



Association of
Metropolitan
Planning
Organizations

AMPO Member Briefing: BASICS Act

March 4, 2026

The LOT Coalition

Local Officials in Transportation (LOT) Coalition amplifies the voices of thousands of organizations and individuals across the nation with a vested interest in the long-term success of our transportation system. Together, our members own, maintain, plan for, and support about half of the federal-aid highway system and the bridges nationwide.



LOT
LOCAL OFFICIALS
IN TRANSPORTATION
COALITION



Surface Transportation Reauthorization

State of Play

Reauthorization 101



Process by which transportation funding and policy are authorized



Occurs Every 5-6 years (current bill – IIJA – expires end of FY 26)

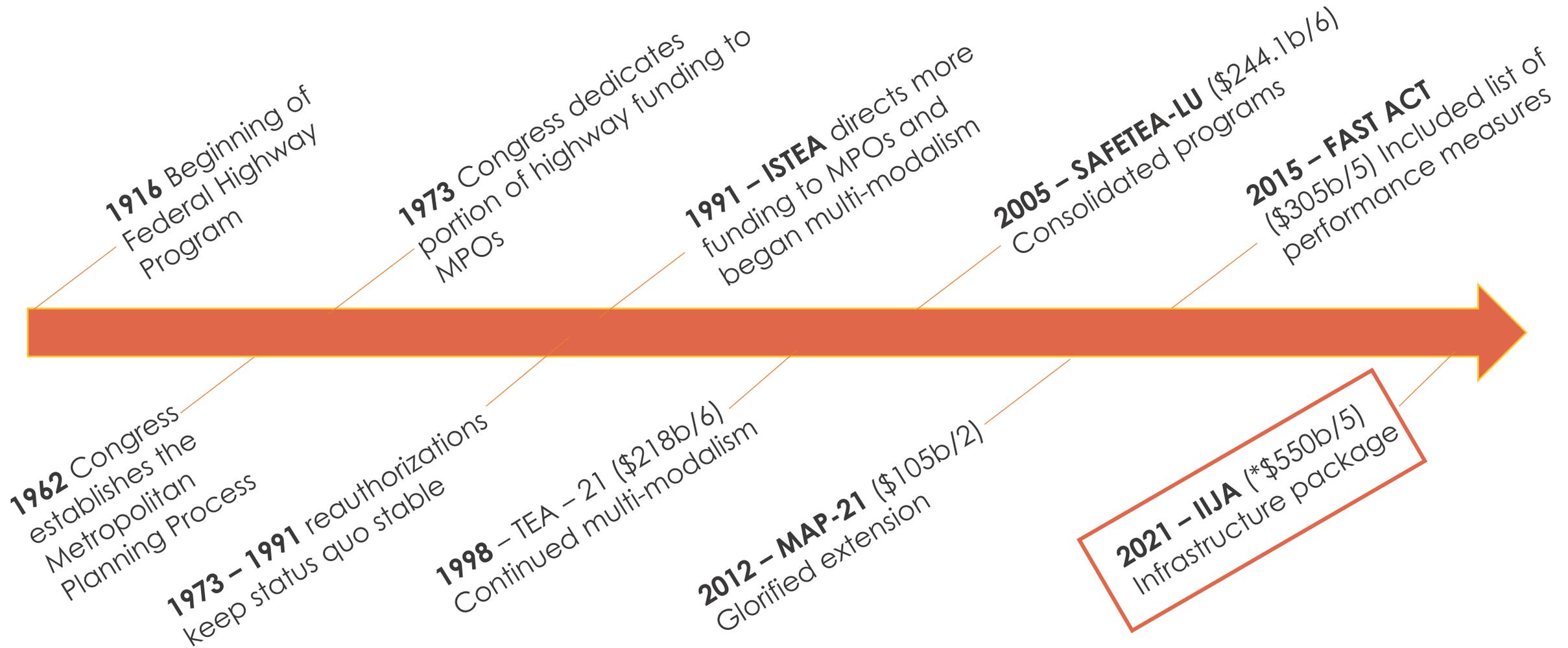


Federal Transportation funding is guaranteed through reauthorization (funding comes from the HTF)

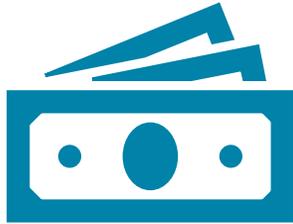


Committees: House: T&I – Policy; Ways & Means – Funding; Science – Research**
Senate: EPW – Highway; Banking – Transit; Commerce – General*/Research*/Safety

An Abridged Reauth History



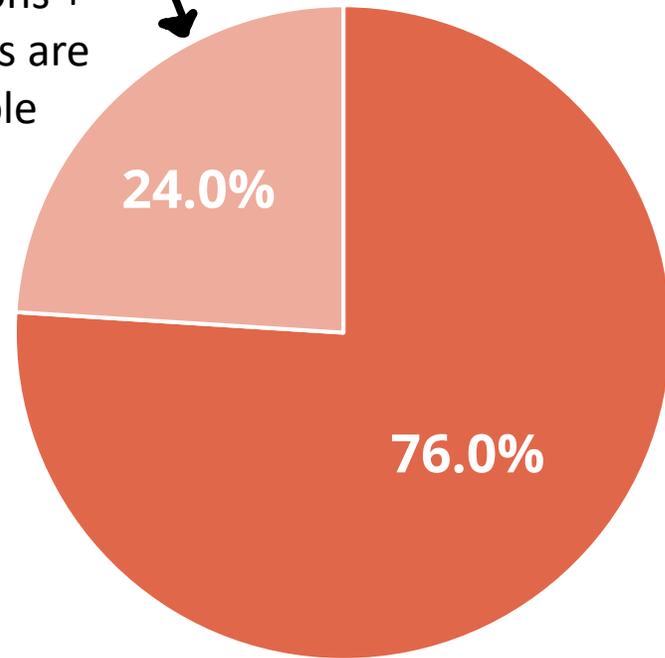
IIJA Funding



\$567 billion
investment in
surface
transportation

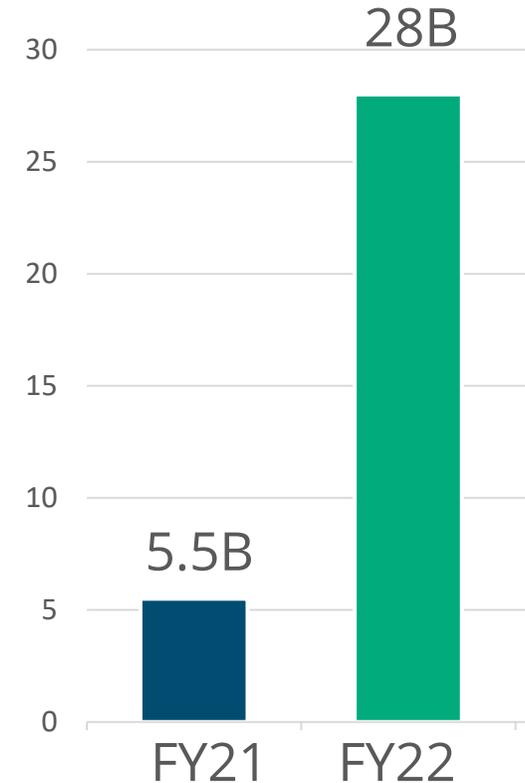
Total Funding Split FY22 – FY26

Regions +
Locals are
eligible



■ Formula ■ Discretionary

Discretionary Funding FAST ACT → IIJA/BIL



How the BASICS Act fits into Reauthorization

Congress is currently working on the next surface transportation reauthorization (IIJA was the last surface bill – Expires Sept. 30)



We expect Congress to release legislative text this Spring



The BASICS Act is AMPO's and the LOT Coalition's marker bill for the next surface transportation reauthorization

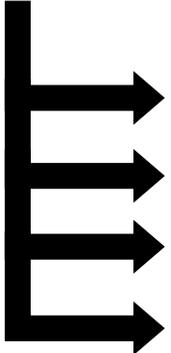
Signals the priorities of local and regional governments

Part or all of the bill could be included in the surface bill – not guaranteed!

The BASICS Act has been introduced but still needs yours and Congress' support!

Chairman Graves on reauthorization:

“In the next surface transportation reauthorization bill, **we’re going back to basics**. After recent years of expanding and creating more programs, spending money we don’t have, and losing money to project approval inefficiencies, **we can and must focus on our most fundamental infrastructure needs.**”

- 
- Greater focus on roads and bridges
 - Less discretionary money/programs
 - Less expansive reach than IIJA – *Likely HTF Baseline + Inflation*
 - Focus on safety, streamlining, and project delivery

The BASICS Act

- Support the needs of cities, counties, RTPOs, MPOs, regions, and communities nationwide.
- Based extensive member input and local and regional experience.
- Includes [AMPO's legislative priorities](#).
- Unified approach supported by AMPO, NARC, NLC, Mayors, NACO, NA

(Original Signature of Member)

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. _____

To improve Federal transportation programs, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Ms. McDONALD RIVET introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on _____

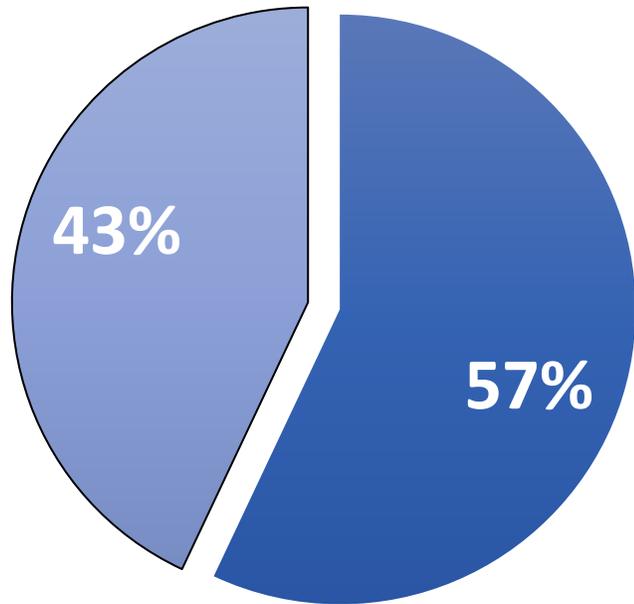
A BILL

To improve Federal transportation programs, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*
3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**
4 This Act may be cited as the “Bridges And Safety
5 Infrastructure for Community Success Act” or the “BA-
6 SICS Act”.

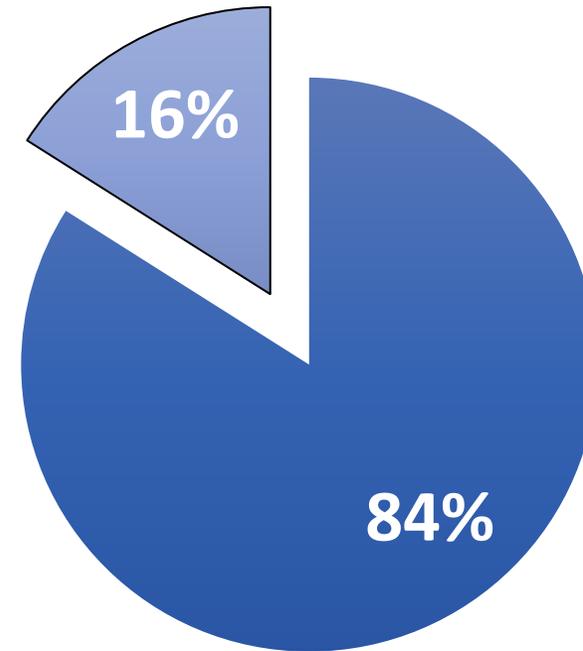
7 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**
8 In this Act:

Local Governments own **43%** of the Federal-Aid Highway System and **75%** of all U.S. Road Miles



■ States ■ Locals

Yet Communities Only See **16%** of the Federal-Aid Highway Funding

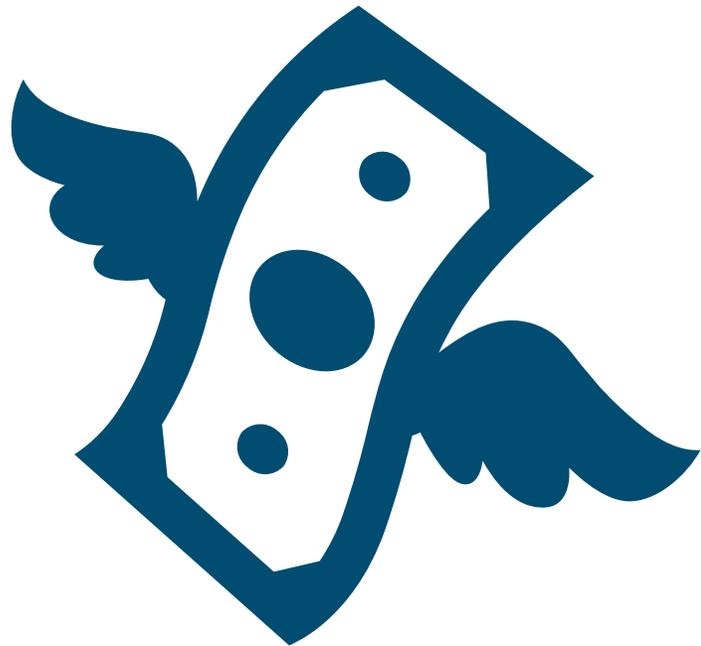


■ States ■ Locals

Responsibility ≠ Resources

*The distribution is out of **balance***

Regions & Locals Need to Maintain their Share



If Congress shifts funding from discretionary programs to formula programs without requiring suballocation to regions,

Local governments could lose access to funding that previously flowed to them under the IIJA, roughly 25 percent of total federal transportation funding.

What the BASICS Act Does

A Section-by-Section Overview

BASICS (Bridges And Safety Infrastructure for Community Success) Act (H.R. 7437)

- **Modernizes Planning Funds (PL)**
 - Increases PL Funds (2.5% of the overall program)
 - 100% Federal Share
 - MPO Option to be Direct Recipients of PL funds (opt-in)
 - Expands Eligibilities
- **Increases Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) Overall Funds**
- **Increases Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) Overall Funds**
 - 25% Suballocation
- **Continues Bridge Formula Program**
 - 25% suballocation
- **Reaffirms MPO Project Selection**
- **Strengthens Consultation with areas below 50,000 in Population**
- **Federal Financial Management System (FMIS) Access**
- **Suballocated Funds Protected from Transfer**
- **Funding for Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPOs)**



Funding Changes

Each fiscal year, states receive federal transportation funding that is distributed across core highway programs:

- National Highway Performance Program (NHPP)
- Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG)
- Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)
- Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ)
- National Highway Freight Program
- Metropolitan Planning
- Carbon Reduction Program (CRP)
- PROTECT Formula Program (PROTECT)

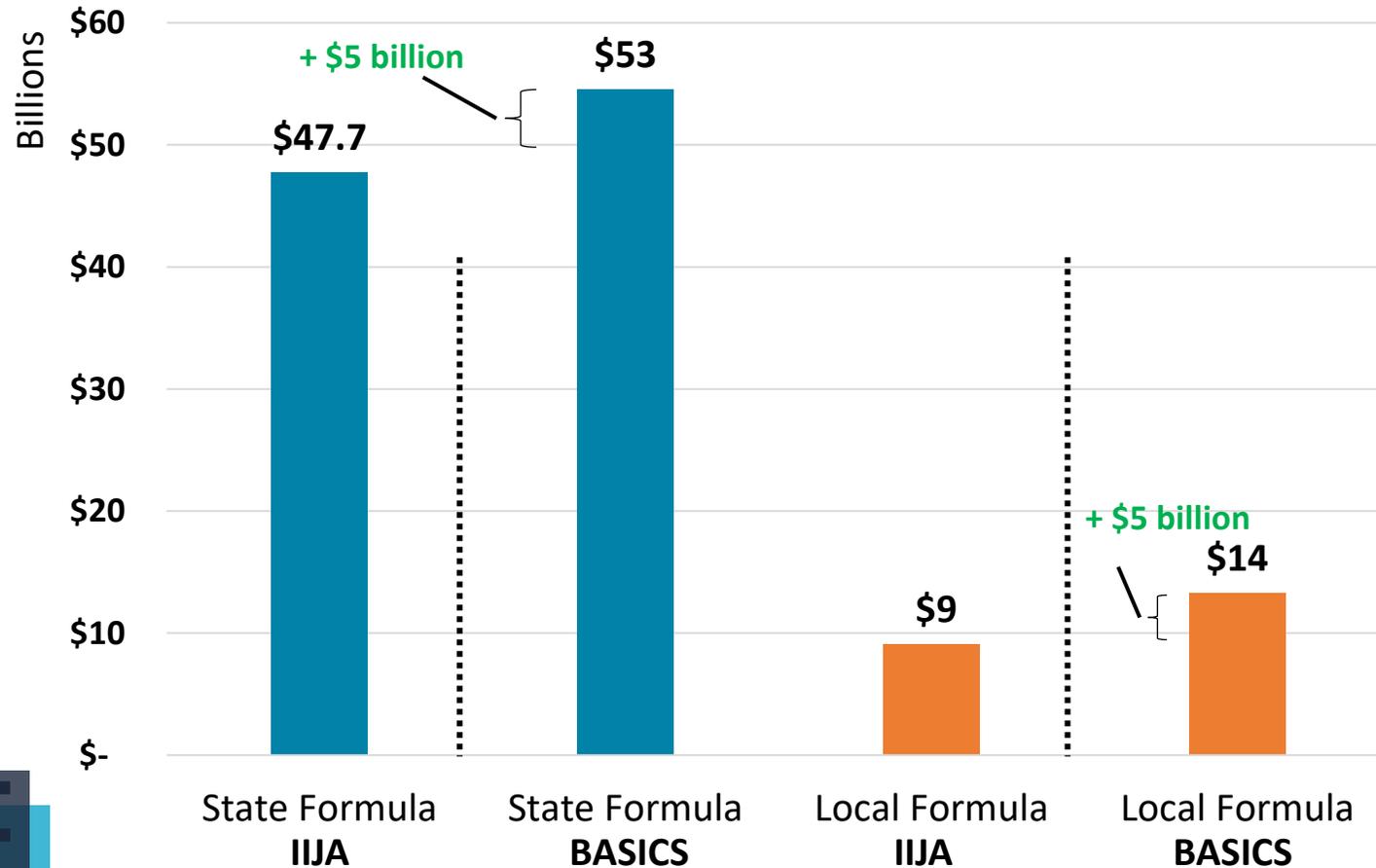
The BASICS Act will adjust how money is apportioned and distributed – it will not reduce overall state funding

Funding Changes

The BASICS Act would move funding from NHPP to HSIP and STBG

Program	FY 26 Amount	FY 27 Amount	% or Value in Code
NHPP	\$ 30,783,800,000	\$ 31,076,135,500	54%
STBG	\$ 14,975,900,000	\$ 17,976,829,827	31%
HSIP	\$ 3,245,900,000	\$ 4,403,079,336	7.6%
SAFETEA-LU Safety Set aside	\$ 3,500,000	\$ 3,500,000	0
Rail Crossing	\$ 245,000,000	\$ 245,000,000	HSIP Set Aside
CMAQ	\$ 2,745,600,000	\$ 2,745,600,000	\$2,745,600,000
PL	\$ 474,200,000	\$ 1,446,478,100	2.5%
Freight	\$ 1,487,200,000	\$ 1,487,200,000	\$1,487,200,000.00
Carbon Reduction	\$ 1,335,300,000	\$ 1,382,833,064	2.4%
Bridge Formula		\$ 5,500,000,000	\$5,500,000,000
Protect	\$ 1,518,400,000	\$ 1,573,768,173	2.72%
Total	\$ 56,814,800,000	\$ 67,840,424,000	

Funding Changes



What the **BASICS** Act does

- Increases guaranteed funding for local governments and states.

What this does **NOT** do

- Decrease overall state funding

Funding Assumptions

1. Baseline HTF = \$80 billion

2. Inflation = \$2 billion

3. Consolidation of Competitive Programs = \$2.5 billion

Note: The LOT Coalition does not advocate for consolidating competitive grant programs – we make this assumption based on the messaging we have heard from Congress

4. SS4A & Bridge Program into Core Formula Programs = \$6.5 billion

So what happens?

- Increases State funding by **\$5 billion (11%)**
- Increases **guaranteed** local funding by **\$5 billion**
- Increases metropolitan planning funding **(PL) to 2.5% of the Federal-Aid Highway Program**
- The Bridge Formula Program and SS4A become **core formula programs**

STBG Changes

To obligate funding to areas with populations less than 50,000 and not represented by an RTPO



The Bridge Formula Program

Renamed the “Strengthening Bridge Formula Program”

- **Funding:** \$5.5 billion/year from 2027 to 2031
 - **Minimum:** \$45 million/year to a state
 - **Off-System Bridges:** 100% Federal Cost Share
 - **Suballocation:** 25% based on population: 

Each Area Receives Funding Proportional to its Population

- Large urbanized areas – **pop. Over 200,000**
- Mid-size urbanized areas – **pop. 50,000 to 200,000**
- Small urban areas – **pop. 5,000 to 49,999**
- other areas – **pop. under 5,000**

The Bridge Formula Program

Eligible uses of funding:

- Construction
- Replacement
- Rehabilitation
- Preservation
- Protection of highway bridges on public roads

Project Selection:

- Populations >50,000, **projects must be included in the TIP**
- Populations <50,000 with RTPO, **projects must be selected in cooperation with RTPOs**
- Populations <50,000 and no RTPO, **projects must be selected in consultation with local governments**

HSIP Changes

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States will not lose safety funding

Program	IIJA (FY2026)		BASICS Act (FY2027)
HSIP	\$3.2 billion	➔	\$4.4 billion
HSIP Suballocated	\$0		\$1.1 billion (25%)

Transferability and Project Selection

Transferability

- **Expand exemption to suballocated funds** under HSIP, Carbon Reduction Program, and the new Strengthening Bridges Formula Program.
- **Make any HSIP funds** that states do transfers, first **available competitively to local governments.**

Project Selection

- **Reaffirms** that suballocated funding under STBG, HSIP, the Carbon Reduction Program, and the new bridge program are obligated **only** to projects that were selected by local or regional decision structures

Metropolitan Planning

- **PL funding is set at 2.5%**

PL IJA FY2026	PL BASICS Act
\$470 million	2.5% = \$1.4 billion

198% increase! →

- **100 percent federal cost share**
- **Direct recipient status for PL funding**
 - Opt-in for MPOs with capacity
- **Access to FMIS**

Note: FTA (5303) and FHWA Titles Mirrored

Metropolitan Planning

Expands PL funding eligibility:

- Fiscal administration of local projects
- Preliminary design
- Administrative and overhead costs, general operating expenses, facilities and infrastructure costs
- Local technical assistance
- Housing studies directly linked to transportation
- Economic development studies directly linked to transportation
- Critical data procurement

RTPO Provisions

There are currently few federally designated RTPOs across the country & those that do exist rely on informal planning structures

- BASICS Act would:
 - **Create a designated formula program** to fund RTPOs
 - **Create a competitive grant program** for non-designated regional planning entities
 - **Allocate \$300,000 annually** to each RTPO
 - **Provide a 100 percent federal cost share**

FAQ

Q: Does the BASICS Act Reduce State DOT Funding?

A: No. It increases State funding by 11% from FY2026 to FY2027.

Q: Is the BASICS Act a Dramatic Shift in Policy?

A: No. It builds on IJA's existing framework and maintains at least 22% of funding for local and regional partners.

Q: Would the BASICS Act Slow Project Delivery?

A: No. It includes reforms, such as PL funding modernization, intended to accelerate delivery.

Q: Can cooperation alone fix State-Local Challenges?

A: Experience suggests not entirely. While some areas collaborate effectively, many continue to face structural challenges under current law. BASICS provides tools to improve coordination while preserving successful partnerships.

What can you do?

At Home	With Congress
<p>Brief your Policy Board on the BASICS Act</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Access the MPO Policy Board Member letter of support template here: shorturl.at/rDsvU	<p>Provide educational briefings to congressional staff on the BASICS Act</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Access the MPO educational outreach template here: shorturl.at/rDsvU
<p>Coordinate unified messaging across jurisdictions (e.g., regional sign on letter). Work with your chambers of commerce!</p>	<p>Provide your congressional delegation with data and local stories to explain impact</p>
<p>Invite your Members of Congress to the district and host a roundtable on regional transportation infrastructure needs.</p>	<p>Participate in Washington, DC fly-ins to elevate your community's voice.</p>
<p>Connect with your State DOT– educate on how the bill benefits states, regions, and local governments.</p>	<p>Meet with your congressional district office staff to educate them on the BASICS Act</p>

Q&A



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