



International Right of Way Association Weekly Update

Monday, May 22, 2017

Trump Administration

- On Tuesday, President Trump will deliver his full budget proposal for fiscal year 2018 to Congress. In the budget blueprint released in March, the President proposed a 13% cut to U.S. Department of Transportation programs. (https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/economy/trump-to-propose-big-cuts-to-safety-net-in-new-budget-this-week/2017/05/21/62c01f44-3e34-11e7-adba-394ee67a7582_story.html)
- During his trip to Saudi Arabia, President Trump announced that Saudi Arabia and Blackstone Group will each commit \$20 billion to create a new fund to invest in U.S. infrastructure. (<https://www.forbes.com/sites/antoinegara/2017/05/20/blackstone-unveils-40-billion-infrastructure-mega-fund-with-saudi-arabia-as-trump-visits/>)

Congress

- This past Wednesday, Secretary Chao appeared before the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee. She echoed many of the remarks she gave at the Infrastructure Week kickoff event last Monday morning, discussed in last week's update. She reiterated that the Administration plans to unveil the principles of its infrastructure proposal before the end of May, with the complete package tentatively scheduled for release in the third quarter of this year. (<https://www.epw.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/2017/5/improving-america-s-transportation-infrastructure-the-road-forward>)
- On the other side of the Hill, the House Ways and Means Committee held its first tax reform hearing on Thursday. The hearing highlighted the magnitude of the work to be done and the differences of opinion between House Republicans and the Administration (<https://morningconsult.com/2017/05/18/business-leaders-want-tax-changes-made-permanent/>)

Analysis

- Nossaman experts who have been in contact with senior officials at the White House and the U.S. Department of Transportation can confirm that, as of this morning, the timeline outlined by Secretary Chao before the Senate is still accurate. We can expect to

see a “principles document” outlining the Administration’s infrastructure proposal in broad terms before the end of the month.

- Even though this deadline is rapidly approaching, we will not have to wait that long to learn more about the Administration’s infrastructure plans. With the release of the President’s full budget proposal for fiscal year 2018 on Tuesday, there will be a wealth of new information to digest.
- As a reminder, the President’s budget proposal outlines his desired allocation of federal resources between all programs—discretionary and mandatory—for a given fiscal year. The budget proposal is not binding on Congress, but serves as a powerful messaging tool to explain and argue for the President’s policies. Congress will then review the President’s budget proposal as it drafts, revises, and adopts a binding budget resolution that will set the parameters for funding bills in the covered fiscal year.