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| |  | | --- | | **Friday, June 14, 2013 130614-01**  **In this Issue:**  **Metro Transmits Letters to Members of Congress and State Legislators Regarding Status of Federal Grants**  **U.S. Senate Schedules Rail Safety Hearing for Next Week** | | |
| **Metro Transmits Letters to Members of Congress and State Legislators Regarding Status of Federal Grants**  We are continuing our efforts to urge the United States Department of Labor to certify Metro’s federal grants which have been pending certification due to the objections of labor unions representing public transit workers. As you aware, labor unions representing public transit workers in California have claimed that the Public Employee Pension Reform Act (PEPRA), enacted in California in 2012, violated federal law relating to transit workers’ collective bargaining rights. This has caused the United States Department of Labor to withhold certification of grants to California transit agencies. Metro’s Federal and State Advocacy teams are communicating with key decision makers in Washington D.C. and Sacramento regarding the fiscal impact of this issue and the urgent need for a resolution. Today, I transmitted a letter to our Congressional and State Legislative Delegations providing an update on the issue and reiterating the need for a resolution to this matter. We will continue to work closely with the Obama Administration, Governor Brown and legislative leaders in Congress and the State Legislature to achieve a favorable resolution. Staff will continue to keep the Board apprised of any developments on this issue. For your review, please find a sample of a [letter](http://libraryarchives.metro.net/DB_Attachments/130614_Ltr_Re_PEPRA_to_Senator_Feinstein.pdf) that was sent to Federal and State Legislators in Los Angeles County.  **U.S. Senate Schedules Rail Safety Hearing for Next Week**  The U.S. Senate is scheduled to hold rail safety hearing next week. The U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation is slated to meet on Wednesday, June 19, 2013 for a hearing entitled “Staying on Track: Next Steps in Improving Passenger and Freight Rail Safety.” Our agency has been very active on the issue of rail safety, specifically supporting the provisions in the Rail Safety Act of 2008 as it relates to Positive Train Control (PTC). We are opposed to efforts by some in the transportation industry to substitute alternative technology, in lieu of PTC, that does not offer the same safety benefits and is not interoperable with PTC. The meeting will be chaired by U.S. Senator Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), who is the newly appointed chair of the Subcommittee on Competitiveness, Innovation, and Export Promotion. The Senate hearing will be webcast at 7:00 a.m. PST next Wednesday via this [link](http://www.commerce.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?p=Home). |
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