

To: Jackson, Ryan[jackson.ryan@epa.gov]
From: Morning Transportation
Sent: Fri 12/1/2017 3:03:34 PM
Subject: POLITICO's Morning Transportation: The one group in Washington still excited about infrastructure — A hiccup in the hotline to driverless cars — DHS to share authority over drones?

By Tanya Snyder | 12/01/2017 10:00 AM EDT

With help from Stephanie Beasley and Brianna Gurciullo

PROBLEM SOLVERS AT BAT: The bipartisan Problem Solvers Caucus wants to "drive the agenda" on infrastructure, says Rep. [John Katko](#) (R-N.Y.), co-chair of the caucus's infrastructure task force. The caucus is preparing to issue a report "in the next week or two" with its proposals on infrastructure, to be ready to strike as soon as the tax debate concludes. "We're going to be loud about this," said Katko after a caucus meeting Thursday. "We're going to be ready to roll." The caucus has held five meetings to gather ideas for the report in the last two months.

Distinguished guests: Former DOT Secretary Ray LaHood and former Pennsylvania Governor Ed Rendell were also at Thursday's caucus meeting. LaHood said he's had multiple conversations with White House infrastructure adviser DJ Gribbin and Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao but that "they need a signal to do something, and that signal has been dark all year long." He lamented that Congress and the White House hadn't put infrastructure at the top of their agenda. "That bill would have been passed, hundreds of people would be working on bridges and roads and we'd be getting back to being No. 1 in infrastructure," he said.

Cold comfort: LaHood, Rendell and the lawmakers agreed that the House tax plan's proposal to eliminate private activity bonds would be "destructive" to the president's stated goal to get the private sector to foot much of the bill for his infrastructure plan. "You can't get rid of private activity bonds; that's the main motivator for private sector involvement," Rendell said. Infrastructure task-force co-chair [Elizabeth Esty](#) (D-Conn.) said Secretary Chao assured her in a meeting two weeks ago, "that, quote, 'that would be fixed' in the infrastructure bill - they're aware that [the elimination of PABs] is a big problem." Of course, the timeline for the infrastructure bill may have shifted since two months ago, when the president reportedly told the caucus that he wants to turn to infrastructure "12 seconds after tax reform."

IT'S FINALLY FRIDAY: Thanks for tuning in to POLITICO's Morning Transportation, your daily tipsheet on all things trains, planes, automobiles and ships. Tanya is in the MT cockpit. Send tips, feedback and song lyrics to tsnyder@politico.com or [@TSnyderDC](https://twitter.com/TSnyderDC).

"I said, now I've got my Magic Bus (too much, Magic Bus) / I drive my baby every way (too much, Magic Bus) / Each time I go a different way (too much, Magic Bus)."

GET LISTENING: Follow MT's [playlist](#) on Spotify. What better way to start your day than with songs (picked by us and readers) about lonely highways and south-bound trains?

SQUEAKY WHEEL: At least one Republican senator has raised an objection to the Senate passing its driverless car bill by unanimous consent. The Hill [quoted](#) Sen. [Gary Peters](#) (D-Mich.)

as saying there were "multiple" holdouts. Sen. [Jim Inhofe](#) (R-Okla.) told MT it's not him: "I do want trucks in there but not that much." The holds could mean that senators simply want more time to look at the legislation, or it could signal a significant obstacle to the consensus that would be required to fast-track the bill ([S. 1885 \(115\)](#)). Get the details [here](#).

SHARING IS CARING: House Homeland Security Committee members during a hearing Thursday raised concerns that DHS wasn't doing enough to protect the public from terrorist plots to attach explosives to drones. Committee Chairman [Michael McCaul](#) (R-Texas) said it's time for Congress consider legislation that would give DHS the authority to test anti-drone attack methods and possibly require FAA and DHS to share jurisdiction over commercial drones. Stephanie has [more details](#) for Pros.

Don't forget: McCaul also [continued rallying](#) DHS to begin installing 3D computed tomography scanners at all airport security checkpoints this year, replacing the 2D X-ray scanners currently in use at most U.S. airports. Travelers shouldn't have to wait another year for TSA to finish piloting the technology, McCaul told DHS Acting Secretary Elaine Duke at the hearing. He has been hammering that point since the DHS inspector general briefed lawmakers last month on an audit that reportedly showed TSA failed between 70 and 80 percent of covert tests.

What it all comes down to: TSA is working with Analogic to pilot CT technology at some airports. Duke, like TSA Administrator David Pekoske before her, told the committee that the algorithms needed to help CT scanners identify objects in carry-on bags are still in development. She also said DHS did not have the money for a nationwide deployment of the technology. "We do not have the funding to deploy it at every airport...to buy for every airport would require much more than a reprogramming," she said. Each of Analogic's CT scanners carries a \$300,000 price tag.

BY THE NUMBERS: The House Appropriations panel with jurisdiction over DOT funding held a hearing Thursday to talk with Federal Highway Administration officials about the Trump administration's request for \$415 million for the agency's Emergency Relief program as part of another hurricane aid package. Brandye Hendrickson, FHWA's acting administrator, told lawmakers that her agency has given states and territories more than \$130 million for emergency fixes, "but the net remaining need still approaches \$500 million." In Texas, about 90 percent of the work to assess the damage to roads, bridges and highways is done. In Florida, the number is about 70 percent. In Puerto Rico, it's more than 91 percent. And in the U.S. Virgin Islands, it's about 80 percent.

A bigger problem? North Carolina Rep. [David Price](#), the panel's top Democrat, said he was worried about the fact that the administration's request "fails to address the existing backlog of [emergency relief] projects in dozens of states that have suffered from other recent disasters." Overall, counting Hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria, the FHWA program has a \$1.37 billion backlog of requests.

THINKING AHEAD: With self-driving cars on the way and DOT in charge of figuring out how to safely introduce them onto roadways, the department lacks "a comprehensive plan that sets clear goals, that establishes when and how it will act, [and] that indicates how it will monitor

progress," according to a new [GAO report](#). The GAO challenged the agency to come to grips with how it will evaluate its current approach to vehicle testing and standards and to determine how self-driving cars will interact with other cars on the road. DOT concurred with the recommendation. Mary Lee has [more](#) for Pros.

HE SAID, SHE SAID: American Airlines said in a statement Thursday that "only a few hundred" out of the 200,000 flights the airline will operate in December are "currently unassigned to pilots" as a result of a computer glitch that allowed all of its pilots to take off the busy week of Christmas. But the Allied Pilots Association, which represents 15,000 American Airlines pilots, insists that it "is able to view in real time December flight crew assignments" and that, in fact, "thousands of flights are still listed as unassigned" - not hundreds. Tanya has [more](#) for Pros.

SHIFTING GEARS: Ken Altman, a former Senate THUD Appropriations Subcommittee aide, has been named the new senior director for government affairs at Amtrak.

THE AUTOBAHN:

- National Economic Council Director Gary Cohn rumored to be leaving the administration. [The Wall Street Journal](#).
- Indiana attorney general requests delay of ELD mandate. [Indiana Attorney General's Office](#).
- Former Facebook exec Randi Zuckerberg complains to Alaska Airlines about sexual harassment on flight. [Facebook](#).
- "General Motors aims to run fleets of self-driving taxis by 2019." [The Financial Times](#).
- "Thousands Apply to Trump's Drone Pilot Program." [NextGov](#).
- "The Boring Company proposes 125-150mph "Loop" for Chicago express train request." [Ars Technica](#).
- "Venezuelan airline barred from European Union skies." [The Republic](#).
- "The DOT has issued fewer fines to airlines this year. Should we be worried?" [The Washington Post](#).
- "Designing a new airline for hipsters (and Air France investors)." [Bloomberg](#).

THE COUNTDOWN: DOT appropriations run out in 8 days. The FAA reauthorization expires in 121 days. Highway and transit policy is up for renewal in 1,035 days.

To view online:

<https://www.politico.com/newsletters/morning-transportation/2017/12/01/the-one-group-in-washington-still-excited-about-infrastructure-037310>

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