



## International Right of Way Association Weekly Update

Monday, July 29, 2019

### The White House

- The Administration announced the award of over \$850 million in INFRA grants this week. There are 10 large projects and 10 small projects that will receive funding this year. The INFRA program was created in the FAST Act and details of the awards are available here: <https://www.transportation.gov/buildamerica/infragrants>.

### Congress

- The Senate is in session this week. The House is in recess until after Labor Day.
- The Senate Environment and Public Works (“EPW”) Committee plans to release its draft of the FAST Act reauthorization bill today and plans to mark it up in a Committee business meeting tomorrow.  
<https://www.epw.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/2019/7/committee-business-meeting> The following are expected to be the key elements of the legislation:
  - \$287 billion in total budget authority for the Federal-aid Highway Program
  - Largely follows the structure of the FAST Act that distributes the majority of the funding through the existing formula programs
  - New grant program for installation of alternative fueling and electric charging infrastructure along the National Highway System
  - Formalizing key elements of this Administration’s “One Federal Decision” policy
- The Senate Banking Committee, which has jurisdiction over federal transit programs, and the Senate Commerce Committee, which has jurisdiction over other surface transportation modes, have not announced plans to advance their portions of the reauthorization bill.
- The Senate is scheduled to pass the bipartisan debt limit and budget caps deal that the Administration negotiated with congressional leaders and that the House passed last week.

### Analysis

- The EPW Committee will take the first public step this week to reauthorize the FAST Act, which expires in September 2020. Historically, the EPW Committee always takes the first step during the surface transportation reauthorization process and prods the other Senate Committees and the House to act. Whether that will hold true in this cycle

remains to be determined. Infrastructure stakeholders and EPW staff expect the bipartisan bill to pass the Committee with unanimous, or near unanimous support.

- The bill's reception with the Senate Finance Committee, which will be responsible for funding the measure, will be the most telling sign of its likely future after the August recess.