

To: Jackson, Ryan[jackson.ryan@epa.gov]; Dickerson, Aaron[dickerson.aaron@epa.gov];
Dickerson, Aaron[dickerson.aaron@epa.gov]
From: Approval Queue
Sent: Tue 11/7/2017 8:58:43 PM
Subject: Your request 'Trip from Washington to Chicago' was approved.

This is a notification only - no action is required.

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Your request 'Trip from Washington to Chicago' was approved.

Approved on 2017, November 07, Tuesday at 03:58 pm Eastern Time by: MARDIKO ELLISON

Comments:

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To: Jackson, Ryan[jackson.ryan@epa.gov]
From: Morning Transportation
Sent: Mon 8/7/2017 2:05:37 PM
Subject: POLITICO's Morning Transportation: Infrastructure grant proposals lean rural — FRA, FMCSA drop plans to propose sleep apnea screening mandate — Welcome to the reporting airlines club

By Brianna Gurciullo and Stephanie Beasley | 08/07/2017 10:00 AM EDT

With help from Tanya Snyder

INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT PROPOSALS LEAN RURAL: DOT is looking to award \$78.9 million in fiscal 2017 grants to 10 transportation infrastructure projects, most of which are in rural areas of the country. Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao notified House Transportation Chairman Bill Shuster (R-Pa.) last week that DOT is proposing the grants for highway, rail, port and bridge projects. MT readers may remember that DOT is overhauling the FASTLANE grant program and re-titling it INFRA. But these grants for "small projects" (those expected to cost less than \$100 million), for which applications had already been sent in, were decided using FASTLANE standards. Large projects seeking fiscal 2017 funding have until Nov. 2 to apply again, under INFRA criteria.

NY, NJ SENATORS TIE UP DOT NOMS OVER GATEWAY: New Jersey's and New York's senators prevented Derek Kan, Ronald Batory and Adam Sullivan from being included in their chamber's wave of confirmations last week because they question whether the Trump administration will help fund the Gateway program's Hudson tunnel project, The Wall Street Journal reports. The Democratic senators have shelved the nominations of Kan (to be under secretary of Transportation for policy), Batory (to be FRA administrator) and Sullivan (to be assistant secretary for governmental affairs) at least until lawmakers return in September.

Confirmation deprivation: The department told WSJ that it finds it "counterproductive to deprive DOT of highly qualified, noncontroversial nominees, who are needed to accomplish the department's work on behalf of the American people, for reasons having nothing whatever to do with their merits."

HAPPY MONDAY: Thanks for tuning in to POLITICO's Morning Transportation, your daily tipsheet on all things trains, planes, automobiles and ports. Welcome to the lazy, hazy, crazy days of recess. Hit us up with tips, feedback and lyrics: sbeasley@politico.com or [@Steph_Beasley](https://twitter.com/Steph_Beasley) and bgurciullo@politico.com or [@brigurciullo](https://twitter.com/brigurciullo).

"Don't hafta tell a girl and fella about a drive-in / Or some romantic moon it seems / Right from the moment that those lovers start arrivin' / You'll see more kissin' in the cars than on the screen."

GET LISTENING: Follow MT's playlist on Spotify. What better way to start your day than with tunes (picked by us and readers) that are all about flying, driving, commuting and sailing?

TWEETS DU JOUR: How quickly is President Donald Trump nominating senior DOT officials during his first year in the White House compared to past presidents? Jeff Davis over at the Eno Center for Transportation broke it down. DHS Acting Secretary Elaine Duke and FEMA

Administrator Brock Long got in some face time with the president and vice president when they hosted a briefing on government efforts to prep for the looming Atlantic hurricane season.

STAY WOKE: FRA and FMCSA announced Friday that they're dropping plans to put forward screening and treatment mandates for commercial drivers and rail workers diagnosed with obstructive sleep apnea. As our Lauren Gardner and Tanya Snyder report, the administration claims that "current safety programs and FRA's rulemaking addressing fatigue risk management are the appropriate avenues" to deal with obstructive sleep apnea - though that rulemaking has languished for years. The move comes despite a slew of recent accidents, some deadly, in which untreated sleep apnea was found to be a causal factor, including a fatal 2000 tractor-trailer crash in Tennessee and a 2013 Metro-North derailment in the Bronx, N.Y.

Tweetmentary: "Focus - this is really important - the Trump admin killing common sense safety regulations like these mean more accidents, more deaths," former FRA Administrator Sarah Feinberg tweeted.

WELCOME TO THE CLUB: Six new airlines will be subject to reporting requirements starting next year because of a passenger-protection rule that lowers the threshold for reporting. Allegiant Airlines, PSA Airlines, Republic Airlines, Endeavor Air, Mesa Airlines, and Envoy Air - none of which currently report on-time performance and denied boarding data to the Bureau of Transportation Statistics - will have to start next year, Tanya reports for Pros.

See you in 2019: The rule also lowered the threshold for reporting mishandled baggage data, though airlines get an extra year before it kicks in because some carriers have "encountered challenges" in "reprogramming computer systems, developing procedures to account for gate-checked bags, and training personnel," a BTS spokesman said.

RAIL VS. TRUCKING WAR OF WORDS: After the head of the Association of American Railroads argued that big trucks aren't paying "their fair share for the infrastructure they use," the American Trucking Associations fired back last week, saying they also think "highway users should pay for their use of the system, but it is utterly false to suggest trucks are responsible for all highway maintenance costs." The trucking industry "is most certainly paying its fair share for maintenance," ATA President and CEO Chris Spear wrote in a column for HuffPost. Spear then knocked weight-distance taxes and mentioned the potential problems with a VMT tax, all while advocating for a federal gas tax hike.

Them's fightin' words: "Rather than creating division in the debate, railroads should be exploring ways to lower costs and stimulate competition in their own industry," Spear writes. "In essence, they maintain an oligopoly that is void of competition, but unlike public utilities which are regulated, the railroads are free to dictate prices and hold captive shippers hostage to them."

SO HAPPY TOGETHER: Toyota and Mazda announced Friday that they would jointly build a \$1.6 billion manufacturing plant in the United States. The plant is expected to produce 300,000 cars per year and create 4,000 jobs, according to the companies, which have yet to disclose where they are planning to break ground. The facility is slated to open in 2021 and could also be a testing ground for the development of electric cars and safety technologies like vehicle-to-

vehicle and vehicle-to-infrastructure communication.

The opposite of 'sad': The Toyota/Mazda deal won high praise from Trump, who campaigned on promises to bring once-plentiful jobs in the auto industry back to the United States, POLITICO's Madeline Conway writes. "A great investment in American manufacturing!" he tweeted on Friday in response to the news. But Pro Trade's Doug Palmer writes that the companies' decision probably isn't just an attempt to curry favor with Trump, who has threatened to re-open NAFTA negotiations to tighten automotive trade rules and raise import taxes. Other policy factors "such as rising U.S. fuel economy standards and generous local incentives" more likely played a larger role in making up the Japanese automakers' minds to open the U.S. plant.

SIGNED, SEALED, DELIVERED: A resolution to create the D.C. area's Metro Safety Commission is awaiting action by Trump after lawmakers enacted it late last week. "The official congressional seal of approval is one of the last hurdles in the drawn-out legislative process that started more than two years ago to codify a new organization that would help prevent safety crises on Metro like the January 2015 L'Enfant Plaza smoke disaster," The Washington Post's Martine Powers reports. Martine (a former MT scribe) also notes that it's uncertain when FTA will stop holding back funding from D.C., Maryland and Virginia over their lateness in forming the commission.

THE SCANDAL THAT NEVER ENDS: An ex-Volkswagen official pleaded guilty Friday to crimes linked to the automaker's diesel emissions scandal. Oliver Schmidt, previously VW's U.S. Environment and Engineering Office general manager, pleaded guilty to "conspiracy to defraud the U.S., to commit wire fraud and to violate the Clean Air Act," as well as breaching that law. He owned up to hiding from the California Air Resources Board that diesel VW cars were equipped with so-called defeat devices that rigged emissions checks, the Justice Department said in a release. Schmidt, a German resident, will be sentenced in December.

PAW PATROL: TSA is at risk of being a few paws short for its bomb-sniffing units, according to a New York Times report that describes how DHS agencies and DOD are being forced to compete with each other to bid for a limited number of dogs - mostly sourced from breeders in Eastern Europe. "With terrorists increasingly attacking so-called soft targets, the demand for detection dogs that can sweep large areas for explosives has soared. So have prices, which can exceed \$25,000 for a single dog," per the article. TSA currently has about 1,000 dogs but needs 350 new dogs every year to replace those that age out of the workforce.

Help! Earlier this year, the president issued a fiscal 2018 budget request that would slash funding for some of TSA's canine units. The House, however, recently passed a DHS reauthorization bill (H.R. 2825 (115)) that would block those changes.

AMTRAK PUTS RIDERS ON THE ROPES: In news that is sure to make a lot of New Yorkers groan, Amtrak announced Friday that service disruptions could continue at Penn Station through the fall and beyond. During a press call with reporters, Amtrak officials said they expect more repairs will be needed even after the organization completes its initial "infrastructure renewal" project on Sept. 4, NJ.com reports. "We will ask our partners at NJ Transit, the MTA and the LIRR for some extended (service) outages, after we've planned for them and determined

the need," said Chief Engineer Gery Williams.

LOBBYING UPDATE: FedEx hired Mehlman Castagnetti Rosen & Thomas to lobby on fiscal 2018 transportation appropriations, "issues related to supply chain management" and "general transportation issues." And Melissa Edwards, a former legislative assistant to Sen. Thad Cochran (R-Miss.), registered to lobby for the Truckload Carriers Association on surface transportation issues.

SHIFTING GEARS: Friday was Lauren Huston's last day as the Senate Commerce Committee's press secretary and digital director. She will be studying full time at Catholic's law school. Brianna Manzelli is taking Huston's place.

ICYMI: C-SPAN aired on Friday night an interview with Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao.

THE AUTOBAHN:

- "As NAFTA talks approach, Mexican officials meet with business leaders in border states." Arizona Daily Star.
- "Hosting the 2028 Olympics could fix Los Angeles." Wired.
- "Boeing Dreamliner crew draws enormous outline of their plane in the sky." NPR.
- "Toyota and Mazda join forces on electric vehicles. Is this the end of the road for gas cars?" The Washington Post.
- "Embattled NJ transit suspends compliance chief 6 months into job." Bloomberg.
- "Spotted: driverless vehicle cruising the streets of Clarendon." ARLnow.com.
- "Unbuckled in the back seat? You'll become a human missile in a crash." USA Today.
- "Infrastructure borrowing drops as U.S. states await Trump plan details." Reuters.
- "NYC mayor pushes for tax on the 1 percent to fund subway fix." The Associated Press.

THE COUNTDOWN: DOT appropriations run out in 54 days. The FAA reauthorization expires in 54 days. Highway and transit policy is up for renewal in 1,150 days.

To view online:

<http://www.politico.com/tipsheets/morning-transportation/2017/08/07/infrastructure-grant-proposals-lean-rural-221732>

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