



House Committee Unveils Federal Transportation Funding Bill

The House Transportation and Infrastructure committee on Wednesday unveiled its \$375 billion, six-year transportation funding package. Committee chairman Rep. Don Young of Alaska hopes to introduce the bill before Congress recesses for the year.

Called the Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users or TEA-LU, the act would result in \$298.7 billion nationwide for highways and \$69.2 billion for transit according to information provided by the committee. Included in the information is a table that indicates Missouri's share of federal transportation funding would increase from about \$3.97 billion under TEA-21 to approximately \$5.51 billion if TEA-LU passes in its current form.

The bill would provide a minimum guarantee of 95 percent return to each state on every dollar paid into the highway trust fund. This corresponds with provisions of an act passed by the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee last week. The guarantee is 90.5 percent currently under TEA-21.

Highway funding in the house bill would grow from nearly \$40 billion nationally in Fiscal Year 2004 to \$60 billion in FY 2009. FY 2003 federal highway spending is projected to be approximately \$33 billion. Transit funds would amount to \$12.4 billion per year over the life of TEA-LU.

The bill does not include mechanisms to generate the additional revenues needed to increase funding by the amounts set out in the act. Responsibility for determining the revenue source will fall to the House Ways and Means Committee.

Rep. Young has indicated in the past that an increase in the federal gas tax may be needed to meet the bill's \$375 billion price tag. The Bush Administration has indicated that any reauthorization act containing a tax increase likely would be vetoed. Additionally, Rep. Marilyn Musgrave of Colorado is leading opposition in the house to any efforts to raise the gas tax through the reauthorization bill.

The Senate's Safe, Accountable, Flexible and Efficient Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century passed out of committee on November 12 would provide \$255 billion for highways and about \$311 billion for transportation programs overall. Originally, the SAFETEA package proposed by the president contained approximately \$247 billion total in federal transportation funding.

For more information, please contact Governmental Affairs Liaison Kent Van Landuyt at (573) 526-9778 or Public Information Manager Shane Peck at (573) 522-6996. MoDOT's website also highlights TEA-21 reauthorization at modot.org.