



## International Right of Way Association Weekly Update

Monday, February 13, 2017

### Trump Administration

- Infrastructure news was sparse this week, but President Trump met with airline executives to discuss modernizing U.S. airports (<http://thehill.com/homenews/administration/318767-trump-vows-to-modernize-airports-in-meeting-with-airline-execs>) and noted the lack of high-speed rail in the United States prior to meeting with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe (<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-02-09/trump-renews-call-to-mend-obsolete-airports-trains-and-roads>).
- A coalition of industry groups sent a letter to President Trump requesting that any infrastructure plan include a long-term fix to the Highway Trust Fund and improvements to all types of infrastructure ([http://www.progressiverailroading.com/federal\\_legislation\\_regulation/news/Industry-coalition-asks-Trump-for-long-term-Highway-Trust-Fund-fix--50772](http://www.progressiverailroading.com/federal_legislation_regulation/news/Industry-coalition-asks-Trump-for-long-term-Highway-Trust-Fund-fix--50772)).
- President Trump will address a joint session of Congress on February 28<sup>th</sup> (<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-politics/wp/2017/01/24/trump-invited-to-address-a-joint-session-of-congress-on-feb-28/>).

### Congress

- The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee held a hearing on February 8<sup>th</sup> entitled "Oversight: Modernizing our Nation's Infrastructure," with witnesses from Wyoming, West Virginia, Oklahoma, Delaware, and Colorado.

### Analysis

- The Senate has spent much of this past week (and month) navigating the delay tactics of Senate Democrats regarding President Trump's nominees. Currently the Senate has confirmed seven cabinet nominees with thirteen remaining (<https://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/cabinet>). Furthermore, Supreme Court nominee Neil Gorsuch's confirmation process looms on the horizon, as Senate Republicans hope to confirm Judge Gorsuch before Easter ([https://www.washingtonpost.com/powerpost/a-fractured-us-senate-awaits-supreme-court-pick-neil-gorsuch/2017/01/31/5fe569f0-e7f9-11e6-b82f-687d6e6a3e7c\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/powerpost/a-fractured-us-senate-awaits-supreme-court-pick-neil-gorsuch/2017/01/31/5fe569f0-e7f9-11e6-b82f-687d6e6a3e7c_story.html)).

- Without a confirmed head of the Office of Management and Budget, the office tasked with preparing the President's Budget, it remains to be seen how much detail the "pamphlet" or "skinny" budget proposal to be released later this month will include. It is typical for new Administrations to publish a short budget proposal within a couple months of taking office as the Cabinet nominees are confirmed before submitting the full budget later in the spring. This proposal will be the first formal opportunity for the Administration to release details of its infrastructure plan prior to President Trump's address to Congress on February 28<sup>th</sup>.