www.artba.org.

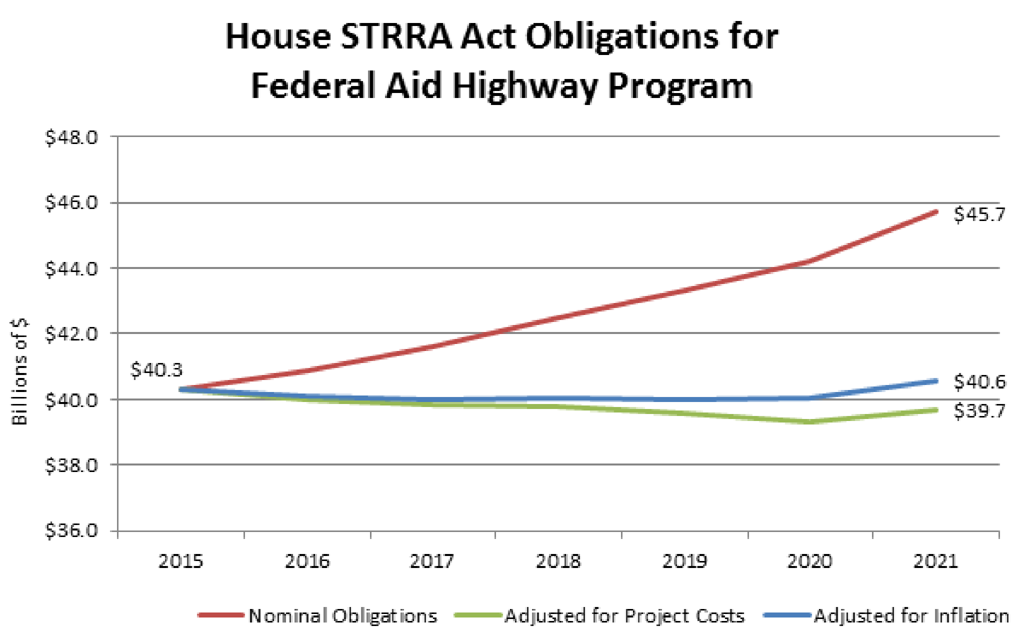
.

Federal Highway Program

The highway portion of the STRRA has two major parts. Subtitle A, "Authorizations and Programs," contains the sections that address the program structure and funding for FY 2016-21. Subtitle C, "Acceleration of Project Delivery," has provisions designed to shorten and simplify the project review and delivery process for highway projects. The bill also includes provisions related to transportation research and innovation and amendments to the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) program.

Funding. The STRRA would authorize a six-year total of $242.3 billion in contract authority for the core apportioned federal highway programs, allowing annual funding to grow gradually from $38.4 billion in FY 2016 to $42.5 billion by FY 2021. The bill would authorize a six-year total of $18.6 billion for allocated programs, including the TIFIA program, the tribal and federal lands programs, FHWA administration and the federal highway research programs, plus a proposed new "Nationally Significant Freight and Highway Projects Program."

Adding these together, the total amount of contract authority authorized for highways is $261 billion. The investment contained in the House proposal, however, would fail to keep pace with both inflation and projected construction material cost increases over the life of the bill (see graph below). By comparison, the Senate DRIVE Act would provide $273.4 billion of new contract authority over the six-year period—$12.4 billion more than the STRRA—an amount sufficient to narrowly maintain federal highway program purchasing power.



Source: ARTBA analysis of STRRA. Project costs are assumed to increase at a rate of 2.8% per year, in line with historical increases under the ARTBA Price Index, which takes into account changes in material prices, industry wages and overall inflation. Inflation forecast from CBO's August 2015 report An Update to the Budget and Economic Outlook: 2015 to 2025.

In both bills, the obligation limitation over the six years is virtually identical to the total amount of new contract authority, $261.4 billion over the six-year period in the House bill and $273.4 billion in the Senate bill[1]. This would permit all of the new contract authority in each bill to be obligated for highway and bridge improvements. However, there would be no room to obligate unused contract authority from previous reauthorization bills. The House bill proposes to rescind $6 billion of contract authority provided before September 30, 2017.

The STRRA would also make some changes in the distribution of apportioned funds among the core highway programs, tweaking the MAP-21 distribution formula to increase the share going to the proposed new Surface Transportation Block Grant Program while providing proportionally less than the current MAP-21 formula for the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Improvement Program and metropolitan planning. The Senate bill also would change the distribution of formula funds, but by increasing the share for the National Highway Performance Program at the expense of the Surface Transportation Program (STO) and the Highway Safety Improvement Program.

Details of funding for the highway program under STRRA are shown in the following table:

[1] Figures include $639 million of contract authority each year that is not subject to the obligation limitation.

Highway Program Funding Under the proposed Surface Transportation Reauthorization and Reform Act of 2015								
	FY2015 Authorization	FY2016 Authorization	FY2017 Authorization	FY2018 Authorization	FY2019 Authorization	FY2020 Authorization	FY2021 Authorization	6-Year Total
Apportioned Programs, Trust Fund, Total	**37,798,000,000**	**38,419,500,000**	**39,113,500,000**	**39,927,500,000**	**40,764,000,000**	**41,623,000,000**	**42,483,000,000**	**242,330,500,000**
Estimated Split Among Programs:								
National Highway Performance Program	21,908,178,122	22,273,973,723	22,665,772,920	23,122,941,560	23,633,678,237	24,125,475,598	24,617,855,634	140,439,697,671
Surface Transportation Program	10,077,074,081							
Surface Transportation Block Grant Program /1		10,315,854,883	10,529,933,806	10,783,940,659	11,006,885,792	11,266,426,651	11,526,255,556	65,429,297,346
Highway Safety Improvement Program	2,192,406,423	2,222,689,420	2,260,744,277	2,305,982,589	2,351,217,815	2,398,819,536	2,446,484,422	13,985,938,059
Railway-Highway Crossings Program	220,000,000	225,000,000	230,000,000	235,000,000	240,000,000	245,000,000	250,000,000	1,425,000,000
Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement	2,266,889,602	2,250,761,070	2,290,351,957	2,336,548,356	2,382,741,917	2,431,111,578	2,479,539,321	14,171,054,199
Metropolitan Planning Program	313,551,772	311,320,905	316,797,039	323,186,836	329,576,239	336,266,637	342,965,069	1,960,112,725
Transportation Alternatives Program	819,900,000	819,900,000	819,900,000	819,900,000	819,900,000	819,900,000	819,900,000	4,919,400,000
Other Programs, Trust Fund, Total	**3,097,000,000**	**3,019,500,000**	**3,057,500,000**	**3,097,500,000**	**3,115,000,000**	**3,150,000,000**	**3,185,000,000**	**18,624,500,000**
TIFIA	1,000,000,000	200,000,000	200,000,000	200,000,000	200,000,000	200,000,000	200,000,000	1,200,000,000
Federal Lands and Tribal Transportation Programs								
Tribal Transportation Program	450,000,000	465,000,000	475,000,000	485,000,000	490,000,000	495,000,000	500,000,000	2,910,000,000
Federal Lands Transportation Program	300,000,000	325,000,000	335,000,000	345,000,000	350,000,000	375,000,000	400,000,000	2,130,000,000
Federal Lands Access Program	250,000,000	250,000,000	255,000,000	260,000,000	265,000,000	270,000,000	275,000,000	1,575,000,000
Territorial and Puerto Rico Highway Program	190,000,000	200,000,000	200,000,000	200,000,000	200,000,000	200,000,000	200,000,000	1,200,000,000
Nationally Significant Freight and Highway Projects /1		725,000,000	735,000,000	750,000,000	750,000,000	750,000,000	750,000,000	4,460,000,000
Research, Technology and Education Authorizations								
Highway Research and Development Program	115,000,000	125,000,000	125,000,000	125,000,000	125,000,000	125,000,000	125,000,000	750,000,000
Technology & Innovation Development Program	62,500,000	67,000,000	67,500,000	67,500,000	67,500,000	67,500,000	67,500,000	404,500,000
Training and Education	24,000,000	24,000,000	24,000,000	24,000,000	24,000,000	24,000,000	24,000,000	144,000,000
Intelligent Transportation Systems	100,000,000	100,000,000	100,000,000	100,000,000	100,000,000	100,000,000	100,000,000	600,000,000
University Transportation Centers Program	72,500,000	72,500,000	75,000,000	75,000,000	77,500,000	77,500,000	77,500,000	455,000,000
Bureau of Transportation Statistics	26,000,000	26,000,000	26,000,000	26,000,000	26,000,000	26,000,000	26,000,000	156,000,000
Construction of Ferry Boats and Terminal Facilities	67,000,000							
FHWA Administration	440,000,000	440,000,000	440,000,000	440,000,000	440,000,000	440,000,000	440,000,000	2,640,000,000
Total Contract Authority, Trust Fund	**40,895,000,000**	**41,439,000,000**	**42,171,000,000**	**43,025,000,000**	**43,879,000,000**	**44,773,000,000**	**45,668,000,000**	**260,955,000,000**
Obligation Limitation	**40,256,000,000**	**40,867,000,000**	**41,599,000,000**	**42,453,000,000**	**43,307,000,000**	**44,201,000,000**	**45,096,000,000**	**257,523,000,000**
Exempt Contract Authority	639,000,000	639,000,000	639,000,000	639,000,000	639,000,000	639,000,000	639,000,000	3,834,000,000
Total Obligation Authority, Trust Fund	**40,895,000,000**	**41,506,000,000**	**42,238,000,000**	**43,092,000,000**	**43,946,000,000**	**44,840,000,000**	**45,735,000,000**	**261,357,000,000**
1 New program proposed by the STRRA								
Source: Analysis of the STRRA								

The figures in the table are dependent on Congress increasing revenues, particularly for FY 2019-21. A provision of the bill would prohibit the Secretary of Transportation from distributing any funds during those three fiscal years unless Congress enacts legislation generating enough revenues to prevent the balance in the Highway Account from falling below $4 billion.[2]

A related provision specifies that if Highway Account revenues exceed or fall below annual amounts specified in the bill for FY 2015 – 2019, the amount of contract authority to be distributed during the next budget year must be raised or cut by the same dollar figure[3]. This is similar to Revenue-Aligned Budget Authority (RABA) provisions in earlier highway bills which were included to ensure that all HTF revenues were spent for highway improvements, not to help balance the budget. The STRRA provision appears to apply only to HTF revenues generated under current law since the revenue baselines are the latest Congressional Budget Office projections under current law. The use of current law revenues as the baseline suggests the T&I

[2] Similarly, a $1 billion balance must be maintained in the Mass Transit Account.

[3] A similar provision would apply to the transit program.

Committee assumes any new revenues enacted to support the annual funding levels in the above table will be provided from the General Fund, not through an increase in HTF taxes.

Program Structure. The STRRA would maintain the existing highway program structure with only two major changes. It would replace the existing STP with a new broader "Surface Transportation Block Grant Program" and would create a new program of "Nationally Significant Freight and Highway Projects."

Block grants. The bill would expand the existing Surface Transportation Program into a "Surface Transportation Block Grant Program" based on the assumption that most of the benefits of STP funds accrue locally and that decisions about how such funds are obligated should be determined by state and local governments who can best respond to unique local circumstances and implement the most efficient solutions. The bill rewrites and simplifies the list of uses eligible for program funds and increases the ways in which STP funds can be used on local roads and rural minor collectors. The new program would still require that a fraction of program funds be distributed within each state on the basis of population, and the fraction subject to this requirement would grow from 50 percent in 2015 under the existing STP program to 55 percent in FY 2020 and FY 2021.

Furthermore, $819.9 million of the annual funding for the block grant program would be set aside for the transportation alternatives program, which supports a variety of pedestrian, bicycling, and environmental activities. This would be the same level of funding for these purposes as was provided by the 2012 MAP-21 reauthorization measure. The STRRA would also require states to invest the same amount each year in Recreational Trails as in 2009, although states would be able to opt out of the Recreational Trails program.

Freight. In lieu of creating a separate national freight program, as would be done under the DRIVE Act, the House proposal would retain a freight policy section and create a $750 million per year "Nationally Significant Freight and Highway Projects Program." It would provide grants for highway, bridge, rail-grade crossing, intermodal and freight rail projects costing more than $100 million that improve movement of both freight and people, increase competitiveness, reduce bottlenecks, and improve intermodal connectivity. Projects would be awarded competitively by the Secretary of Transportation based on specific criteria. The program would allow up to $500 million to be allocated to freight rail and/or intermodal projects, the first time federal highway funds would be permitted for freight rail improvements.

The STRRA also rewrites the National Freight Policy segment of MAP-21 to focus more on the highway movement of freight. The new section, titled "National Highway Freight Policy," simplifies the designation of a national freight network by including all Interstate Highways plus non-Interstate road segments designated as part of the national freight network prior to the bill's enactment. The bill would also allow expansion of the network by up to 10 percent if the additional roads connect existing segments or connect to other freight transportation modes. It would eliminate the requirement for development of a national freight strategic plan and for freight transportation conditions and performance reports.

Other highlights include:

- National Highway Performance Program (NHPP). Adding two permissible uses for NHPP funds: to pay subsidy and administrative costs for TIFIA projects and for improvements to bridges that are not on the National Highway System.
- Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ). Adding vehicle/infrastructure communications to the list of eligible uses for CMAQ funds and would exempt sparsely populated rural states from certain requirements to reduce pm 2.5 emissions in nonattainment or maintenance areas if regional motor vehicle emissions are an insignificant contributor to the problem.
- Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP). Increasing the focus of this program on infrastructure safety by eliminating the ability of states to shift funds to behavioral or educational activities. The bill also includes a provision that would require a state to dedicate increased resources to rural road safety if it has a fatality rate from rural road vehicular crashes that is higher than the national average. Lastly, it would allow states to stop collecting safety inventory data for unpaved or gravel roads.
- Automatic Traffic Enforcement. Prohibiting the use of federal highway funds to purchase or operate cameras used for traffic enforcement, except if the cameras are used in a school zone.
- Repeat DWI Offenders. Amending the current requirement for an ignition interlock system to permit offenders to operate an employer's vehicle used in the course of business.
- Highway Trust Fund Transparency. Requiring semi-annual reports to be published on the Internet with detailed data on the use of federal highway funds. Data would be provided by the states on the use of funds from each highway program and would provide details on all federally-funded highway projects, including cost, type of improvement, location and project ownership.
- Tribal Transportation. Laying out criteria for the Secretary of Transportation to allow a Native American tribe to self-administer its federal highway funds.
- Emergency Relief (ER) Program. Expanding eligibility for ER funds to federally-owned roads open to public travel.
- Bridge Bundling. Authorizing states to bundle multiple similar bridge projects into one project that would be awarded as a single contract.
- Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program. Reauthorizing the DBE program without any discernable changes from current law. The measure makes an inflation-based increase in the cap for eligible businesses to $23,980,000 in average annual gross receipts over the preceding three years, consistent with current law and practice.

Accelerated Project Delivery

STRRA builds upon MAP-21's improvements to the transportation project environmental review and approval process by expanding opportunities and instituting stronger directives to use existing efficiency tools, and by creating new reforms aimed at reducing delay.

Strengthening the Role of "Lead Agency." A major theme of STRRA is strengthening the role of the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) as the "lead agency" on transportation projects. Building upon prior reauthorization laws, STRRA grants "substantial deference" to the decisions of the lead agency. This standard requires other agencies to defer to the decisions of the lead agency unless it will "violate the participating agency's statutory responsibilities." The STRRA specifically requires "substantial deference" to the lead agency when considering the range of alternatives on a transportation project.

STRRA also limits the comments of participating agencies to "subject matters within the agency's special expertise or jurisdiction." Such a limitation could prevent participating agencies from venturing outside the realm of their jurisdiction and delaying project approvals.

Deadlines and Reducing Delay. STRRA adds to MAP-21's efforts to use deadlines to reduce delay in the transportation project review and approval process. Specifically, it would create:

- A deadline of 45 days from the beginning of the initiation of the environmental review process in which to identify all participating agencies;
- A deadline of 90 days from the beginning of the initiation of the environmental review process in which to develop a coordination plan to obtain comments from participating agencies; and
- An expansion of the existing deadline of 180 days from either the final decision of the lead agency or a completed permit application for any decision under federal law relating to a project to also include decisions under federal regulations and Executive orders.

STRRA also directs the U.S. DOT, in coordination with other federal agencies likely to have review or permitting authority over transportation projects, to develop guidelines for conducting coordinated project reviews. Coordinated reviews allow for multiple regulatory processes to occur at the same time as opposed to one-after-the-other, reducing delay. STRRA directs the department to develop an "environmental checklist" for transportation projects to be used when a lead agency and participating agencies set project review schedules.

Finally, STRRA requires the U.S. DOT to develop a website allowing the public to track the progress of environmental reviews. The website would identify all agencies participating in project reviews and identify where delays, if any, are occurring. States that have chosen to participate in the federal delegation program for environmental reviews will also have to submit information to this website.

Reduction of Duplication. STRRA focuses on reducing duplicative efforts throughout the environmental review process in multiple ways. First, it would require "to the maximum extent practicable" the combination of a final environmental impact statement and record of decision into a single document. As both types of documents can often be quite voluminous, eliminating one is a significant reduction in paperwork.

STRRA expands on combining the transportation planning and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) environmental review processes. For transportation projects, an extensive amount of information is gathered during the planning process, which often occurs prior to the actual triggering of NEPA review requirements. STRRA would allow information gathered during the planning process, to the extent it is still current and relevant, to satisfy NEPA requirements, limiting duplicative reviews and reducing the amount of delay in the NEPA process. Alternatives to proposed transportation projects analyzed and rejected during the planning process would not need to be re-analyzed during NEPA review.

While MAP-21 gave the lead agency the option to use information obtained in the transportation planning process to satisfy NEPA requirements, STRRA directs such information to be used "to the maximum extent practicable and appropriate." STRRA would expand the opportunities to use the information to include decisions on the purpose and need for projects.

Delegation of Regulatory Responsibilities to States. STRRA expands on past efforts to delegate federal environmental and regulatory responsibilities to states by building upon the existing DOT program allowing states to conduct federal environmental reviews. In order to encourage greater participation in the program, STRRA directs the U.S. DOT to offer training and information-sharing to states not currently utilizing the delegation program. STRRA instructs the department "to the maximum extent practicable" to delegate responsibility to states for "project design, plans, specifications, estimates, contract awards, and inspection of projects, both on a project –specific and programmatic basis."

STRRA would also create a new delegation pilot program for up to five states to substitute other state laws and regulations (in addition to the NEPA process) for their federal equivalents. States enrolled in this new delegation pilot program may also use their authority over locally administered transportation projects.

While the House bill's use of "to the maximum extent practicable" is clearly an attempt in the duplication and delegation sections to motivate state and federal agencies to utilize the efficiencies that would be available, such an approach does not require them to do so and it is unclear how or if such language would be enforceable.

Historic Preservation Requirements. STRRA simplifies historical preservation and mitigation requirements. Under the Act, the Secretary of Transportation may determine that no practical alternative exists when a project might impact a historical resource. When such a determination is made, there would no longer be a need for any further alternatives analysis. STRRA also exempts maintenance and repair of existing rail and transit lines from historic preservation requirements.

Bridge Repair Projects. The House proposal would seek to streamline the environmental review process for bridge repair by exempting "common post 1945 concrete or steel bridge[s] or culvert[s]" from individual review. This was actually done through regulation by FHWA in 2012, but STRRA makes the change permanent.

Categorical Exclusions (CEs). STRRA expands the opportunities for the use of two CEs created by MAP-21. First, it would expand the opportunities for using CEs on projects involving limited federal assistance by adjusting the amount of federal assistance required to qualify a project for the CE to include increases in the Consumer Price Index. Further, on multi-modal projects, involving more than one modal agency of DOT, STRRA would allow the lead agency to qualify the project for CE status with the concurrence of the participating agency.

TIFIA and Innovative Financing

The Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) Program provides loans and credit assistance for large-scaled surface transportation capital projects. While the STRRA would provide largely status quo highway investment levels, it would impose an 80 percent cut in funds allocated to the TIFIA program. It would reduce annual TIFIA funding for the next six years to $200 million—$800 million less than the $1 billion provided for the program in FY 2014 and FY 2015. While this reduction is likely the result of the measure's revenue constraints rather than opposition to the TIFIA Program, it should be noted the FHWA was required to transfer $639 million in TIFIA funds to the highway formula programs on April 27 because TIFIA's uncommitted balance exceeded its statutory limit.

In addition, the bill would maintain the MAP-21 requirement that an unobligated balance exceeding 75 percent of TIFIA's annual program funding must be transferred to the highway formula programs annually. The STRRA would lower the threshold for local projects eligible for TIFIA assistance to $10,000,000 or higher. It would also allow states to use highway formula funds for subsidy and administrative costs relating to TIFIA credit assistance, subject to approval by U.S. DOT.

Lastly, the measure would clarify that availability payments made by states under certain P3 concession models are eligible for federal reimbursement.

Highway Research, Technology and Education Authorizations

STRRA features provisions dealing with the federal highway research, technology and education programs in a section of the bill titled the "Transportation for Tomorrow Act of 2105." Major provisions include:

Funding. Most of the highway research, technology and training programs would receive either the same annual funding as during FY 2015 or small funding increases.

Advanced Technology Deployment. Expanding the scope of the Innovative Pavement Research and Deployment Program by requiring the Secretary of Transportation to develop a program to stimulate deployment of advanced transportation technologies to improve system safety, efficiency and performance. Grants could be used for advanced traveler information systems, advanced transportation management technologies, advanced public transportation systems, advanced safety systems including vehicle-to-vehicle communications, among others. Federal share would be 50 percent and awards could total up to $75 million per year.

Report on Benefits of Innovative Technologies. Requiring an annual Internet report on the benefits from deploying new technologies and innovations, including cost savings, project delivery time improvements, reduced fatalities and congestion impacts.

Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) Program Goals. Expanding the list of ITS program goals to include enhancement of the national freight system and support to national freight policy goals.

Use of ITS Program Funds. Specifying that ITS funds for operational tests may not be used for construction of physical surface transportation infrastructure unless the construction is incidental and critically necessary to implement an ITS project.

Assistant Secretary and Duties. Creating a new Assistant Secretary for Research and Technology. The bill would expand the list of explicit responsibilities of the Secretary of Transportation to include coordination of departmental research and development activities, advancement of innovative technologies, development of comprehensive statistics and data, and coordination of multimodal and multidisciplinary research, among others. It also would provide that the secretary may enter into cooperative contracts with other federal agencies, state and local agencies, and others to carry out departmental research on a 50/50 cost-sharing basis.

Research and Innovative Technology Administration. Repealing the section of the U.S. Code establishing the Transportation Department's Research and Technology Administration, thus moving responsibility for transportation research and technology into the Office of the Secretary. The bill would also eliminate the Office of Intermodalism in the Research and Technology Administration.

University Transportation Centers. Continuing the University Transportation Centers (UTC) program with a few changes. Funding would increase from $72.5 million in FY 2015 to $77.5 million by FY 2019. Funding for the three UTC levels would be flexible within ranges rather than a fixed amount as under MAP-21, including $2 million to $4 million for the five National Transportation Center consortia; $1.5 million to $3 million for the 10 Regional Transportation Center consortia; and $1 million to $2 million for the Tier I centers. Selection of centers would remain competitive, and selection would be made by the secretary, the new Assistant Secretary for Research and Technology and the FHWA Administrator; the FTA Administrator would no longer be involved. Matching requirements would remain as under MAP-21.

Transportation Funding Alternatives. Directing the Secretary of Transportation to make grants to states to demonstrate alternative user-based revenue mechanisms that could maintain the long-term solvency of the HTF. The goal is to test at least two alternative user-based revenue mechanisms and to provide recommendations for adoption and implementation at the federal level. Funding would be up to $15 million in FY 2016 and $20 million per year thereafter, and the federal share would be 50 percent.

Future Interstate System. Providing for a $5 million study by the Transportation Research Board that would focus on the actions needed to restore the Interstate System as a premier system that meets the growing and shifting demands of the 21st century, with a report due in three years.

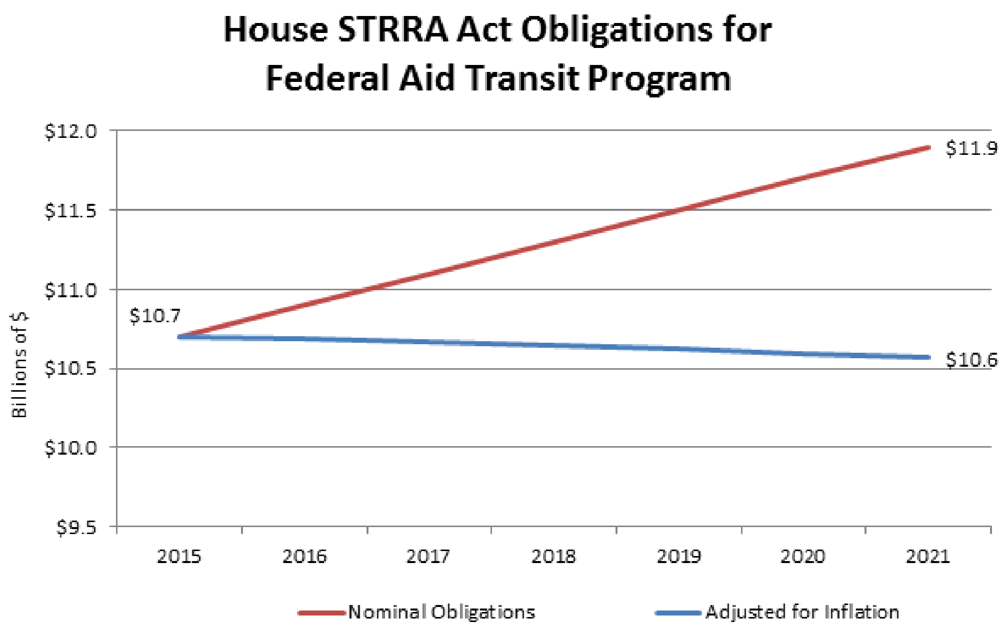
Public Transportation

As is the case with most programs in the House surface transportation reauthorization proposal, funding for public transportation grows at levels in accordance with the Congressional Budget Office's projected baseline spending levels. The public transportation programs doled out by formula would grow from the current extension funding level of $8.6 billion to $9.62 billion over the course of the six-year bill, or 10.6 percent. The STRRA's annual investment levels by program are depicted below.

Public Transportation Program Funding Under the proposed Surface Transportation Reauthorization and Reform Act of 2015								
	FY2015 Authorization	FY2016 Authorization	FY2017 Authorization	FY2018 Authorization	FY2019 Authorization	FY2020 Authorization	FY2021 Authorization	6-Year Total
Authorizations for Public Transportation - Trust Fund								
Formula Grants, Total	**8,595,000,000**	**8,723,925,000**	**8,879,211,000**	**9,059,459,000**	**9,240,648,000**	**9,429,000,000**	**9,617,580,000**	**54,949,823,000**
Metropolitan Planning	128,800,000	128,800,000	128,800,000	131,415,000	134,043,000	136,775,000	139,511,000	799,344,000
Pilot Program for Transit Oriented Development Planning	10,000,000	10,000,000	10,000,000	10,000,000	10,000,000	10,000,000	10,000,000	60,000,000
Urbanized Area Formula Grants	4,458,650,000	4,458,650,000	4,458,650,000	4,549,161,000	4,640,144,000	4,734,724,000	4,829,418,000	27,670,747,000
Formula Grants for Enhanced Mobility of Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities	258,300,000	262,175,000	266,841,000	272,258,000	277,703,000	283,364,000	289,031,000	1,651,372,000
Pilot Program for Innovative Accesss and Mobility								
Formula Grants for Other than Urbanized Areas	607,800,000	607,800,000	607,800,000	620,138,000	632,541,000	645,434,000	658,343,000	3,772,056,000
Research, Development, Demo and Deployment Program								
Tech Assistance and Development								
Bus Testing Facility	3,000,000	3,000,000	3,000,000	3,000,000	3,000,000	3,000,000	3,000,000	18,000,000
National Transit Institute	5,000,000	5,000,000	5,000,000	5,000,000	5,000,000	5,000,000	5,000,000	30,000,000
National Transit Database	3,850,000	3,850,000	3,850,000	3,850,000	3,850,000	3,850,000	3,850,000	23,100,000
State of Good Repair Grants	2,165,900,000	2,198,389,000	2,237,520,000	2,282,941,000	2,328,600,000	2,376,064,000	2,423,585,000	13,847,099,000
Bus and Facilities Formula Grants	427,800,000	430,000,000	431,850,000	445,120,000	458,459,000	472,326,000	486,210,000	2,723,965,000
Bus and Bus Facilities Competitive Grants		90,000,000	200,000,000	200,000,000	200,000,000	200,000,000	200,000,000	1,090,000,000
Growing and High Density State Formula Grants	525,900,000	525,900,000	525,900,000	536,576,000	547,307,000	558,463,000	569,632,000	3,263,778,000
Innovative Public Transportation Workforce Development Program								
Transit Coop Research Program	7,000,000							
Human Resources and Training	5,000,000							
Obligation Ceiling		**8,724,000,000**	**8,879,000,000**	**9,059,000,000**	**9,240,000,000**	**9,429,000,000**	**9,618,000,000**	**54,949,000,000**
Authorizations - General Fund								
Research, Development, Demonstration and Deployment Program	70,000,000	33,495,000	34,091,000	34,783,000	35,479,000	36,202,000	36,926,000	210,976,000
Tech Assistance and Standards	7,000,000	6,156,000	8,152,000	10,468,000	12,796,000	15,216,000	17,639,000	70,427,000
Capital Investment Grants	1,907,000,000	2,029,000,000	2,065,000,000	2,106,000,000	2,149,000,000	2,193,000,000	2,237,000,000	12,779,000,000
Administration	104,000,000	105,933,000	105,933,000	105,933,000	105,933,000	105,933,000	105,933,000	635,598,000
Total Authorizations	**10,683,000,000**	**10,898,509,000**	**11,092,387,000**	**11,316,643,000**	**11,543,856,000**	**11,779,351,000**	**12,015,078,000**	**68,645,824,000**
Source: Analysis of the STRRA bill								

The nominal annual increases in funding levels are present not only for core public transportation formula programs that are funded from the HTF, but also for the fixed guideway capital investment grants that are currently funded via the General Fund. This program, which is the dedicated federal mass transit capital construction program, grows from a current, FY 2015 funding level of $1.91 billion to $2.24 billion in FY 2021. This amounts to nearly 15 percent growth, but these investment levels would continue to be subject to the annual appropriations process.

The graph below shows the House proposed transit investment levels would fall just short of maintaining purchasing power over the next six years.



Source: ARTBA analysis of STRRA. Inflation forecast from CBO's August 2015 report An Update to the Budget and Economic Outlook: 2015 to 2025.

On the policy front, the House bill would reduce the statutory federal share for mass transit capital grants from 80 percent to 50 percent. Theoretically, this means more projects could be funded with federal dollars. At the same time, this change could also mean state and local entities unable to come up with more of their own resources would be unable to participate in the program. It should be noted that competition for funds from this program has led to many applicants proposing state and local contributions for transit capital projects well in excess of the 20 percent currently required by law.

This analysis will be updated as appropriate depending on action taken by Congress.