

To: Jackson, Ryan[jackson.ryan@epa.gov]
From: Morning Transportation
Sent: Fri 10/27/2017 2:02:10 PM
Subject: POLITICO's Morning Transportation, presented by Coalition for Future Mobility: Shuster talks infrastructure, gas tax — TSA on academic probation — Rubio re-ups Cuban airport security bill

By Brianna Gurciullo | 10/27/2017 10:01 AM EDT

With help from Stephanie Beasley and Lauren Gardner

ONE AFTER THE OTHER: Rep. [Bill Shuster](#) (R-Pa.) wants lawmakers to dive into working on an infrastructure package as soon as efforts to overhaul the tax code wrap up - but, he argued Thursday, the White House has to be more specific about what it wants. "Waiting until tax reform is done, I think [an infrastructure package] should be tucked in right behind it," the Transportation Committee chairman told reporters. Shuster said he's "been talking to some senators" about an infrastructure bill, but no lawmaker wants to get ahead of the White House. "There's no sense in me going out there and putting something out, and then all of a sudden the president beats it down," Shuster said. "We need the White House - the bully pulpit - to be saying, 'Here's our principles,' and let us go to work." Crafting a bill would take "some weeks," he said.

Let's see ... After the gas tax came up during a meeting with National Economic Council Director Gary Cohn and the Problem Solvers Caucus this week, Shuster said he doesn't believe "there's a will" among House lawmakers to raise the levy as they consider a tax overhaul. "But I think as we go through the process - [with] Gary Cohn, the White House and the Senate - there'll be opportunities to talk to folks and see where we go," he said. He also added: "I know that, from my experience here in the House and talking to some senators, Democrats would get on board, I think, to get a tax reform bill if we did something to take care of the Highway Trust Fund."

A matter of some urgency: "The trust fund will go broke in 2020," Shuster said. "Just in case people don't realize it, that's an election year. ... I mean, we can't continue to beg, borrow and steal from different pots of money because it's just not out there anymore."

ANOTHER WEEK DOWN: Thanks for connecting at POLITICO's Morning Transportation, your daily tipsheet on all things trains, planes, automobiles and ports. Send along tips, feedback and lyrics to bgurciullo@politico.com or [@brigurciullo](https://twitter.com/brigurciullo).

"Now there's nothin' left and not a reason / There's nothin' left to believe in / When just one remains / I've sailed away."

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

**** A message from the Coalition for Future Mobility:** Impaired drivers cause one third of fatal crashes. Tell Congress to greenlight Autonomous Vehicle testing and deployment.
<http://bit.ly/gl-sd> **

PILOT TRAINING IN FOCUS: The FAA posted partial recommendations from an Aviation Rulemaking Committee Thursday that have achieved near-consensus on a hotly debated topic: training requirements for prospective airline pilots. Our Lauren Gardner [writes](#): The committee "recommends allowing airline-provided training programs to count as credit toward required flight hours to become a commercial airline pilot. Those programs would be subject to FAA approval. Only pilots with prior military experience or with certain academic backgrounds - populations that can already receive credit toward the 1,500 hour requirement - would be eligible to participate in those programs."

The breakdown: But the Air Line Pilots Association - which blasted the FAA for releasing what it said was an incomplete body of work - and the airlines disagree on how much credit such a program should be worth toward the 1,500 hours. ALPA says 250 hours across the board, while the airlines think the credit should vary based on experience - but in a way that would favor pilots coming from thinner academic backgrounds. In the end, the airlines' approach would lead to all military and degree-holding pilots coming through such a program being eligible to apply for a co-pilot's certificate with just 500 hours of flight time.

Maybe, maybe not: A spokesman for Senate Commerce Chairman [John Thune](#) (R-S.D.) said he'd be "open to considering" the alternatives considered by the ARC "if doing so increased support for the FAA bill," which is currently being held up over language he championed to give regulators more leeway to approve additional pathways for flight-hour credit. But Senate Minority Leader [Chuck Schumer](#)'s office pointed to a statement he made denouncing a separate advisory committee's recommendation last month that the 1,500-hour requirement be changed - indicating that the biggest opponent to the FAA bill's training language isn't swayed.

THOUGH WE DOUBT YOU MISSED IT ... The House cleared the Senate's budget on Thursday, but the vote was a squeaker, with discord over the state and local tax deduction leading some Republicans to oppose it. Now, Senate Republicans will be able to pass tax legislation without Democratic votes, POLITICO's Jennifer Scholtes and Rachael Bade [report](#). House Ways and Means Chairman [Kevin Brady](#) (R-Texas) has said the GOP will unveil a tax bill Nov. 1.

Can't stop, won't stop: Meanwhile, Senate Majority Leader [Mitch McConnell](#) told members that the chamber could be in session the week of Thanksgiving, POLITICO's Seung Min Kim [reports](#). At the moment, senators are scheduled to be in recess.

TSA ON ACADEMIC PROBATION: We caught up with Rep. [Michael McCaul](#) (R-Texas) before he jetted out for the weekend, and he said he remains concerned that the report card for TSA's airport screenings shows the agency still falls short of an "A" in some areas, more than two years after the DHS inspector general dropped a bombshell [report](#) identifying security failures. McCaul said he expects to have a briefing with the IG's office next week to discuss its latest covert checkpoint investigation. The office said last week that it had identified more "vulnerabilities" but has not yet revealed its findings. More for Pros [here](#).

TWEET DU JOUR: From the Eno Center for Transportation's Jeff Davis: "There are 18 Senate-confirmable positions at [@USDOT](#). Here is today's status." Check out the [breakdown](#).

MENÉNDEZ LAWYERS WANT MISTRIAL: Attorneys for Sen. [Bob Menéndez](#) (D-N.J.) and the co-defendant in his corruption trial are arguing that the judge should declare a mistrial, POLITICO New Jersey's Matt Friedman [reports](#). "We have been precluded ... both during cross-examination and, now, repeatedly in our case of putting forward our defense," one lawyer said, blaming prosecutors and the judge himself. But Judge William Walls responded: "At this point, I'm not really impressed by your argument that what I have done or not done so far is perhaps grounds for a mistrial." The same day, Sens. [Lindsey Graham](#) (R-S.C.) and [Cory Booker](#) (D-N.J.) [testified](#) in court as character witnesses for Menéndez, with both saying they think he is "honest and trustworthy."

RUBIO RE-UPS CUBAN AIRPORT SECURITY BILL: Sen. [Marco Rubio](#) (R-Fla.) has reintroduced [legislation](#) aimed at heightening security for flights between the United States and Cuba. The measure, a new version of a bill that Rubio introduced last year after DOT reinstated commercial flights to the island nation, is identical to one the House passed earlier this week. Both measures call for TSA to audit screening procedures and personnel at all 10 Cuban airports with international flights. TSA also would be required to hash out an agreement with Cuba to let inspectors evaluate security protocols at airports, and U.S. airlines would have to disclose deals with Cuba's government.

ON BOARD: Patricia Chasse Hiatt is now deputy director of airport safety and standards at the FAA, according to [Aviation News Today](#), an American Association of Airport Executives publication. She worked at TSA for 15 years. Meanwhile, Patrick Warren, who has been FRA's executive director, will soon be deputy director of the Office of Airport Planning and Programming.

SLICE OF PI: POLITICO Influence [reports](#): "The Intelligent Transportation Society of America has tapped Shailen Bhatt as its next president and chief executive. Bhatt was previously the executive director of Colorado's Transportation Department and before that held a similar position in Delaware. He also worked for the Federal Highway Administration during the Obama administration. [...] He succeeds Regina Hopper, who left ITS America this summer after a rocky tenure that saw much of the staff depart. David St. Amant has served as interim president and chief executive since August. Korn Ferry handled recruiting for the position."

SHIFTING GEARS: Alexandra Viers is now a government relations specialist at Boeing after a stint at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, per PI.

SPOTTED: Sen. [Deb Fischer](#) (R-Neb.) at the American Trucking Associations conference in Orlando earlier this week. The lawmaker and long-time trucking advocate was seen chatting with ATA leadership and members, including FedEx, during a reception at the event. Fischer's office did not respond to a request for comment on her attendance.

THE AUTOBAHN:

- "Alphabet looks to snowy Michigan to test self-driving cars." [Reuters](#).

- "Shell games: How trucking companies that cheat drivers dodge penalties." [USA Today](#).
- "NGO report urges reform of airports' carbon offsets." [POLITICO Europe](#).
- "Airlines gauge success of Basic Economy by how many passengers avoid it." [USA Today](#).
- "Forgetting a child in a back seat can kill. Cars may soon warn you." [The New York Times](#).
- "GE explores exiting from the railroad business." [The Wall Street Journal](#).
- "American Airlines leads U.S. carriers in passenger complaints of racism." [Bloomberg](#).
- "Metro board averts political crisis and approves Purple Line land deal." [WAMU 88.5](#).
- "American, Southwest canceled 13,000 canceled flights for Sept. natural disasters." [USA Today](#).
- "UPS ramps up spending to keep up with online shoppers." [The Wall Street Journal](#).

THE COUNTDOWN: DOT appropriations run out in 43 days. The FAA reauthorization expires in 156 days. Highway and transit policy is up for renewal in 1,070 days.

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