

### Onsite:

Greater Portland Transit District  
114 Valley Street, Conference Room A | Portland, ME 04102

### Remote:

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## MEETING AGENDA

AGENDA ITEM	PRESENTER	ACTION or INFORMATION
<b>1. Call Meeting to Order (4:00)</b>	Linda Cohen, Committee Chair	N/A
<b>2. Public Comment (4:00-4:05)</b> The Advocacy Committee welcomes public comment. For items NOT listed on this agenda, the chair will recognize speakers at this point on the agenda. For items on the agenda, the chair will recognize public comment following the staff presentation. There is a 3-minute time limit per speaker.	Linda Cohen, Committee Chair	Information
<b>3. Meeting Minutes (4:05-4:10)</b> Review and approve minutes from the May 21, 2025 Advocacy Committee Meeting.	Linda Cohen, Committee Chair	<b>ACTION</b>
<b>4. Legislative Update (4:10-4:55)</b> Staff will review pending and recently passed state and federal legislation affecting public transit.	Megan Hannan, Director of Government Affairs & Community Engagement	Information
<b>5. Future Agenda Items (4:55-5:00)</b> Committee members may request future agenda items. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Federal Initiatives Affecting Transit</li><li>Bus Rapid Transit</li><li>Workplan Development (Strategic Plan)</li></ul>	Linda Cohen, Committee Chair	Information
<b>6. Upcoming Meetings (4:55-5:00)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Executive Committee – August 27, 2025 at 3:30 pm</li><li>Finance Committee – September 10, 2025 at 4:00 pm</li><li>Market/Coms Committee – September 10, 2025 at 3:00pm</li><li>Plan/Ops Committee – September 17, 2025 at 10:30 am</li><li>Advocacy Committee – September 17, 2025 at 4:30 pm</li></ul>	Linda Cohen, Committee Chair	Information

<b>7. Adjournment (5:00)</b>	Linda Cohen, Committee Chair	<b>ACTION</b>
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*As of November 9, 2022 Greater Portland METRO is holding meetings of the Board of Directors (and its committees) in hybrid format, both in person at METRO's offices and via webinar. The remote portions of all meetings are conducted in accordance with the requirements of [METRO's Remote Participation Policy](#) (adopted August 25, 2022) as well as LD 1772, PL 2022 Ch. 666, and 1 MRSA Chapter 13, Subchapter 1.*



**Greater Portland Metro Advocacy Committee**

**Monday, May 21, 2025:**

**DRAFT Meeting Minutes:**

Member	Municipality	Role	Status
Linda Cohen	South Portland	Chair	Present
David Morse	Westbrook	Vice Chair	Absent
Anna Bullett	Portland	Committee Member	Present
Lou Simms	Gorham	Committee Member	Absent
Hope Cahan	Falmouth	Exec Committee Liaison	Absent
Ed Suslovic	Portland	Board President	Present

Staff Present	Identified Members of the Public
Glenn Fenton – Executive Director Chad Heid – Chief Transportation Officer Mike Tremblay – Director of Transit Development	Megan Hannan (prior to starting at Metro) Eamonn Dundon

**I. With a Quorum in place, this meeting was called to Order By: Linda Cohen at 4:00 pm**

**II. Public Comment:**  
No comments from members of the public present.

**III. Meeting Minutes:**  
Anna Bullett moved acceptance of the minutes from the March 24, 2025 Advocacy Committee Meeting. Linda Cohen seconded the motion. A roll call vote was conducted and the motion passed unanimously of voting members present.

**IV. Legislative Update:**  
Glenn Fenton provided an update on various bills related to transportation that are currently under review by the Maine state legislature.

**V. Committee Goal Setting:**  
Committee members reviewed final draft committee goals for inclusion in Metro's strategic plan.

**VI. Future Agenda Items:**

- Legislative Update
- Federal Initiatives Affecting Transit

- Vision Zero
- Bus Rapid Transit
- Workplan Development (ongoing)

**VII. Upcoming Meetings:**

- Executive Committee – May 28, 2025 at 3:30 pm
- Finance Committee – June 4, 2025 at 4:00 pm
- Board of Directors Meeting – June 26, 2025 at 4:00 pm
- Advocacy Committee – August 20, 2025 at 4:30 pm

**VIII. Adjournment:** Meeting is adjourned by mutual consent at 4:52 pm.



## ADVOCACY COMMITTEE

## AGENDA ITEM 4

### DATE

August 20, 2025

### SUBJECT

Legislative Update

### PURPOSE

Review future, pending or recently passed legislation that could impact Metro's operations.

### BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS

Thursday July 24, the Senate Appropriations Committee released and voted 27 -1 to report out its version of the FY 2026 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development (THUD) bill. They made it very clear that this was the result of bi-partisan work and it shows. This memo outlines the key elements of the Senate bill as they relate to public transit, especially Metro's priorities, and compares them to the House proposal.

For reference, APTA has called for a total of \$22.3 billion in public transit funding—including at least \$4.6 billion for Capital Investment Grants (CIG)—consistent with IIJA-authorized levels and the President's request. While the Senate proposal is stronger than the House's in several areas, it still falls short of these targets.

#### Key Provisions:

- \$16.8 billion in total FTA funding (which is less than the House version's \$19.2B, but see asterisk below)
- \$1.9 billion for Capital Investment Grants (CIG)
- \$1.1 billion for the Bus and Bus Facilities program
- \$96 million for Congressional Directed Funding
- \$55 million for ferry programs, including rural ferries

These levels are in line with or above FY 2025 levels and significantly exceed the House FY 2026 proposal, which you recall cut many transit programs substantially.

#### Comparison to the House THUD Bill

Program	Senate FY26	House FY26	Notes
Transit Total	\$16.8B	\$19.2B*	*House includes IIJA advance funds, so not directly comparable
Capital Investment Grants	\$1.9B	\$1.65B	Senate stronger support

Bus & Bus Facilities	\$1.1B	Baseline only	Senate adds discretionary funds
Congressionally Directed Spending	\$96M	\$96M	In concurrence
Ferry Programs	\$55M	n/a	Rural ferries called out (we can't forget our friends)

#### What This Means for Metro

- Capital Planning: The Senate's \$1.9B CIG funding protects Metro's eligibility for major infrastructure investments when the time comes. That said, APTA warns that CIG needs exceed \$36 billion in pending project requests, so final allocation matters.
- Fleet Modernization: Senate's \$1.1B in Bus & Bus Facilities funding enhances opportunities for Metro to pursue new bus purchases, perhaps including low- and zero-emission models.
- Policy Flexibility: Without anti-DEI and anti-environment riders, Metro has more room to pursue inclusive and sustainability-focused projects.

#### Next Steps:

- Monitor the Senate floor debate for transit-related amendments or changes.
- E-mail back Senator Collins' office to thank them for supporting the Senate approach and to stress the importance of preserving these levels and policy stances in the final bill.
- Share APTA's full FY 2026 recommendations with our delegation to underscore how critical these programs are to Maine and Metro.

#### **FISCAL IMPACT**

Undetermined at this time.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

Information only.

#### **CONTACT**

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 Director of Government Affairs  
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[mhannan@gpmetro.org](mailto:mhannan@gpmetro.org)

#### **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A - Eaton Peabody Legislative Update  
 Attachment B – APTA Legislative Update (07/28/25)  
 Attachment C - The Bus Coalition Legislative Update  
 Attachment D - Letter from Secretary Duffy

*Summary of the*  
132<sup>nd</sup> Maine Legislature  
First Regular Session  
And  
First Special Session

*Prepared for:*



*Prepared by:*



The First Regular Session

Wednesday, December 4, 2024 at 10:00

am and adjourned sine die Friday, March 21, 2025. Pursuant to the Constitution of Maine, Article IV, Part Third, Section 16, the general effective date for nonemergency laws passed in the First Regular Session of the 132nd Legislature is Friday, June 20, 2025.

The First Special Session of the 132nd Legislature began Tuesday, March 25, 2025 adjourned sine die June 25, 2025. Pursuant to the Constitution of Maine, Article IV, Part Third, Section 16, the general effective date for nonemergency laws passed in the First Regular Session of the 132nd Legislature is September 24, 2025.

### **Laws Passed in First Session**

**LD 274                    An Act Making Unified Allocations From The Highway Fund And Other Funds For The Expenditures Of State Government And Changing Certain Provisions Of The Law Necessary To The Proper Operations Of State Government For The Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2025, June 30, 2026 And June 30, 2027**

**Chapter 9**

This law authorizes biennial appropriations across multiple departments primarily funded via the Highway Fund, with additional allocations from federal, special revenue, and other sources; for the fiscal years 2025-26 and 2026-27. The law details baseline staffing levels, personal services, all other, operating costs, and capital expenditures for the Department of Administrative and Financial Services (including bureaus responsible for buildings, grounds, claims, and revenue services), the Department of Environmental Protection (air quality), Legislature, Department of Public Safety (encompassing highway safety, motor vehicle inspection, state police, support units, traffic safety, and commercial enforcement), Secretary of State- Motor Vehicles, and Department of Transportation (covering administration, fleet services, highway & bridge capital, maintenance, multimodal initiatives like ferry and rail services). It includes specific one-time purchases (e.g., bomb suits, forensic lasers, hybrid vehicles), technology cost adjustments, reclassifications and position adjustments, and capital investments such as bridge construction, ferry operations, and aviation infrastructure.

**Funding for transit operations is provided at \$5 million per year.**

**LD 275                    An Act To Make Supplemental Allocations From The Highway Fund And Other Funds For The Expenditures Of State Government And To Change Certain Provisions Of The Law Necessary To The Proper Operations Of State Government For The Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2025**

**Chapter 3**

PART A: This Part makes appropriations and allocations of funds for fiscal year 2024-25.

PART B: This Part directs that funds carry forward into fiscal year 2025-26 for the Department of the Secretary of State, which extends the time within which previously authorized funds may be used in accommodation of the plate manufacturing billing process.

PART C: This Part directs the State Controller to carry forward up to \$2,500,000 in unexpended balances in the Personal Services and All Other line categories in the Department of Secretary of



State, Administration - Motor Vehicles program, after all financial commitments for obligations and budgetary adjustments have been made, at the end of fiscal year 2024-25 to the next fiscal year to the All Other line category in the Department of Secretary of State, Administration - Motor Vehicles program. These funds must be used to continue the modernization of systems and services at the Bureau of Motor Vehicles.

**LD 1359                    Resolve, To Direct The Department Of Transportation To Report Progress  
Made Toward Implementing Recommendations Based On The 2025  
Public Transit Advisory Council Report**  
**Chapter 99**

This Resolve requires the Department of Transportation, by December 3, 2025, to submit to the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation a report detailing its progress on implementing the recommendations from the 2025 Public Transit Advisory Council report, including specific dates of actions taken toward implementing those recommendations and specific dates on which the department plans to take additional actions toward implementing those recommendations. The Resolve also allows the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation to report out legislation to the Second Regular Session of the 132nd Legislature based on the report.

**LD 1451                    Resolve, Directing The Department Of Transportation To Establish The  
Maine Coordinating Working Group On Access And Mobility**  
**Chapter 101**

This resolve requires the Department of Transportation to establish the Maine Coordinating Working Group on Access and Mobility. The working group is tasked with developing an implementation plan to improve access to transportation across the State through interagency coordination and engagement with stakeholders. The Department of Transportation must submit a report with the implementation plan, including any necessary legislation and estimated appropriations, to the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation by February 1, 2026. The committee may report out legislation based on the report to the Second Regular Session of the 132nd Legislature.

**LD 447                    An Act To Amend The Law Governing Ferry Service To Matinicus Isle**  
**Chapter 229**

This law maintains the requirement that ferry service to Matinicus Isle be at least 12 times per year with an opportunity for residents to meet with MaineDOT to discuss the possibility of more trips.

**LD 472                    Resolve, Directing The Maine-Canadian Legislative Advisory Commission  
And The New England And Eastern Canada Legislative Commission To  
Examine Restoring Passenger Rail From Boston To Montreal**  
**Chapter 30**

This resolve directs the Maine-Canadian Legislative Advisory Commission and the New England and Eastern Canada Legislative Commission to examine restoring passenger rail from Boston, Massachusetts to Montreal, Quebec, Canada. The commissions are directed to submit a report with their findings to the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation by December 3, 2025.

LD 30

**Resolve, To Direct The Department Of Transportation To Implement The Recommendations Of The Portland To Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council**  
**Chapter 96**

This Resolve directs the Department of Transportation to implement the recommendations of the Portland to Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council. It specifically directs the Department of Transportation to remove state-owned inactive existing railroad track along the section known as the Berlin Subdivision between the City of Portland and the City of Auburn, rather than between the City of Portland and Royal River Park on East Elm Street in the Town of Yarmouth.

LD 821

**An Act To Make Allocations From Maine Turnpike Authority Funds For The Maine Turnpike Authority For The Calendar Year Ending December 31, 2026**  
**Chapter 5**

This law allocates the Maine Turnpike Authority anticipated revenues for calendar year 2026 across multiple operational categories including administration, accounts and controls, highway and equipment maintenance, fare collection, public safety, and building maintenance ;with total line item budgets amounting to roughly \$56.1 million, plus a 5% contingency (up to 10%) adding \$2.8 million for a total authorized spending of \$58.94 million. It allows for the transfer of any surplus in the contingency (and other line items, pending legislative oversight) to other budget categories before year end, subject to reporting and joint committee review. Underspent balances may be carried into the next fiscal year. Finally, it reports projected bond-related revenue needs; including \$44.4 million for debt service, \$42 million in reserve maintenance, and about \$45.9 million for capital improvements and other obligations; totaling \$132.28 million to satisfy bond resolutions and debt reserve requirements.

LD 850

**An Act To Amend The Motor Vehicle Laws**  
**Chapter 119**

This law allows the Secretary of State to adopt rules to administer self-service kiosks for vehicle registration renewals and driver's license and nondriver identification card renewals and replacements. It imposes a \$1.00 fee on electronic lien titling transactions.

The law clarifies that the process to dispose of vehicle parts is in the same manner as for the entire vehicle. It clarifies that impounded vehicles and vehicle parts are the property of the Secretary of State. It requires an owner or lienholder claiming ownership of a vehicle or vehicle part to take possession within 30 days from receipt of notice. It allows the Secretary of State to dispose of a vehicle or vehicle part in a manner considered appropriate and requires any proceeds from a sale to be deposited in the Motor Vehicle Services Fund.

The law also defines the term “temporary registration plate program”; and enables the Secretary of State to establish an electronic temporary registration plate program and adopt rules to administer the program. It also increases the temporary registration plate fee by \$1.00 to support the electronic temporary registration plate program.

**LD 1186                      Resolve, Directing The Department Of Transportation To Study The  
Feasibility Of Ferry Service To Monhegan Island  
Chapter 97**

This resolve directs the Department of Transportation to work with island and ferry service stakeholders to study the feasibility of adding ferry service to Monhegan Island. The department must submit a report by December 3, 2025 to the Joint Standing Committee on Transportation, which is authorized to submit legislation to the Second Regular Session of the 132nd Legislature.

**LD 1411                      An Act To Modify The Laws Regarding Driver's License Applications  
Chapter 165**

This law modifies the penalties applicable to a person who fails to obtain a license within 30 days of becoming a resident of this State. Under current law, a violation of this provision is a traffic infraction if the person has been a resident for less than 90 days and a Class E crime if the person has been a resident for more than 90 days. Under the bill, a person who violates this provision commits a traffic infraction and if the person has been a resident for at least 90 days the person may be fined a minimum of \$150 up to a maximum fine of \$500. The law eliminates the Class E crime for violating this provision.

The law also modifies the provision of law that requires a person to disclose the person's social security number on the person's application for a driver's license or nondriver identification card. In current law there is language specifying that the provision does not apply if the applicant provides proof to the Secretary of State that the person is ineligible to receive a social security number. The bill clarifies that the provision is not applicable to any person who is ineligible to receive a social security number, whether or not the person provides proof to the Secretary of State.

**Bills Carried Over**

**LD 305                      An Act Regarding Transportation In Maine**

This bill is a concept draft pursuant to Joint Rule 208. This bill would amend the laws governing transportation.

**LD 394                      An Act To Improve Transportation Infrastructure In Maine**

This bill is a concept draft pursuant to Joint Rule 208. This bill proposes to amend the law to improve the State's transportation infrastructure.

**LD 877                      An Act To Require Transportation Network Companies To Provide Fair  
Wages To Drivers**

This bill is a concept draft pursuant to Joint Rule 208. This bill would require transportation companies to provide fair wages to drivers.

**LD 1804                      An Act Concerning Funding And Oversight Of Transportation Matters**

This bill amends the laws related to legislative oversight of transportation funding and use of the funds from the Highway Fund. The bill: 1. Codifies the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over transportation matters as having jurisdiction over the Highway Fund. It updates references to the Highway Fund; 2. Establishes a minimum level of funding for transportation infrastructure programs related to bridges, highway lights and multimodal transportation, and

requires the State Budget Officer to adjust the minimum level of funding by the percentage change in the Consumer Price Index each biennium beginning July 1, 2027; 3. Increases, from 40% to 60%, the percentage of automobile-related sales and use taxes transferred to the Highway Fund and adds automobile-related sales and use taxes to the list of revenue that is allocated to and becomes part of the Highway Fund beginning July 1, 2027; 4. Provides for the net revenue from liquor operations to be deposited as undedicated revenue to the General Fund, rather than being split between undedicated revenue to the General Fund and undedicated revenue to the Highway Fund; 5. Provides for state funding for the Department of Public Safety, Bureau of State Police to come solely from the General Fund, rather than being split between the General Fund and the Highway Fund, beginning in fiscal year 2027-28; 6. Removes the Department of Public Safety, Bureau of State Police from the list of allowable uses of the Highway Fund; 7. Adds multimodal transportation to the list of allowable uses of the Highway Fund; 8. Redefines “transportation infrastructure” to mean the infrastructure, assets, facilities and systems related to all modes of transportation, including highways, bridges, aviation, transit, railroads, ferries, ports and other marine infrastructure, trails and bicycle and pedestrian facilities, as well as all buildings, utilities and other appurtenances related to those modes; 9. Removes the designation of project-specific and nonproject-specific procurement and retains the provision that the Department of Transportation has full power to purchase all supplies, materials and equipment that are incidental to, or necessary for, construction, improvement or maintenance of transportation infrastructure; and 10. Requires, beginning March 1, 2026, the Department of Transportation and the Maine Turnpike Authority to submit biennial reports in each even-numbered year, summarizing the procurement activities over the preceding 2 calendar years. The summary must include construction contracting, consulting contracts for engineering and other technical services and other vendor contracts.

#### LD 287

#### **An Act To Require And Encourage Safe And Interconnected Transportation Construction Projects**

This bill establishes requirements for the safety and interconnectivity of state-financed transportation construction projects, including: 1. Requiring a transportation project, the design of which commences on or after January 1, 2026 and the cost of which is \$500,000 or more, to: A. Perform certain duties, including identifying locations on state highways and state aid highways with a lack of facilities for or designs creating unsafe conditions for pedestrians, bicyclists and other users not in a motor vehicle; B. Consult with municipalities about active or planned transportation connections, public transportation facilities and management of posted speed limits to reduce motor vehicle crash exposure and severity; C. Adjust posted speed limits within the construction project to minimize motor vehicle crashes, particularly in locations experiencing a higher probability of crashes; and D. Plan, design and construct facilities providing context-sensitive solutions that contribute to transportation system connectivity and safety for pedestrians, bicyclists, other users not in a motor vehicle and persons accessing public transportation; and 2. Requiring the Department of Transportation to prioritize transportation funding to projects that: A. Provide street access for all transportation users; B. Encourage mixed land uses; C. Encourage infill development; D. Facilitate access to affordable or dense housing; E. Encourage walkable neighborhoods; F. Preserve open space, wetlands, parks, farms and woodlands; and G. Encourage robust community and public participation, opinions and input in the type and scope of the transportation construction or other project.

LD 446

**An Act Regarding Driver Education**

This bill is a concept draft pursuant to Joint Rule 208. This bill proposes to enact measures regarding driver education.

LD 566

**An Act To Modernize The Motor Vehicle Inspection Program And Amend  
The Law Governing Inspection Fees**

This bill authorizes the Chief of the State Police to require the use of an electronic inspection program for the purpose of performing motor vehicle inspections. It also authorizes an inspection station to charge a \$20 fee for inspection regardless of the model year of the inspected vehicle and provides that an operator of an official school bus inspection station is entitled to a fee of \$20 for each school bus inspected.

LD 1211

**An Act Regarding Certain Definitions In The Sales And Use Tax Laws  
Affecting Rental Equipment**

This bill changes the definition of "automobile" in the sales and use tax laws to provide that a pickup truck or van with a gross vehicle weight rating of 10,000 pounds or less is included only if it is not used primarily to transport goods or freight. The bill also changes the definition of "lease or rental" to provide that it does not include a lease or rental of tangible personal property that is used only at the primary business location of the lessor.

LD 1835

**An Act To Improve Nonemergency Mainecare Transportation**

This bill does the following. 1. It requires the Department of Health and Human Services to create and maintain a MaineCare nonemergency transportation dashboard, which is information posted on the department's publicly accessible website reflecting broker performance indicators and results. 2. It requires the department to track nonemergency transportation trips by region and categorize and issue a monthly report regarding all incidents involving the delivery on nonemergency transportation. 3. It establishes the nonemergency transportation ombudsman program as an independent program within the Executive Department to provide ombudsman services to MaineCare members regarding MaineCare nonemergency transportation provided by the department. 4. It requires the department to establish a nonemergency transportation advisory committee in each region to provide the department with recommendations regarding the performance of nonemergency transportation services in that region.

## **Bills That Failed**

LD 1020	An Act To Repeal The Laws Providing For The Construction Of A Connector To Gorham And To Resell Land Taken Under Those Laws To Previous Property Owners
LD 1138	An Act To Reduce Pollution Associated With Transportation In Alignment With The State's Climate Action Plan
LD 1125	An Act Regarding The Impact Of Certain Nonemergency Transportation Services Contracts On Community Action Agency Programs
LD 96	An Act To Amend The Motor Vehicles And Traffic Law Governing Mandatory Driver's License Suspension For Refusing Testing For Drugs Or A Combination Of Drugs And Alcohol
LD 115	An Act To Assess Impact Fees On Megayachts
LD 263	Resolve, To Provide Rural Nonmedical Transportation Services To The Elderly And Adults With Disabilities Receiving Home And Community Benefits Under Mainecare
LD 304	An Act Regarding The Department Of Transportation
LD 320	An Act To Repeal Certain Motor Vehicle Inspection Requirements
LD 348	Resolve, To Study The Effect Of High-intensity Headlights On Drivers
LD 367	An Act To Authorize General Fund Bond Issues To Improve Highways, Bridges And Nonhighway Modes Of Transportation
LD 433	An Act Relating To Requirements For School Bus Drivers
LD 487	Resolve, Directing The Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority To Apply For Federal Funding For The Purpose Of Identifying The Rail Corridor Connecting Portland To Orono As An Intercity Passenger Rail Corridor
LD 511	Resolve, To Direct The Department Of Transportation To Implement The Recommendations Of The Portland To Auburn Rail Use Advisory Council
LD 622	An Act To Implement A Surcharge On Electric Vehicle Registration
LD 661	An Act To Amend Motor Vehicle Inspection Requirements
LD 667	An Act To Modernize The State Motor Vehicle Inspection Program And The Law Governing Inspection Fees
LD 1010	An Act To Amend The State's Vehicle Inspection Law By Requiring Inspections Biennially
LD 1194	An Act To Phase Out Vehicle Excise Taxes And Implement A Fee For Infrastructure Funding Based On A Vehicle's Annual Mileage
LD 1268	An Act To Address Employee Recruitment And Retention Issues Within The Maine State Ferry Service By Providing A Yearly Stipend

<a href="#">LD 1292</a>	An Act To Codify The Maine Turnpike Authority's Contributions To The Highway Fund With Regard To The Sensible Transportation Policy Act
<a href="#">LD 1612</a>	Resolve, Directing The Department Of Transportation To Solicit Proposals For The Utilization Of Unused State-owned Railroad Lines
<a href="#">LD 1641</a>	An Act To Allow Municipalities To Implement A Local Option Sales Tax
<a href="#">LD 1680</a>	An Act To Establish A Permanent Ferry Oversight Committee To Ensure Sustainable And Equitable Ferry Operations
<a href="#">LD 1714</a>	An Act To Create A New Pathway To Licensure To Drive School Buses
<a href="#">LD 1731</a>	An Act To Increase The Influence Of The Maine State Ferry Advisory Board On The Funding And Operations Of The Maine State Ferry Service
<a href="#">LD 1795</a>	An Act To Change The Calculation For Municipal Service Charges For Tax-exempt Organizations
<a href="#">LD 1809</a>	An Act To Further Stabilize Highway Fund Revenue
<a href="#">LD 1875</a>	An Act To Create Equity In Maine's Highway Funding By Imposing A Road Use Fee For Electric Vehicles





July 28, 2025

## **Senate Committee on Appropriations Advances FY 2026 Transportation Appropriations Bill**

**Provides Overwhelming Majority of Public Transit and Passenger Rail  
Funding Authorized by Infrastructure Investment Jobs Act**

On July 24, the Senate Committee on Appropriations marked up [S. 2465, the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2026](#) (Senate THUD Appropriations bill). The Committee reported the bipartisan legislation by a vote of 27-1 from the Senate Committee. Earlier this month (July 14), the House Committee on Appropriations marked up its THUD Appropriations bill (H.R. 4522) and approved it on a party-line vote of 35-28. View [APTA's Legislative Alert on the House THUD Appropriations bill](#).

**The Senate THUD Appropriations bill appropriates the overwhelming majority of public transit and passenger rail funding authorized by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA).** Specifically, the Senate THUD Appropriations bill, together with the IIJA's advance appropriations, provides a total of **\$21.1 billion for public transit** in Fiscal Year (FY) 2026, an **increase of \$203.3 million (1 percent)** from the FY 2025 enacted level and **\$1.94 billion more than the House THUD Appropriations bill**. The bill, together with the IIJA's advance appropriations, **provides \$3.55 billion for Capital Investment Grants (CIG)**, a decrease of \$255 million from FY 2025 enacted levels, and \$1.9 billion more than the House THUD Appropriations bill.

In addition, the Senate THUD Appropriations bill and IIJA provide **\$16.2 billion for passenger and freight rail** in FY 2026, an increase of **\$36.5 million** from the FY 2025 enacted level, and **\$2.6 billion more than the House THUD Appropriations bill**.

**The bill appropriates \$2.4 billion for Amtrak**, a significant increase from the House bill.

### **Public Transit**

The Senate THUD Appropriations bill and IIJA provide **\$21.1 billion for public transit** in FY 2026, an increase of **\$203.3 million (1 percent)** from the FY 2025 enacted level and **\$1.94 billion more than the House THUD Appropriations bill (10 percent)**. This **total funding**



is **\$1.2 billion (-5 percent) less** than the amount authorized in the IIJA.

The bill fully funds the public transit contract authority of **\$14.64 billion** as provided by the IIJA, an increase of **\$363 million** from the FY 2025 enacted level.

The Senate THUD Appropriations bill and IIJA provide **\$3.55 billion for Capital Investment Grants, a decrease of \$255 million from the FY 2025** enacted level but \$1.9 billion more than the House THUD Appropriations bill. Currently, communities are requesting more than **\$36 billion** of CIG funds in FY 2026 and subsequent years to construct 54 projects in 23 States. View [APTA's CIG Project Pipeline Dashboard](#).

The Senate THUD Appropriations bill provides **an additional \$334.8 million for new and existing programs**, of which \$193.9 million was repurposed from unobligated funds from the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) (P.L. 109-59). The Senate bill provides \$78.1 million for operating assistance for the 2026 FIFA World Cup; \$68 million for a bus leasing program for the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games; \$20 million for operating costs for transit safety for the 10 transit systems with the highest ridership in FY 2024; \$1.5 million for Bus Testing Facility Grants; \$55 million for Passenger Ferry and Rural Ferry Grants; \$7.5 million for technical assistance and workforce development; \$5 million for the accelerating innovative mobility initiative; \$500,000 for Tribal Technical Assistance; and \$58.9 million for Congressionally Directed Spending (earmarks) for specific public transit projects. Regarding major international sporting events, the accompanying report directs the Secretary of Transportation to work with public transit providers to provide appropriate relief from the spare ratio requirement and charter service restrictions, if specifically requested by the transit agency, to support the preparation and delivery of service during such events.

The Senate THUD Appropriations bill includes several important transit policy provisions. Section 163 blocks the Rostenkowski Test, preventing a possible across-the-board cut of FY 2025 transit formula funds to each public transit agency. Section 164 prohibits the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) from impeding or hindering a project from advancing or approving a project seeking a CIG Federal share of more than 40 percent.

Section 166 provides a 100 percent Federal share for § 5310 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors & Individuals with Disabilities and § 5311 Rural Area formula grants obligated in FY 2026.

Section 167 expands public transit agencies' authority to acquire land prior to completion of National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review. Specifically, the provision amends 49 U.S.C. § 5323(q) by replacing the term "right-of-way" with "real property interests", thereby expanding the opportunity for broader property acquisition prior to the completion of environmental reviews. This provision would bring the Federal Transit Administration's property acquisition authority into parity with Federal Highway Administration programs. View [APTA's Fact Sheet on Real Property Acquisition](#).

Finally, concerning Chinese rolling stock procurement prohibitions, section 168 prohibits funds from being used to award or amend a contract for bus or rail rolling stock with a manufacturer that, at any time, met the criteria outlined in § 5323(u), including any entities resulting from a reorganization or restructuring or any successor organizations regardless of whether the reorganized, restructured, or successor entity currently meets those restrictions.

View [APTA's Public Transit Funding Table](#) of the Senate and House THUD Appropriations bills.

## Passenger Rail

The Senate THUD Appropriations bill and IIJA provide **\$16.2 billion** for passenger and freight rail in FY 2026, **an increase of \$36.5 million from the FY 2025 enacted level and \$2.6 billion more than the House THUD bill (19 percent)**. This total funding is **\$4.8 billion (-23 percent)** less than the amount authorized in the IIJA.

Specifically, the bill appropriates **\$2.4 billion for Amtrak grants** (\$1.6 billion for the National Network and \$850 million for the Northeast Corridor), which is **\$114.4 million (5 percent) more** than the FY 2025 enacted level. The accompanying report calls for continued research into wayside bearing defect detection systems, in line with the National Transportation Safety Board's recommendations from its investigation into the derailment in East Palestine, Ohio.

The Senate THUD Appropriations bill provides \$151.5 million for Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) grants, an increase of \$51.5 million (52 percent) from the FY 2025 enacted level. The CRISI grants include \$51.5 million for Congressionally directed spending for designated CRISI projects. The Senate THUD Appropriations bill also allows CRISI grants to be used for commuter railroad projects that implement or sustain positive train control systems.

Conversely, the House THUD Appropriations bill provided funding for Amtrak and CRISI by transferring \$2.8 billion in unobligated FY 2026 funding from the Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Program, which was originally to be provided as an advance appropriation through IIJA.

The Senate bill provides \$75 million in additional funding for the Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail grants.

Unlike the House bill, the Senate THUD Appropriations bill does not include the controversial policy rider to prohibit any funding for the California High-Speed Rail Authority project.

Finally, section 155 includes a sense of Congress noting the importance of long-distance passenger rail routes, particularly for those in rural areas, and the need to sustain such routes and services to ensure connectivity throughout the National Network.

View [APTA's Passenger Rail Funding Table](#) of the Senate and House THUD Appropriations bills.

## U.S. Department of Transportation Programs

The Senate THUD Appropriations bill provides **\$250 million**, in addition to the **\$1.5 billion** of advance appropriations included in the IIJA, for the Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) competitive grant program for surface transportation projects, including public transportation and multi-modal projects.

Although the legislation does not provide additional appropriations for the Mega grant program, the accompanying Committee report specifically encourages DOT to consider eligible transit projects for awards made using Mega program advance appropriations.

View [APTA's FY 2026 Priorities Letter to Senate THUD Appropriations Subcommittee](#).

View the [Senate Committee on Appropriations Summary of S. 2465, the THUD Appropriations bill](#).

View [S. 2465, the THUD Appropriations bill](#).

View [S. 2465, the THUD Appropriations bill Committee Report \(S. Rpt. 119-47\)](#).

View the [Congressionally Directed Spending Items of S. 2465, the THUD Appropriations bill](#).



July 14, 2025

## House Appropriations Committee Leaders Unveil FY 2026 THUD Appropriations

FY 2026 THUD Bill significantly cuts public transit and passenger rail funding

Today (July 14), the House Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies (THUD) Appropriations Subcommittee will mark up H.R. \_\_\_\_, the THUD Appropriations Act, 2026.

The House THUD Appropriations bill significantly cuts public transit and passenger rail funding, compared to the authorized levels in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). Specifically, the THUD Appropriations bill, together with the IIJA's advance appropriations, provides a total of **\$19.2 billion for public transit** in FY 2026, **a cut of \$1.7 billion (-8.3 percent)** from the FY 2025 enacted level, including cutting nearly all General Fund appropriations for Capital Investment Grants (CIG). This total funding is **\$3.1 billion (-13.9 percent) less** than the amount authorized in the IIJA.

In addition, the House THUD Appropriations bill and IIJA provide **\$13.6 billion** for passenger and freight rail in FY 2026, **a cut of \$2.6 billion (-15.9 percent)** from the FY 2025 enacted level. This total funding is **\$7.4 billion (-35.3 percent) less** than the amount authorized in the IIJA. The bill cuts the General Fund appropriation for Amtrak by **\$115 million (-4.7 percent)**, while increasing funding for Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Grants by **\$438 million (403.8 percent)** from the FY 2025 enacted levels.

The bill also includes several policy riders, including prohibiting the use of funds that may contradict President Trump's Executive Orders, such as those related to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), regulatory streamlining, and English proficiency.

### Public Transit

The House THUD Appropriations bill and IIJA provide **\$19.2 billion for public transit** in FY 2026, **a cut of \$1.7 billion (-8.3 percent)** from the FY 2025 enacted level. This total funding is **\$3.1 billion (-13.9 percent) less** than the amount authorized in the IIJA.

The bill fully funds the public transit contract authority of **\$14.64 billion** as provided by the IIJA. This funding represents a **\$363 million increase** from the FY 2025 enacted level.

However, the bill significantly cuts total CIG funding. The THUD Appropriations bill and IIJA advance appropriations combined provide **\$1.65 billion for Capital Investment Grants, a cut of \$2.2 billion (-56.5 percent)** from the FY 2025 enacted level. The bill only provides \$54 million in General Fund appropriations for CIG funding, **a cut of 97.6 percent**. Of the \$1.6 billion in advance appropriations, \$404 million is available for new fixed guideway projects and \$1.2 billion for Small Starts.

The bill significantly cuts CIG funding even though many public transit agencies are pursuing CIG projects to address the mobility demands of their communities. Currently, communities are requesting **\$36 billion** of CIG funds in FY 2026 and subsequent years to fund construction of 54 projects in 23 states. [View APTA's CIG Project Pipeline Dashboard.](#)

Unlike prior THUD Appropriations Acts, the bill does not provide additional funding above IIJA authorized levels for Buses and Bus Facilities Competitive Grants, Low-No Emission Bus Competitive Grants, or Ferry Grants. However, it does include **\$96 million** for congressionally directed spending (earmarks) on designated public transit projects.

The THUD Appropriations bill does include an important transit policy provision: section 163 of the bill blocks the Rostenkowski Test, preventing a possible across-the-board cut of FY 2026 transit formula funds to each public transit agency. However, unlike prior THUD Acts, the bill does not prohibit DOT from impeding or hindering a project from advancing or approving a project seeking a CIG Federal share of more than 40 percent.

[View APTA's Public Transit Funding Table of the THUD Appropriations bill.](#)

## Passenger Rail

The House THUD Appropriations bill and IIJA provide **\$13.6 billion** for passenger and freight rail in FY 2026, **a cut of \$2.6 billion (-15.9 percent)** from the FY 2025 enacted level. This total funding is **\$7.4 billion (-35.3 percent) less** than the amount authorized in the IIJA.

The THUD Appropriations bill provides **\$2.3 billion for Amtrak grants** (\$1.4 billion for the National Network and \$924 million for the Northeast Corridor). The bill cuts the General Fund appropriation for Amtrak by **\$115 million (-4.7 percent)**.

The bill provides **\$538 million for CRISI grants, an increase of \$438 million (403.8 percent)** from the FY 2025 enacted levels. The CRISI grants include \$38.4 million for congressionally directed spending for designated CRISI projects.

The bill provides funding for Amtrak and CRISI by transferring **\$2.8 billion** in unobligated FY 2026 funding from the Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Program. The funding was originally provided through advance appropriations in the IIJA. As a result, the Federal-State Partnership for

Intercity Passenger Rail Program will have **\$4.4 billion (-39.7 percent)** available in FY 2026.

Sections 153, 156, and 157 of the bill prohibit any funding for the California High-Speed Rail project, Texas Central Railway project, and Northern Lights Express Intercity Passenger Rail project, respectively.

[View APTA's Passenger Rail Funding Table of the House THUD Appropriations bill.](#)

### **U.S. Department of Transportation Programs**

The legislation provides no General Fund appropriation for Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) or Mega competitive grants for surface transportation projects, including public transportation and multi-modal projects.

Section 193 prohibits DOT from enforcing a mask mandate in response to the COVID-19 virus in FY 2026.

Section 425 restricts the use of funds that may be used in contravention of President Trump's Executive Orders, including those related to DEI, and regulatory streamlining.

[View. H.R.      FY 2026 THUD Bill Text.](#)

[View the House Committee on Appropriations Summary of the THUD Appropriations bill.](#)





## **FY26 Bus Grants Fully Funded: Fully Funded, Including Advanced Appropriations**

Dear TBC Members and Supporters,

Recently, the House of Representatives unveiled its FY 2026 Appropriations bill for Transportation and Housing and Urban Development (THUD).

**We were pleased to see that Section 5339 formula and grant programs (Buses and Bus Facilities and Low- and No- Emission projects) received full funding at the IIJA-Authorized Levels, including Advanced Appropriations.**

Throughout the bill, there were cuts to other programs, including CIG and rail, so it's a positive sign that bus funding was not targeted for cuts. As a reminder, we worked with the Bipartisan Congressional Bus Caucus to send a bipartisan letter to the Appropriations Committee in support of full funding and believe that was critical to our efforts.

Maintaining this funding level is in line with President Trump's budget request. This alignment from the President and House Republicans is a promising sign for FY26 Appropriations, and we are hopeful the Senate will follow suit. These FY26 funding levels will also give us a strong starting point as we continue to advocate for full funding for bus programs in the upcoming Surface Transportation Reauthorization Bill.

Last month, I traveled to Washington, D.C. and met with over 40 House T&I, Senate Banking, Senate Appropriations and FTA officials that will be key players in drafting the next Reauthorization bill. Offices on both the House and Senate side clearly understood the importance of 5339 funding, but we still have a long road ahead of us and need your continued engagement.

Thank you all for your advocacy so far. It was clear that many of the folks we met with on the Hill had heard from you and they recognized the importance of bus programs, particularly the competitive grant program.

As the FY26 THUD Appropriations bill continues through the legislative process, we will provide more updates and action items.

**The full text of the bill is available [here](#) and a summary from the House Appropriations Committee is [here](#).**

## Attachment D

### THE SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION

WASHINGTON, DC 20590



July 2, 2025

To All Recipients of U.S. Department of Transportation Funding:

The U.S. Department of Transportation (Department or DOT) distributes substantial Federal financial assistance for thousands of projects, programs, and activities operated or initiated by diverse entities, including but not limited to State and local governments. DOT administers this Federal financial assistance to support the development and maintenance of the Nation's transportation infrastructure, pursuant to statutory authority and in accordance with binding contractual agreements in the form of Federal financial assistance agreements, usually grants, cooperative agreements, and loans.

As part of President Trump's agenda to end illegal discrimination, inefficient climate change policies, and other harmful initiatives in Federal programs, the President has issued several Executive Orders (E.O.) including those titled as follows: E.O. 14170, Reforming The Federal Hiring Process And Restoring Merit To Government Service; E.O. 14151, Ending Radical And Wasteful Government DEi Programs And Preferencing; E.O. 14168, Defending Women From Gender Ideology Extremism And Restoring Biological Truth To The Federal Government; E.O. 14149, Restoring Freedom of Speech and Ending Federal Censorship; E.O. 14173, Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity; and E.O. 14154, Unleashing American Energy.

These E.O.s direct Federal agencies, where and as consistent with law, to identify and eliminate all orders, directives, rules, regulations, notices, guidance documents, funding agreements, programs, and policy statements, or portions thereof, which were authorized, adopted, or approved between noon on January 20, 2021 and noon on January 20, 2025, and which reference or relate in any way to climate change, "greenhouse gas" emissions, racial equity, gender identity, "diversity, equity, and inclusion" goals, environmental justice, or the Justice 40 Initiative.

Between noon on January 20, 2021 and noon on January 20, 2025, DOT incorporated these types of policies into the terms, schedules, exhibits, and attachments of the Department's Federal financial assistance agreements. Accordingly, I write to clarify that the Department will no longer enforce these policies, or any other requirements incorporated into its Federal financial assistance agreements that are inconsistent with the policy objectives of this Administration and current DOT leadership. More specifically, the Department considers any policies or requirements not based in statute or regulation relating or referring to climate change, "greenhouse gas" emissions, racial equity, gender identity, "diversity, equity, and inclusion" goals, environmental justice, and the Justice 40 Initiative that were incorporated into the terms, schedules, exhibits, and attachments of its Federal financial assistance agreements to be null and void and of no effect.

Recipients of DOT Federal financial assistance are hereby released of their obligations to comply with these policies and requirements effective immediately.



This letter does not impose new conditions or requirements, but instead serves merely to provide notice that DOT will not enforce or require adherence to any of the aforementioned policy requirements the prior administration incorporated into the Department's Federal financial assistance agreements. The Department has removed those requirements from its Federal financial assistance agreements, and inserted language that requires compliance with already existing legal requirements, as applicable based on existing court decisions including, among others, existing legal requirements related to immigration enforcement and the prohibition of discrimination—not the type of new sweeping policy requirements imposed by the prior administration.

As a reminder, the Department offers technical guidance and support for all recipients of DOT Federal financial assistance through its program offices. Should you require clarification regarding your obligations, you are encouraged to contact your designated DOT representative.

The Department remains committed to advancing a transportation system that serves the public interest efficiently and unleashes economic prosperity and a superior quality of life for American families and supports our partnership to achieve these goals.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'SPD', is positioned above the name Sean P. Duffy.

Sean P. Duffy