



Metro

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Congressional Democrats Unveil Plan to Wrap Up Unfinished Appropriations Bills

Last night, the two incoming chairmen of the Senate and House Appropriations Committees, Senator Robert C. Byrd (D-WV) and Representative David Obey (D-WI), announced a major plan for taking up and completing Congress' remaining FY2007 appropriations bills. Rather than trying to combine nine individual spending bills into a massive omnibus appropriations package when the 110th Congress convenes in January, the two incoming chairs have opted for a year-long stopgap funding measure, or continuing resolution (CR), which will apply for the remainder of the current fiscal year through September 30, 2007. In addition, Senator Byrd and Congressman Obey indicated that this year-long CR would contain no earmarks or special provisions. They further added that a moratorium on earmarks will remain in effect until a reformed appropriations process is established.

In announcing this plan, Byrd and Obey criticized Republican leaders for failing to pass all spending measures on time and took exception to the GOP leadership's decision to carry over uncompleted appropriations bills into the new session of Congress. The two chairmen said in a news release that "while the results will be far from ideal, this path provides the best way to dispose of the unfinished business quickly, and allow governors, state and local officials and families to finally plan for the coming year with some knowledge of what the

federal government is funding."

It should be noted that a year-long CR essentially places the federal budget on autopilot for the remainder of the year and will affect every area of government spending except for defense and homeland security. In addition, it has major implications for transportation in general, and Metro in particular. For example, it is unclear how New Starts projects that have existing Full Funding Grant Agreements (FFGA) such as the Metro Gold Line Eastside Extension (MGLEE), would fare under a year-long CR scenario. However, since FFGA's are built into the Federal Transit Administration's annual budget, it is expected that the MGLEE would be funded. Additionally, transit and highway formula programs are likely to be significantly impacted under this scenario.

Metro's lobbying team has already begun the process of consulting with congressional staff and federal agency officials to determine the precise impact of a year-long CR on the MGLEE and other major transportation programs. We will keep you informed of any new developments in the weeks ahead.

Proposition 1B: Los Angeles County Corridor Mobility Improvement Program Nomination Favorably Received by Caltrans' Headquarters

Yesterday, Caltrans' Headquarters released the attached "Preliminary Draft - For Deliberative Purposes Only" short list of projects to be considered for the statewide Corridor Mobility Program funding contained in Proposition 1B. In November, voters authorized a total of \$4.5 billion for this program -- \$2.7 billion of which was specifically earmarked for Southern California's 13 counties. Caltrans' short list includes almost \$6.2 billion in statewide projects, including a statewide set-aside for Traffic Management Systems work of \$150 million. Southern California's proposals amount to total \$3.6 billion included on the short list.

There were \$1.5 billion in Los Angeles County projects on this Caltrans HQ short list as follows:

Interstate 10 from Puente to Citrus Carpool Lane:	\$ 173.5 M
Interstate 10 from Citrus to Route 57 Carpool Lane:	\$ 191.5 M
Route 138:	\$ 15.8 M
Interstate 405 Northbound Carpool Lane:	\$ 730.0 M
Interstate 5 OCL to I-605 Carpool/Mixed Flow Lanes:	\$ 387.0 M
Total:	\$1,497.8 M

It should be noted that the Route 138 project request was substantially reduced by Caltrans from \$111 million to \$15.8 million. Additionally, two projects originally included in the Metro/Caltrans District 7 list (adopted by the Metro

Board of Directors on December 7, 2006) were not included on the Caltrans Headquarters list. The first excluded project was a \$40 million Intelligent Transportation Systems request that can still be considered for funding from the statewide Traffic Systems Management set-aside described above. The second project excluded was a \$73 million request for the Interstate 5 Carpool Lane from Route 170 to Route 134 in Burbank and Glendale. Metro Countywide Planning staff will be evaluating the path forward for funding for this project. Options include continued negotiations with Caltrans to include the project, an independent Metro request for the Corridor Mobility program funds, the 2006 State Transportation Improvement Program Augmentation, or other local funds.

Overall, Caltrans reduced the total requests for Corridor Mobility program funds by two thirds, from \$19 billion statewide to \$6.2 billion. In contrast, the total \$1.77 billion requested by Los Angeles County was very well received by Caltrans, which elected to shorten our list by only 15%. This draft short list must now be finalized and forwarded to the California Transportation Commission for their next meeting on January 16, 2007. The CTC will then further reduce the list to the \$4.5 B available before their February 28, 2007 meeting in Newport Beach.

New Study Shows Working Families Hit Hard by Rising Transportation and Housing Costs

["A Heavy Load: the Combined Housing and Transportation Burdens of Working Families,"](#) a study published by the Center for Housing Policy in cooperation with the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, describes the relationship between transportation and housing costs for low- to middle-income working families in 28 major metropolitan areas nationwide. For the purposes of the study, working families are defined as those earning between \$20,000 and \$50,000 per year. The study found that the combined burden of transportation and housing costs is amazingly uniform across all metropolitan areas, averaging about 57% a household's annual income.

According to Jeffrey Lubell, the Executive Director of the Center for Housing Policy, "working families are increasingly moving further from their jobs to find affordable housing. Yet we found that many of these families end up spending more on transportation costs than they save on housing." In fact, for every dollar that a working family saves on housing, it spends 77 cents more on transportation. Further, in every metropolitan area studied, neighborhoods existed where working families were burdened with both high transportation and high housing costs.

Other key findings from the study include:

- More than 85% of low-to-moderate income workers travel to work in private vehicles. 85% of Los Angeles commuters, 88 percent of San Diego's, and
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77% of those in San Francisco commute via private car.

- Generally speaking, transportation costs outweigh housing savings once commuters travel 12 or more miles.
- And, working families in Los Angeles tend to live in the inner suburbs, in a secondary central city (e.g. Anaheim or Riverside), or in the region's older suburbs where housing costs are lower and public transit service is more reliable. Among working families, public transit commute times almost always are 70-75% greater than private auto commute times.

Ultimately, this study indicates the importance of: coordinating the development of housing and transportation policy; expanding the supply of affordable housing near urban and suburban job centers; improving public transportation in areas with lower housing costs; and reducing the costs of commuting by private car for working families.

Appellate Court Affirms Lower Court Dismissal of Lawsuit Against Metro

Yesterday, Metro was notified that the California Court of Appeals', 2nd Appellate District, affirmed a lower court ruling dismissing the agency from a lawsuit brought by a 15 year-old plaintiff who was shot while waiting for a Metro bus adjacent to Taft High School, in Los Angeles. In affirming the lower court's ruling the Appellate Court determined that Metro owed no legal duty to protect the plaintiff from harm.

In September 2003, a Metro bus passed a group of teenagers waiting outside Taft High School in Woodland Hills because he felt the conditions were unsafe. Shortly thereafter, an alleged gang member drove past the group and fired shots, injuring three students including the plaintiff.

As a result of this incident, we convened a panel with participants from the Los Angeles Police Department, Los Angeles Sheriff's Department, Long Beach Transit, and Los Angeles Unified School District to review our Standard Operating Procedure Rules 7.10 and 7.109 – Refusing Transportation. The panel issued a number of recommendations, which were implemented in the months following the incident.

Metro Orange Line Pavement Repairs

Earlier today, both the *Daily News* and KFWB inquired about the [pavement repairs](#) currently in progress on the Metro Orange Line. Staff reported that the exact cause of the pavement deterioration has not yet been determined. However, the agency is working jointly with contractor Shimmick/Obayashi Joint Venture to determine why portions of the paving require repair after one year of operation. In efforts to reduce further deterioration as a result of approaching

winter rains, both parties are moving proactively to ensure that the ride quality for Metro Orange Line service is not further degraded. Crews are now removing pavement materials, and samples will be collected for further analysis. Repair costs could be up to \$1.5 million – which would be shared by both parties. Service delays of one to two minutes resulted from today's start of construction. Stories are expected to run this afternoon and tomorrow.

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