# Transportation Bill Uniqueness

## Transportation Bill updates for the Neg

### Doesn’t thump Politics – HSR-specific

#### ( ) Transport bill doesn’t thump disad – didn’t increase net funding and specifically avoided High-Speed Rail increases. Those are still unique links.

Freemark ‘12

(Yonah – Master of Science in Transportation from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Bachelor of Arts in Architecture, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Yale University with Distinction. Also a freelance journalist who has been published in Planning Magazine; Next American City Magazine; Dissent; The Atlantic Cities; Next American City Online; and The Infrastructurist – He created and continues to write for the website The Transport Politic – The Transport Politic – Congress Passes Major Transportation Bill, Preserving the Status Quo

July 1st – http://www.thetransportpolitic.com/)

On Friday, the U.S. House and Senate passed MAP-21\*, the federal government’s latest ground transportation authorization bill, modeled closely on the bill that passed the Senate in March. The $105-billion piece of legislation will provide funding for essential highway and public transportation programs, most of which are in the form of formula-based allocations that direct money automatically to states and metropolitan areas. The bill will be in effect for 27 months, expiring in September 2014. MAP-21 replaces SAFETEA-LU, the last long-term federal transportation bill, which expired in 2009; in the meantime, we have seen extension after extension of that law and a seemingly never-ending set of grueling disagreements about the future of mobility policy in the U.S. that revealed stark partisan differences about the role of the federal government in directing the construction and maintenance of the nation’s road and transit systems. There have been points in this debate when the chances of a bill passing — any bill other than an extension — seemed close to nil. Democrats have demonstrated a sincere interest in expanding the amount spent on new transportation capital, especially in high-speed rail and transit, as illustrated by President Obama’s proposal in early 2011 for a $556 billion, six-year bill. Republicans, meanwhile, have argued for constraining the amount spent on highways to revenues collected from fuel taxes — and abandoning efforts to expand funding for sustainable mobility. But ultimately the two sides have similar goals: To maintain existing transportation funding without increasing taxes to pay for them; in other words, to preserve the status quo. Indeed, that is the first point to make clear about this transportation bill: It is neither transformational nor a long-term problem-solver. It does not “fail America,” as some have suggested, by failing to make the major reforms that have been suggested by proponents for four years. It does reduce the complication of moving a major project through the federal grant process and it reduces the overall confusion of programs in the U.S. Department of Transportation, two important changes. It is, however, a disappointment that the bill does not do more to equalize decision making between modes, of course: Why do there continue to be separate budgets for highways and for transit? Why can’t rail (which goes unfunded in this legislation) be compared to highway expansion when the latter is being considered? Meanwhile, why do transit expansion projects continue to be subjected to rigorous competitions for funding, while highways do not? The bill continues the decades-long trend of declining investment in transportation at the national level. As the following chart shows, as a share of the federal budget, transportation spending has declined from about 3% in the 1960s to about 2.5% in the 1970s to about 1.5% today. At the national level (including local and state funding), transportation spending has declined from about 2% of U.S. GDP to less than 1.5% (though there was a stimulus-related jump in 2009). There has been a general decline in the perception of the importance of spending public dollars on transportation. That trend will continue under MAP-21, which provides about $50 billion per year in funding, equivalent to spending today adjusted for inflation.

#### ( ) Rail is unique – it’s small ratio in the transport bill maintains political balance

Freemark ‘12

(Yonah – Master of Science in Transportation from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Bachelor of Arts in Architecture, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Yale University with Distinction. Also a freelance journalist who has been published in Planning Magazine; Next American City Magazine; Dissent; The Atlantic Cities; Next American City Online; and The Infrastructurist – He created and continues to write for the website The Transport Politic – The Transport Politic – Congress Passes Major Transportation Bill, Preserving the Status Quo

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MAP-21, of course, is more than just a spending bill. Like its predecessor, the large majority of funding in the bill is dedicated to highway spending. As can be seen in the chart below, transit and rail have established a share of about a quarter of federal ground transportation spending, a ratio that is similar to that of spending by state and local governments. That split has been in place since the mid 1980s and is way down from the large percentage of federal ground transportation funds dedicated to transit and rail in the 1970s and early 1980s. MAP-21 maintains that politically motivated balance. (The bill does decrease funding for bicycling and pedestrian programs, obviously not good news, but I’ll leave that discussion to others.)

Note: MAP-21 is the title of the new Transportation Spending Bill

#### ( ) House specifically scaled-back HSR – plan uniquely reverses that.

Simon ‘12

Richard Simon, Tribune Washington Bureau, The Baltimore Sun – June 30, 2012 -- lexis

Congress on Friday sent to President Barack Obama a roughly $100 billion transportation bill that lawmakers from both parties touted as perhaps the largest jobs measure of the year. The legislation also would avert a doubling of interest rates for millions of college student loans that was threatened to hit Sunday. "The American people finally will have a jobs bill from this Congress," said Eleanor Holmes Norton, a Democrat who is the delegate to the House from Washington, D.C. The first major transportation bill since 2005, the legislation would keep highway and transit spending at current levels through Sept. 30, 2014. It includes an expansion of a federal loan program sought by several mayors to fast-track bus and rail projects in traffic-choked regions. The House approved the bill by a lopsided 373-52 vote. The Senate approved it 74-19. The bill would provide financial incentives to states that crack down on distracted driving, require ignition interlock devices for drunken-driving offenders and establish graduated licensing programs to restrict teenagers' driving privileges. It also would impose new safety rules on interstate passenger buses in response to a number of tour bus crashes. The bill's passage came only after lawmakers once again faced deadlines -- a shutdown of the highway program Saturday and a doubling of interest rates on certain subsidized student loans Sunday -- and did something unusual for this Congress: compromise. Republicans, in the face of White House opposition, dropped an effort to use the bill to try to advance the controversial Keystone XL pipeline from Canada. Environmentalists said the bill would weaken environmental reviews in order to satisfy GOP calls for speedier project approvals "The dramatic reforms in this measure will get projects moving by cutting the red tape that delays projects across the country and drives up construction costs," said House Transportation Committee Chairman John Mica (R-Fla.). Democrats made concessions that are likely to lead to less funding for bicycle, pedestrian and beautification projects. Republican leaders, despite opposition within their conservative ranks, agreed to find money from other than the gas tax to fund transportation projects, such as higher employer premiums to the pension insurance agency, the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corp. All the no votes in both houses were cast by Republicans. "It has been obvious for many years that the current gasoline tax is not enough to meet the desire of Congress to spend on transportation," said Ryan Alexander, president of the watchdog Taxpayers for Common Sense, accusing lawmakers of relying on "budgetary smoke and mirrors" to fund projects. The 599-page bill includes other measures, from targeting Asian carp, an invasive species threatening the Great Lakes, to steering 80 percent of the fines that will be paid by BP -- up to $21 billion by one estimate -- from the 2010 oil spill to the Gulf Coast to help restore coastal ecosystems and rebuild economies in the region. The bill also includes a measure to renew the federal flood insurance program. Congressional leaders paved the way for the bill's approval after dropping a measure, opposed by lawmakers from California to Pennsylvania, that would have forced millions of property owners living near flood-control facilities to buy flood insurance. The mandate was designed to shore up an insurance program that is billions of dollars in debt, largely because of Hurricane Katrina and other 2005 hurricanes. Separately, the House approved an amendment to an annual spending bill that would prevent federal transportation funds from being spent in the next fiscal year for California's controversial high-speed rail project.

### Doesn’t thump Politics – General

#### ( ) Transport bill doesn’t thump disad – was a *popular* win and, unlike plan, it’s sweetened with Student Loan goodies

D.D.N. ‘12

Daily Disruption News Desk – “House Passes Massive Transportation and Student Loan Bill Saving 3 Million Jobs” – June 30, 2012 – http://www.dailydisruption.com/2012/06/house-passes-massive-transportation-and-student-loan-bill-saving-3-million-jobs/

Lawmakers were up against a rapidly approaching weekend deadline that would have seen funding evaporate had they not agreed to the money before a short-term extension expired. They also needed to quickly resolve the student loan crisis, which led to the incorporation of that measure in the transport bill following months of bickering over details on the two issues. The bill also shores up the federal flood insurance program for another five years. The package sailed through the House with 373 votes to 52, and then passed the Senate 74-19, with one member voting present. The White House praised the bill’s passage, saying that “for months, President Obama has been calling on Congress to take up these two important priorities before middle class families pay the price for inaction.” “Thanks to Congress heeding that call today, millions of American students will avoid a $1,000 debt hike while millions of construction workers will be able to stay on the job,” White House spokesman Jay Carney said in a statement. Boxer, who chairs the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, hinted at the protracted nature of the deliberations that eventually produced a bill both sides could live with. “It has been a very long and winding road to get to this place,” but the bipartisan cooperation “sends a tremendous signal to the people of America, and that is that we can work together,” Boxer said after the vote. House Speaker John Boehner said that while the bill was “far from perfect” — he expressed disappointment the pipeline was left out — it slashed red tape involved in obtaining permits and eliminated government waste. “This bipartisan agreement ensures that taxpayer dollars are spent on high-priority infrastructure projects, not bike paths and beautification,” he said. The bill ensured that student loan interest rates, currently at 3.4 percent, will not double to 6.8 percent for more than seven million students as had been scheduled on July 1. Obama had campaigned relentlessly on the student loan issue, traveling to colleges and universities where he called on members of Congress to extend the low interest rates. Both parties said they didn’t want to see the student loan rates go up; the question was how to come up with the $6 billion cost of extending the low rates.

#### ( ) Unrelated Student loan provisions saved the transport bill – plan won’t have those.

Fram ‘12

(Alan – reporter for The Associated Press – Associated Press Financial Wire – June 28, lexis)

Facing weekend deadlines for action, congressional leaders have agreed to deals overhauling the nation's transportation programs without a Republican provision forcing approval of the proposed Keystone XL oil pipeline, and avoiding a doubling of interest rates for new student loans, congressional officials said Wednesday. The agreements underscored the pressures both parties face to avoid angry voters and embarrassing headlines in the run-up to this November's presidential and congressional elections. Letting road-building programs grind to a halt during an economic downturn would be a blow to the image of lawmakers, while Democrats and Republicans alike seemed eager to avoid enraging millions of students and their parents by boosting the costs of college loans. In contrast, enactment of the transportation measure would create or save 3 million jobs, said Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., chief sponsor of the Senate version of the bill. And the student loan measure would spare an estimated 7.4 million students who get subsidized Stafford loans beginning July 1 this Sunday from facing $1,000 in higher interest costs over the lives of their loans, which typically take over a decade to repay. Congressional leaders were planning to combine the highway and student loan measures into a single bill to reduce potential procedural obstacles and hoped for final approval this week. Lawmakers would then leave Washington for a July 4 recess.

#### ( ) Doesn’t thump the link – student loans were ducked-in and they’re very popular

Trevizo ‘12

Perla Trevizo, Staff Writer for Chattanooga Times Free Press (Tennessee) – Chattanooga Times Free Press – July 3, 2012 – lexis

A key congressional vote at the last hour to keep interest rates on student loans from doubling was nothing more than political maneuvering, Tennessee's junior senator said Monday. "What has happened is that President [Barack] Obama made it a campaign issue and Mitt Romney [the presumptive Republican presidential nominee] quickly agreed," U.S. Sen. Bob Corker, R-Tenn., said during an editorial board meeting at the Chattanooga Times Free Press on Monday. Pressure on lawmakers to act on student loans mounted last week. Interest rates on subsidized Stafford loans, awarded based on financial need, were to jump from 3.4 percent to 6.8 percent on July 1 if Congress didn't act. About 7 million students would have been affected. Friday's vote is expected to save those students about $1,000 over the life of their loans. From the beginning, members of both parties agreed something had to be done to keep interest rates lower for students who borrowed after July 1. The sticking point was how to pay for it. Lawmakers in the end included an extension of the current interest rate in a transportation reauthorization conference report. The Senate vote was 74-19, and the House vote was 373-52.

### Was not a loss for Obama

#### ( ) Transport bill was not a loss for the White House

Washington Post ‘12

(June 30, 2012 – lexis)

Lawmakers approved a broad measure Friday that freezes federally subsidized student loan rates for another year, reauthorizes the government flood insurance program and extends federal transportation funding for two more years. The deal resolved months of acrimonious debate on key legislative concerns on the eve of the Fourth of July recess and offered President Obama an opportunity to claim victory after a high-profile campaign to pressure Congress into action on both the student loan and transportation issues.

### Didn’t drain that much capital along the way

#### ( ) Transport bill didn’t drain a ton of capital along the way

Rampton ‘12

Roberta Rampton – Reuter’s reporter – Climate Spectator – June 29, 2012 -- lexis

The bipartisan blueprint was largely crafted by the Democratic-led Senate and was in line with White House expectations. One of the most liberal senators worked with one of the most conservative to convince other lawmakers to accept the deal, defying analysts who had predicted a short-term extension rather than a longer-term deal given the overheated political climate.

### Does not thump spending

#### ( ) wasn’t a net increase in spending – froze current levels

LA Times ‘12

(June 29th – http://articles.latimes.com/2012/jun/29/news/la-pn-congress-passes-transportation-bill-halts-student-loan-rate-hike-20120629)

The first major transportation bill since 2005, the legislation would keep highway and transit spending at current levels through the end of fiscal year 2014. It includes an expansion of a federal loan program sought by Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa and other mayors to fast-track bus and rail projects in traffic-choked regions.

### Does not increase mass transit spending

#### ( ) Transport Bill doesn’t increase mass transit spending

Freemark ‘12

(Yonah – Master of Science in Transportation from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Bachelor of Arts in Architecture, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Yale University with Distinction. Also a freelance journalist who has been published in Planning Magazine; Next American City Magazine; Dissent; The Atlantic Cities; Next American City Online; and The Infrastructurist – He created and continues to write for the website The Transport Politic – The Transport Politic – Congress Passes Major Transportation Bill, Preserving the Status Quo

July 1st – http://www.thetransportpolitic.com/)

In terms of funding for mass transit, the bill offers $8.478 billion in FY 2013, rising to $8.595 billion in FY 2014, both on par with existing funding levels, adjusted for inflation. Programs designed to distribute funds by formula remain the largest percentage of the bill and grow similarly, accounting for about $6.5 billion in spending in both years, mostly to pay for the purchase of new buses and the reconstruction of facilities (such as through State of Good Repair grants). The capital investment program, however, has been cut by about $50 million and is stuck at $1.91 billion in both years. This funding provides for the Small Start and New Start programs, which provide the grant funding for new rail and bus corridors.

### How it was funded

#### ( ) MAP-21 didn’t increase net spending – but, because gas taxes weren’t raised, it had to divert from pension programs

Freemark ‘12

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Preserving the status quo doesn’t mean keeping spending in line with revenues from the fuel tax. Because neither party has demonstrated an interest in working for an increase in the gas tax or establishing a viable alternative, maintaining current spending levels means that funds must be identified from elsewhere. As such, the law creates a number of new financing methods to pay for expenditures not covered by the Highway Trust Fund, into which fuel taxes flow. The biggest change involves altering the way pension interest rates are calculated. But most of the shortfall will be covered by the government transferring in $18.8 billion in general funds from income tax collections, $6.2 billion in FY 2013 and $12.6 billion in 2014. Because the U.S. operates with a deficit, that money is effectively debt-based. Got a problem with that? The vast majority of legislators from both sides of the aisle do not seem to be particularly concerned.

### Does not thump Federalism

#### ( ) transportation bill does not non-unique federalism

Fram ‘12

Alan – reporter for The Associated Press – Huffington Post – 6-29-12

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/06/29/transportation-bill-student-loans\_n\_1638116.html

The bill consolidates federal transportation programs and gives states more flexibility in spending money from Washington. It also contains an array of safety initiatives including requirements aimed at enhancing bus safety. And it makes advocates of bike and pedestrian paths compete for money with other transportation projects.

## Transportation Bill Updates for the Aff

### Thumps Politics – 2AC

#### ( ) Transport bill thumps the link

The Hotline ‘12

(July 2, 2012 Monday – lexis)

"Congress gave final approval on" June 29 "to legislation that combines a two-year transportation measure with bills to extend subsidized student loans and revamp federal flood insurance, wrapping up a bruising session with measures that will be popular on the campaign trail. The final" $127B "package angered fiscal conservatives and liberal environmentalists alike, but leaders in both parties along with many rank-and-file lawmakers wanted to put the issues behind them." Rep. Nick Rahall (D-WV): "When all is said and done, this bill is what it is. It means jobs." "The transportation legislation extends federal highway, rail and transit programs for 27 months, authorizing" $120B "in spending, financed by the existing 18.4 cents-a-gallon gasoline tax and the 24.4 cents-a-gallon diesel tax, as well as about" $19B "in transfers from the Treasury, according to Taxpayers for Common Sense, a watchdog group. That was a retreat for many House conservatives, who had vowed to scale back or eliminate those taxes and shift responsibility to the states." The $6.7B "student loan provision extends the current 3.4 percent interest rate on Stafford loans for one year, financed by changes in pension laws and a restriction on the length of time students could get those loans. The flood insurance program increases premiums and requires people living near levees to have coverage." Rep. Tim Huelskamp (R-KS): "This is clearly not exactly what we wanted to do. People fear the government will just keep growing. This only serves to cement that" (Weisman, New York Times, 6/29). "The massive majorities by which the package passed 373-52 in the House and 74-19 in the Senate - do not capture the weeks of wrangling ahead of the votes. The bill was in doubt until the last minute, with current transportation policy set to expire" and student loan rates "expected to jump" on July 1. (Everett/Snider, Politico, 6/29)

### Thumps Politics – 1AR

#### ( ) Lopsided final vote count doesn’t mean the bill didn’t drain capital.

Rampton ‘12

Roberta Rampton – Reuter’s reporter – Fox Business – Published June 29, 2012

http://www.foxbusiness.com/news/2012/06/29/us-congress-passes-bill-for-transport-jobs-student-loans/#ixzz1zcLv2UCk

After months of negotiations and jockeying for political position, the House passed the bill, 373-52. The Senate approved it, 74-19. The bill came together this week as lawmakers calculated the election-year impact of continued gridlock on measures affecting jobs, soaring consumer debt, and help for people who need government underwriting for flood risk to buy a home. "It has indeed been a very bumpy road to get to this point," said John Mica, the Republican chairman of the House Transportation Committee, *who led negotiations* on the bill. "I'm not particularly pleased with some of the twists and turns," he said on the House floor on Friday, describing the difficulties of reaching the deal in the gridlocked Congress. After months of negotiations, the compromise was reached just days before the deadlines for an increase in student loan rates and for a lapse in transportation funding.

#### ( ) Bill drained a ton of capital along the way

Laing ‘12

Keith Laing is a national political journalist who works for The Hill newspaper in Washington, D.C. At The Hill, Keith covers transportation policy in Congress – The Hill – 06/29/12

http://thehill.com/blogs/transportation-report/highways-bridges-and-roads/235683-lawmakers-exhale-after-heavy-lift-on-transportation-bill

The long road that led to the agreement between the chambers was not lost on the chief architects of the new legislation. "It is good to be at this point in the completion of a long-overdue transportation reform bill. A lot of people said it couldn't be done," Rep. John Mica (R-Fla.) said of the effort, which stretched three years and two sets of transportation committee chairmen in the House. “It’s not lost on any of us that this is an election year," he told reporters after the House vote. "But we’ve got responsibilities that are bigger than an election.” The House voted 373-52 to approve the transportation bill. Mica’s counterpart in the Senate, Sen. Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), agreed with his assestment shortly after the Senate passed the measure on a 74-19 vote of its own. “It has been a very long and winding road to get to this place,” Boxer said. “I think it sends a tremendous signal to the people of America, and that is that we can work together.” Negotiations on the transportation bill were thought to be at a dead end as recently as a week ago.  To avoid a permanent stalemate, House Republicans dropped demands for mandating the authorization of the controversial Keystone XL oil sands pipeline and loosening regulations on coal ash. In return, Senate Democrats agreed to streamline environmental permitting of transportation projects and allow states to opt out of bike and pedestrian programs. Many House Democrats fought tooth and nail against the provisions Republican leaders in the House insisted on including in the compromise. But even they said the passage of a new multi-year was a big deal.

#### ( ) Student loans also drained capital

Fram ‘12

Alan – reporter for The Associated Press – AP – June 30, 2012 – lexis

Congress emphatically approved legislation Friday preserving jobs on transportation projects from coast to coast and avoiding interest rate increases on new loans to millions of college students, giving lawmakers campaign-season bragging rights on what may be their biggest economic achievement before the November elections. The bill sent for President Barack Obama's signature enables just over $100 billion to be spent on highway, mass transit and other transportation programs over the next two years, projects that would have expired Saturday without congressional action. It also ends a bare-knuckle political battle over student loans that raged since spring, a proxy fight over which party was best helping voters muddle through the economic downturn.

#### ( ) no one in Congress likes the bill

Everett ‘12

et al, John Burgess Everett is a transportation reporter for POLITICO Pro – Politico – June 29, 2012 -- lexis

Congress passed a transportation bill Friday worth over $100 billion, sending the bill to the president's desk after months of brinksmanship. The massive majorities by which the package passed - 373-52 in the House and 74-19 in the Senate - do not capture the weeks of wrangling ahead of the votes. The bill was in doubt until the last minute, with current transportation policy set to expire. The bill also capped federal student loan interest rates, which were expected to jump on Sunday. And it extended federal flood insurance programs. But the House was able to rush the legislation through after a Thursday night Rules Committee meeting. Meanwhile, supporters in the Senate fended off dissenters who argued the bill violated Senate rules. There was a trio of procedural votes to get to final passage as outside groups like Heritage Action for America decried the rushed process. "Any of the amendments were to kill the bill. And I couldn't let that happen," Sen. Jim Inhofe (R-Okla.) told POLITICO of overcoming objections from Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.), who wanted the upper chamber to have more time to read the bill. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) had tried to push through the measure by unanimous consent Thursday to allow lawmakers to go home early for the recess week, but leadership decided to kick the vote until Friday to allow for a consent agreement and give the upper chamber time to review a score from the Congressional Budget Office. Lawmakers from both parties and chambers say the bill is imperfect, but most agree it represents an improvement over current policy. House Republicans dropped insistence on including the Keystone XL pipeline and other environmental provisions as the Senate Democrats moved toward the House position on environmental streamlining and dropped funds for conservation. Congress put some battles on the shelf to work out what many believe is this session's big jobs bill, upsetting some green groups but heartening the construction industry and many state departments of transportation. "Nobody likes the bill. But we've got to have a bill," one GOP lawmaker told POLITICO. And Rep. Nick Rahall (D-W.Va.), who along with other House Democratic negotiators withheld signatures on the conference report over complaints of being frozen out of the information pipeline, said he and others "reluctantly" voted for the bill.

### Obama involved

#### ( ) White House was involved in transport bill

Laing ‘12

Keith Laing is a national political journalist who works for The Hill newspaper in Washington, D.C. At The Hill, Keith covers transportation policy in Congress – The Hill – 06/29/12

http://thehill.com/blogs/transportation-report/highways-bridges-and-roads/235683-lawmakers-exhale-after-heavy-lift-on-transportation-bill

The transportation bill will have to be signed now by President Obama, who has campaigned against Congress for not approving new road and transit spending and other parts of his jobs proposals for the better part of a year. Obama is expected to quickly sign the bill to avert an interruption in transportation funding.

### Transportation Bill = Loss for Obama

#### ( ) Transport bill is a loss for Obama and Dems

Adler ‘12

Ben Adler is a contributing writer for The Nation and federal policy correspondent for Next American City. Lean Forward – Jul 3, 2012 – http://leanforward.msnbc.msn.com/\_news/2012/07/03/12544141-this-is-a-win-after-dems-cave-transportation-bill-creates-no-new-jobs?lite

The Surface Transportation law, which determines how the federal government will disburse transportation infrastructure funds, is normally passed every six years, and it expired in 2009. It used to be a fairly simple matter: tally up the revenues from the gasoline tax, give 20 percent to mass transit, the rest to roads, and send it back to the states. But those days are long gone. Here's what happened this time around: We needed a transportation law that would meet the needs of our diverse population: more money for bicycling, walking and mass transit and more money for fixing crumbling roads and bridges—as well as a raise in the gas tax, which hasn't gone up for nearly two decades. So after taking office, President Obama, working with congressional Democrats, issued ambitious proposals to meet these goals. But Democrats were afraid to say how they would pay for them. Meanwhile, as Congress focused on other matters, such as health care reform, it passed a series of temporary extensions that just kept the current rules in place. Then in 2010 Republicans took over the House of Representatives and went to work on a right wing fantasy bill: They would eliminate dedicated funding for mass transit and eliminate environmental reviews for new projects, and tack on irrelevant measures such as building the controversial Keystone XL oil pipeline. Even the House Republican caucus was divided on this approach, and they could not get the votes to pass it. In the end, Senate Democrats and Republicans agreed on a compromise bill that would last two years, and the House passed a temporary extension of its own. But in reconciling the two bills, Democratic negotiators conceded far too much. The final bill, set for President Obama's signature, will continue current overall funding levels, but it includes compromises with the House GOP’s reactionary agenda, including eliminating funding for repairing existing infrastructure; cutting funds for making walking and biking safer; the removal of a measure that would have let cash-strapped transit agencies use federal funding to keep operations going; and cutting tax deductions for mass transit by half.

#### ( ) It’s a loss for Obama and Dems

Adler ‘12

Ben Adler is a contributing writer for The Nation and federal policy correspondent for Next American City. Lean Forward – Jul 3, 2012 – http://leanforward.msnbc.msn.com/\_news/2012/07/03/12544141-this-is-a-win-after-dems-cave-transportation-bill-creates-no-new-jobs?lite

Smart growth advocates, too, say the bill is step in the wrong direction. “On the whole, the bill supports development styles which are losing popularity,” said Alex Dodds, spokeswoman for Smart Growth America. “Walkable downtowns are seeing a renaissance across the country, and transportation infrastructure is a huge part of that. The federal transportation bill could have supported these vibrant places much better. What the bill does support are projects that won't deliver as well on their investment.” LaHood described the bill as bipartisan. That's true if you define bipartisanship as Democrats—who control the Senate and White House—moving in the direction Republicans want. “I am so glad that House Republicans met Democrats half way, as Senate Republicans did months ago,” said Boxer. That sounds a lot like Democrats moving three quarters of the way toward Republicans. Not exactly a result for Dems to brag about.

#### ( ) Transport Bill unpopular with public – jacks Safe Route provisions

Hall ‘12

Mary Lauran Hall of the America Bikes coalition – AmericaBikes.org June 28, 2012 – http://www.americabikes.org/new\_transportation\_bill\_cuts\_biking\_walking\_funding\_by\_more\_than\_60\_percent

The new transportation bill is a bad bill for biking and walking. This bill: Cuts available biking and walking funds by 60 to 70 percent. Biking and walking programs are combined into a single program, Transportation Alternatives, with drastically reduced funding. Eliminates dedicated Safe Routes to School funding. The bill eliminates dedicated funding for the massively popular and cost-effective Safe Routes to School program, which helps make walking and biking to school safer for millions of American schoolchildren.

### Transportation Bill = Boosts Spending

#### ( ) Transport bill non-uniques spending

Mail Tribune ‘12

(July 3rd – http://www.mailtribune.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20120703/BIZ/207030305/-1/NEWSMAP)

Last week, lawmakers in Congress approved a bill that keeps highway and transit spending at current levels for the next two years, but there was a catch: They came up nearly $20 billion short. Rather than cut spending or raise taxes to make up the difference, they tapped the U.S. Treasury, something they'd done three times already. Transportation and budget experts say lawmakers can't have it both ways: The once-self-sustaining mechanism for highway spending no longer works. For half a century, revenue from federal taxes on gasoline and diesel fuel paid for highway projects. But since 2008, lawmakers have transferred $35 billion in general funds into the Highway Trust Fund to keep it from going bankrupt. Negotiators who sorted out the differences between the GOP-majority House of Representatives and the Democratic-controlled Senate call it a necessary compromise; conservatives call it deficit spending. "We have a shell game up here," Sen. Rand Paul, R-Ky., said Friday before he voted against the bill. "We say one thing's going to pay for it. Now this is going to pay for it. Money disappears." There are potential solutions on the table, including increasing the gasoline tax or replacing it with another dedicated source of funding. Other proposals would shift more responsibility for funding transportation projects to the states. Some states have acted already. But it took three years for Congress to agree to a two-year bill, and transportation experts say it's a shortsighted measure that delays making hard choices. "We'd all love to budget by pretending we can pull money out of thin air," said Erich Zimmermann, a senior policy analyst for transportation at Taxpayers for Common Sense, a Washington budget watchdog. "This is clearly going on the nation's credit card."

## MISC – Transportation Bill

### Deficit spending on transportation not cause backlash

#### ( ) spending on transport does not cause backlash – MAP 21 proves.

Freemark ‘12

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July 1st – http://www.thetransportpolitic.com/)

Preserving the status quo doesn’t mean keeping spending in line with revenues from the fuel tax. Because neither party has demonstrated an interest in working for an increase in the gas tax or establishing a viable alternative, maintaining current spending levels means that funds must be identified from elsewhere. As such, the law creates a number of new financing methods to pay for expenditures not covered by the Highway Trust Fund, into which fuel taxes flow. The biggest change involves altering the way pension interest rates are calculated. But most of the shortfall will be covered by the government transferring in $18.8 billion in general funds from income tax collections, $6.2 billion in FY 2013 and $12.6 billion in 2014. Because the U.S. operates with a deficit, that money is effectively debt-based. Got a problem with that? The vast majority of legislators from both sides of the aisle do not seem to be particularly concerned.

Note: MAP-21 is the title of the Transportation Spending Bill