



The National Beat

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Feature Focus

National Beat Feedback, USDOT Withholding STBG and HSIP Funding, USDOT Freedom to Drive Initiative, and the BASICS Act

[National Beat Feedback](#)

It was great meeting many of you during AMPO's Technical Symposium in Lexington, Kentucky. We are always looking for ways to improve the National Beat to best provide you with useful updates from DC and across the transportation industry. If you have the time, it would be very appreciated to hear any suggestions or comments about the National Beat, whether it is how to improve it, additional content you would like to see, or just to leave a note.

[→ AMPO National Beat Feedback Survey](#)

[USDOT to Withhold \\$73M in STBG & NHPP Funds from NY](#)

On April 17, USDOT announced that they will be withholding \$73 million of New York's surface transportation funding. The action follows a FMCSA audit of New York's DMV, **which found that the state was not in compliance with national commercial driver's licenses (CDLs) requirements**. FMCSA's audit found that the state had failed to revoke illegally issued CDLs and commercial learner's permits (CLPs) – even after previous orders for corrective action. This action by USDOT corroborates an agency led crackdown on CDL noncompliance, with similar states having their funding revoked or threatened for failing to comply with more stringent CDL standards.

***TL;DR:** USDOT is withholding \$73 million in New York transportation funding after finding widespread noncompliance with federal CDL standards, part of a broader nationwide crackdown that has already affected multiple states. While the penalty targets state agencies and represents a small share of overall funding, it could have indirect ripple effects on local transportation funding depending on how states adjust allocations.*

Context

In June 2025, USDOT began a [nationwide audit](#) of state practices in issuing non-domiciled CDLs. This audit was the result of multiple Executive Branch initiatives. Action followed multiple instances of [traffic fatalities involving non-domiciled CDL holders](#) and resulted in calls for congressional action on CDL compliance during this year's [State of the Union Address](#). Key developments include:

- An April 28, 2025, the White House released an executive order on [Enforcing Commonsense Rules of the Road for America's Truck Drivers](#) which guided federal agencies to create more stringent CDL standards, support and improve the working conditions of US truck drivers, and to review existing state CDL issuance practices.
- Congress introduced the [Dalilah's Law](#) to strengthen the requirements needed to receive a CDL.
- Congress secured [\\$200 million for truck parking](#) through the FY2026 THUD Appropriations package.



- On February 13th, USDOT issued a [Final Rule](#) amending federal regulations on how CDLs are issued, limiting eligibility for non-domiciled CLPs and CDLs for individuals who do not meet specific requirements.

These actions collectively led to a nationwide audit, which identified [several states](#) with significant compliance issues requiring corrective action.

State Compliance

As a result of the nationwide audit, several states received orders for corrective actions. Among these were [Minnesota](#), [Illinois](#), and [California](#) (which had \$160 million of federal funds withheld). The most recent action by USDOT targeted [New York](#), citing that out of a sample of 200 records, 107 of New York's non-domiciled CDLs were issued in violation of federal law, a failure rate of 53%. Citing multiple attempts to work with the state, **USDOT made a final determination of noncompliance and the decision to withhold \$73 million in federal transportation funding**, specifically from New York's National Highway Performance Program (NHPP) and the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) program (representing 4% of those funding programs).

New York has since [filed a lawsuit](#) against the action, arguing that their issuance procedure has been in compliance with federal standards, and that withholding federal funding will have substantial negative effects on key industries and their workforce, as well as for the state's infrastructure quality and safety.

How This Could Impact MPOs

AMPO has yet to hear of direct impacts on MPOs from federal CDL compliance enforcement. With that said, the main funding sources that USDOT is targeting are NHPP and STBG. The **STBG program includes both state-controlled and suballocated funds**. While USDOT has not clarified how penalties will be applied within each program, these actions raise concerns that locally controlled transportation funding could be affected, even though local governments and MPOs have no authority over state CDL licensing practices. AMPO will continue monitoring these enforcement actions and seek clarity on how suballocated funds may be treated. Please reach out to AMPO's Legislative Director [Katie Economou](#) with any questions.

[USDOT Launches “Freedom to Drive” Initiative](#)

On April 20, USDOT sent a [letter to state Governors](#), calling on them to enhance their coordination with USDOT to address roadway congestion across the country. Coined the “Freedom to Drive” initiative, USDOT is looking to alleviate areas with high rates of roadway congestion by expanding roadway capacity and building public-private partnerships.

***TL;DR:** USDOT's “Freedom to Drive” initiative asks states to identify their worst congestion hotspots and work with the federal government to expand roadway capacity, use new technologies, and partner with the private sector to ease traffic. The effort signals a broader shift toward car-focused infrastructure and away from multimodal projects, which could shape future funding priorities and project selection.*

Context

In an attempt to address high rates of congestion across the US road network, USDOT sent a letter to state Governors directing them **to submit up to five local, state, or national roadways that**



experience the highest rates of congestion and to work with USDOT to alleviate them.

Specifically, the letter asks states to identify action plans to address congestion with specific emphasis on “expanding and maximizing roadway capacity for driving” in the following ways:

- Building new roadway capacity
- Applying operational strategies and technologies to maximize existing roadway capacity
- Recovering roadway capacity that serves non-driving purposes

USDOT is supporting this initiative by citing congestion as a significant inhibitor to economic growth, with time stuck in traffic equating to \$269 billion in lost productivity. With expectations that vehicle miles traveled will increase over time in addition to increased freight traffic on existing roadways, **they argue that congestion will continue to be a barrier for both urban and rural communities.** In cooperation with state governments, **USDOT is looking to collaborate with the private sector, utilize innovative technology, and use existing resources** to address areas of congestion identified at the state level.

Implications

The USDOT letter builds upon previous federal attempts at expanding roadway capacity and addressing roadway congestion. Specifically, the focus on recovering roadway capacity is similar to previous actions by USDOT to remove bike lanes along DC corridors, claiming that they lead to [increased roadway congestion](#), though last week [a judge disagreed](#) and blocked the bike lane removal efforts (See AMPO’s analysis of USDOT’s Review of DC Bike Lanes [Here](#)).

The initiative also reflects previous USDOT and Congressional actions focusing on traditional, **“core infrastructure,”** investments that are often auto centric. This is seen by USDOT [rescinding grant funding](#) for bike or pedestrian infrastructure projects, as well as **citing bike lanes as “less favorable conditions”** in federal grant applications such as the FY2026 SS4A NOFO (See AMPO’s analysis of the NOFO [Here](#)). For MPOs, this offers additional insight into federal transportation priorities and **a shift away from multimodal focused projects and toward auto projects focused on motor vehicle capacity.** Additionally, it gives insight into USDOT’s focus on improving roadway congestion and what projects USDOT may favor moving forward with new funding opportunities.

For MPOs this initiative is relevant because congestion is a core regional planning issue that many already help plan for and address. As states identify congestion hotspots for USDOT, **MPOs may be well positioned to help provide important data, context, and project pipelines that show how congestion can be addressed through a range of regional approaches.** This also gives MPOs an opportunity to underscore their role in congestion management and regional coordination, as well as their contribution to improving overall system performance. Please reach out to AMPO’s Legislative Director [Katie Economou](#) with any questions.

BASICS Act

On Feb. 9, [Rep. Kristen McDonald Rivet \(D-MI\)](#) and [Rep. Rob Bresnahan \(R-PA\)](#) introduced [HR 7437](#), the bipartisan [Bridges and Safety Infrastructure for Community Success \(BASICS\) Act](#). **The legislation would invest in bridges, deliver regional priority projects, improve road safety,**



enhance transparency and collaboration, and build stronger rural and urban regions.

Cumulatively, this would improve local and regional access to funding to plan, deliver, and maintain the systems that communities rely on every day.

[→ Access AMPO's Analysis of the BASICS Act here](#)

BASICS Act Update

On April 9, **Rep. Jay Obernolte (R-CA), Rep. Gabe Vasquez (D-NM), Rep. James Baird (R-IN), and Rep. Frank Mrvan (D-IN)** [signed on as cosponsors](#) for the **BASICS Act**, representing **bipartisan support from four states across the country**. Interest among congressional offices and Members of Congress has elevated in recent weeks, with additional cosponsors pending. This is likely a result of increased support from locals and MPOs, as MPO Policy Boards and MPO Statewide Associations from across the country have either submitted or are in the process of submitting letters of support for the BASICS Act. As reauthorization discussions move forward, building visible support now increases the likelihood that key provisions are reflected in the next surface transportation reauthorization bill. If your MPO Board is interested in signing a letter of support, please contact AMPO's Legislative Director [Katie Economou](#).

BASICS Act Resources

➔ **BASICS Act Toolkit**

For all things BASICS Act, refer to the LOT Coalition's BASICS Act Toolkit, which includes bill text, summaries, one pagers, action items, and supporting materials.

➔ **LOT Coalition Letter to AASHTO**

On Feb. 25, the LOT Coalition, including AMPO, sent a formal letter to AASHTO leadership in response to recent public comments regarding the BASICS Act. The response includes a Q&A section directly addressing AASHTO's comments and further explaining the bill's structure and funding assumptions.

We believe it is important to clarify the intent and structure of the legislation. As drafted the BASICS Act is built on growth in the overall federal program and is intended to increase funding for both State DOTs and local and regional partners. The LOT Coalition does not seek to reduce state funding.

Spring Fly-In

On March 17 and 18, AMPO hosted its Spring Fly-In with MPO participation from both our Policy and ART Committees, representing MPOs from across the country.

- Members met with federal partners, congressional offices, and industry leaders, helping inform federal research and policy and amplify the impact of MPOs nationwide.
- Policy Committee members were able to meet with congressional offices to educate and inform staffers on the BASICS Act and how planning funds directly translate into project delivery.

Webinars

On Feb. 19, the LOT Coalition hosted a webinar to share more about the BASICS Act. Please refer to the BASICS Act Toolkit to review the slides and content.

On March 4, AMPO **hosted a webinar on: "Inside the BASICS Act: What it Means for MPOs and the Road to Reauthorization."** To revisit the discussion, please refer to the following resources:

- **BASICS Act [Webinar Slides](#)**
- **BASICS Act [Webinar Recording](#)**

Resources

Brief your MPO Policy Board on how these priorities affect transportation outcomes in your region:

- [MPO Policy Board Member Letter of Support Template](#)
- [Board Resolution Template](#)
- [Updated BASICS Act PowerPoint](#)

Educate your Congressional Delegation and speak to how the provision would benefit your region:

- [MPO Education Outreach Template](#) to connect with your delegation. Using data-backed, local examples make a difference.

Work through your MPO Statewide Association:

Coordinate with MPOs statewide to share a letter in support of the BASICS Act:

- [Statewide MPO Association Letter of Support](#)

One/Two Pagers

- [BASICS Act One-Pager](#)
- [BASICS Act Rural Benefits One-Pager](#)
- [Fair Share for Local Roads One-Pager](#)
- [AMPO Legislative Priorities One-Pager](#)
- [AMPO Planning Funds One-Pager](#)
- [AMPO Tailorable PL Two-Pager](#)
- [Tailorable Project Delivery & MPOs Two-Pager](#)

Visiting DC? Questions about the BASICS Act? Want to meet with your Delegation?

Please contact AMPO's Legislative Director [Katie Economou](#)



Congress

Congressional “Vibe” Check

Reauthorization. Reauthorization activity continues to accelerate as committees refine draft language and begin shaping the next surface transportation bill.

Where things stand:

- **House T&I.** Majority and minority staff are finalizing draft sections. All titles **have circulated internally**. Staff-to-staff negotiations on base text are now underway, and other House committees and off-committee members are beginning to surface their own reauthorization priorities.
 - **Chairman Sam Graves (R-MO) said that the committee is targeting to markup the next surface transportation bill in mid-May.** The previous date of April 29 did not come to fruition as topline numbers have yet to be decided. **Rep. Graves has indicated that topline numbers will be between \$500 and \$550 billion, with the potential to reach \$600 billion.**
 - With the IIJA set to expire on Sept. 30, 2026, and with Chairman Graves in his final term amid an approaching midterm election cycle, House leadership has strong incentives to complete work this Congress.
- **Senate.** Among Senate committees, EPW is furthest along. Chair Capito (R-WV) has indicated that major action on **the bill may not happen until the summer, and that passing legislation prior to IIJA’s expiration will be a “challenge.”**
- **Administration.** On the Administration side, FHWA, FTA, and other USDOT operating administrations are transmitting their reauthorization proposals to the Office of Management and Budget, the final step before formal submission to Congress.

A general note on timing: Given the remaining FY 2026 work, midterm elections on the horizon, and the long history of surface transportation bills missing deadlines, **a continuing resolution/extension appears to be likely.** Even so, MPOs should operate under the assumption that reauthorization could move on time. This engagement window will not open twice, and once base text is released, shaping the bill is significantly harder via amendment.

The Buzz on Reauthorization

- [House Transportation Bill Takes Shape Around \\$500B–\\$550B as Markup Likely Delayed to May](#): Eno Center for Transportation completed an assessment of the current reauthorization process and how previous surface transportation bills have proceeded. House T&I Chairman Sam Graves (R-MO) said that he intends for the surface transportation reauthorization bill to be marked up on April 29, though, as the bill was not introduced, the




markup will likely be in May instead. He indicated that topline numbers were between \$500 billion to \$550 billion over five years, a figure that requires context given how prior reauthorizations were structured and funded, including TEA21, SAFETEA-LU, MAP-21, the FAST Act, and IIJA. A significant difference with the next bill will be a focus on guaranteed budget authority rather than the large amount of unfunded general fund authorizations that were prominent in IIJA. What this means is that the House bill is expected to focus on formula programs over competitive grants and would likely fall near a \$555 billion baseline, or higher, when adjusting for inflation. Rep. Graves also suggested an electric vehicle and hybrid fee as a way to help fund the Highway Trust Fund, which analysts estimate could raise roughly \$28 billion to \$35 billion over five years, though additional funding would still be needed to meet total transportation funding needs.

Introduced Legislation Related to Reauthorization

Whether you want to see what marker bills could be included in the next surface transportation reauthorization or are curious about what Congress is working on, AMPO is tracking all relevant legislation that has been introduced since December 2025. Please refer to our legislation tracker to see what bills have been introduced, who introduced them, and what they would do.

[→ 119th Weekly Congress Legislation Tracker](#)


What's Making Headlines? A number of issues on the Hill are drawing attention this week outside of reauthorization.

-  **The House Passes DHS Funding Bill:** Congress passed a bill to restore funding for most DHS agencies after a 76-day lapse, covering agencies such as TSA, FEMA, and the Coast Guard, while leaving immigration enforcement agencies and Border Patrol to be funded separately through a partisan process. The move reflects ongoing political divisions, with Democrats seeking limits on enforcement practices and Republicans pushing for full funding without new restrictions, setting up continued conflict and a separate funding fight in the months ahead.



Administration & Agencies

USDOT

-  **NHTSA Nearing Final Rule for CAFE Standards:** NHTSA is moving closer toward a final rule to update Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards. In December 2025, USDOT proposed a rule to ease existing CAFE standards (Read AMPO's analysis of the proposed CAFE standards change [here](#)). The agency's analysis highlights a core tradeoff: looser standards would reduce upfront vehicle costs by roughly \$840–\$910 per vehicle but increase lifetime fuel expenses by about \$1,250–\$1,430 per vehicle, resulting in an estimated \$46–\$54 billion increase in fuel spending across the fleet through model year 2031. While higher oil prices improve the cost-effectiveness of fuel-saving technologies and shift more consumers toward

hybrids and EVs, NHTSA's modeling still finds net societal benefits under both baseline and high oil price scenarios, though marginally. The rulemaking comes during a time of volatile global oil markets, underscoring the longstanding policy tension between lowering near-term vehicle costs and reducing exposure to fuel price spikes that originally motivated CAFE standards.

- [!\[\]\(97d7445697a94970d6443da16b12b5fa_img.jpg\) **Federal Judge Blocks USDOT from Removing Popular DC Bike Lane:**](#) A federal judge has **blocked a USDOT effort to remove the protected bike lane on DC's 15th Street**, ruling that the agencies involved failed to provide a sufficient rationale for the planned teardown. The decision follows a lawsuit from the [Washington Area Bicyclists Association](#), which argued the lane improves safety and traffic conditions, citing data showing reduced crashes and improved car flow after installation. The ruling has sparked celebration among advocates while also prompting broader concern about the future of protected bike infrastructure nationwide. While the effort was blocked, advocates emphasize that ongoing political and administrative actions continue to pose risks to sustainable transportation investments across the country.
- [!\[\]\(258b828d223cb6b35d2b001cf8c6c1e7_img.jpg\) **USDOT Requests Comments for Loan Programs Involving TOD:**](#) USDOT's Build America Bureau is seeking public comment on proposed interim guidance that would establish preferred loan sizing for TOD projects under the RRIF and TIFIA credit programs. The policy would apply to projects already in the pipeline that have received preliminary eligibility determinations or entered the NEPA process and would remain in place until a final TOD financing framework is issued. Comments are due by May 18, 2026, please use [Docket No: DOT-OST-2026-1487](#).

HUD

- [!\[\]\(52f8f8b98f8396d4f92059ff19d41332_img.jpg\) **HUD Proposes Rule to Redefine Eligibility Standards Surrounding Gender:**](#) HUD has proposed a rule that would roll back existing anti-discrimination protections by redefining eligibility standards in federally supported housing programs to recognize only biological sex, removing references to gender identity and sexual orientation. The proposal would give shelters and housing providers greater discretion in how they classify and separate certain facilities. Supporters say the change is intended to address privacy and religious liberty concerns, while others have raised concerns about how it could affect access for some vulnerable populations seeking housing or shelter services. The proposal is now open for public comment period and is expected to face legal challenges.



National News

- [!\[\]\(d691176a0c8c25c55a5ec880b4a44829_img.jpg\) **Brookings Institute Analysis on How States Are Approaching VMT Mitigation Policies:**](#) For most of the 20th century, transportation planning emphasized expanding highways and increasing vehicle miles traveled (VMT), which was widely associated with economic growth. In recent decades, that relationship has weakened, and higher VMT is now often linked to negative impacts such as increased household transportation costs, greater emissions, and rising infrastructure maintenance burdens. As a result, state officials have begun exploring new approaches to improve transportation systems while limiting VMT growth, with California leading this shift through the passage of [SB 743](#) in 2013, requiring projects to assess and

mitigate the VMT they generate. Today, four states, California, Minnesota, Colorado, and Oregon, have enacted VMT mitigation policies using different approaches at the project or planning level, while others such as Maryland, New York, New Jersey, and Massachusetts are considering similar legislation. With upcoming elections expected to bring new state leadership, VMT mitigation policy remains a key area to watch as states reevaluate transportation priorities and investment strategies.

- [!\[\]\(ef9d0f80c5c0f7b4bed9fcc98d310922_img.jpg\) **Clinical Research Study Reveals Need For Better E-Mobility Infrastructure, Not Reducing E-Bike Use:** A \[study\]\(#\) analyzing records at Bellevue Hospital of roughly 900 emergency room cases from 2018–2023 found that injuries involving e-bikes and other forms of micromobility have been relatively rare, but were rising with post-pandemic growth, eventually starting to decline in 2023. The analysis shows that about half of all injuries were caused by collisions with motor vehicles, while most involved riders falling off their device on their own. The smallest share was incidents with other riders or pedestrians. The study’s authors emphasize that better infrastructure is the most effective short-term solution, pointing to evidence that most cycling injuries and fatalities occur on streets without protected bike lanes and that separating cyclists from traffic could significantly reduce serious injuries. Researchers also note that pedestrians remain the most vulnerable group in street crashes, further pushing the need to redesign streets to promote safety and accommodate for micromobility use.](#)
- [!\[\]\(999a5e3fc9b7a6ab64b477dbcd2c0571_img.jpg\) **The Urban Institute Analyzes the Challenges Behind Maintaining a Robust Public Transportation Workforce:** An Urban Institute \[analysis\]\(#\) found that public transportation systems across the US continue to face workforce shortages that are limiting their ability to fully restore and expand service after the COVID-19 pandemic. Transit agencies employ about half a million workers, but ongoing hiring and retention challenges, especially for operators, maintenance staff, and other frontline roles, have led to service constraints in many regions. While wages are competitive in some markets, strict job requirements, limited flexibility, and uneven regional pay can discourage applicants. The report suggests agencies address these issues by streamlining hiring requirements, improving communication about pay and benefits, and offering additional supports like training programs, childcare assistance, and more flexible work options.](#)
- [!\[\]\(4a22a098f67aa2577f972ec4d67f1799_img.jpg\) **The Urban Institute’s Study on How Community Engagement Practices Could be Driving Up the Cost of Transit Construction:** An Urban Institute analysis argues that high transit construction costs in the US, often significantly higher than in peer countries, are driven less by local wage or cost-of-living differences and more by institutional and procedural factors such as fragmented governance, complex environmental review, procurement practices, litigation risk, and the structure of community engagement. While public participation is essential for democratic accountability, the report argues that engagement processes can sometimes lengthen project timelines, increase costs through late-stage design changes, and not accurately reflect the views of more vocal or higher-income stakeholders if not carefully structured. It highlights cases where prolonged planning contributed to major cost escalation, while also noting that insufficient engagement can undermine trust and delay projects. The report ultimately argues that more effective approaches, such as earlier, time-bound engagement, stronger technical capacity within agencies, and greater transparency around costs and trade-offs, could help the US deliver transit projects more efficiently without sacrificing meaningful public input.](#)

- [🔗 Why Have US Streets Been so Dangerous for Pedestrians?](#) Citylab highlighted that pedestrian deaths in the US remain significantly elevated despite a recent short-term decline, with roughly 3,000 people killed while walking in the first half of 2025 and totals still above pre-pandemic levels. Over the past decade, US pedestrian fatalities have risen sharply even as most peer countries have seen declines, reflecting a persistent safety gap. Researchers point to a combination of factors, including high-speed road design, vehicle size, distraction, and suburban land-use patterns that force more people to walk in car-oriented environments, but emphasize that roadway design is the dominant driver of risk rather than individual behavior. Experts argue that improvements such as lower speeds, safer crossings, and redesigned streets are more effective than focusing on pedestrian behavior or waiting for autonomous vehicles, noting that many current US safety strategies fall short of achieving meaningful reductions in deaths.
- [🔗 Is the Current Way We Pay for Transportation Fair?:](#) A breakdown of how the US pays for transportation shows that the idea that drivers fund roads through gas taxes is largely a myth, as highways and transit are supported by a mix of fuel taxes, tolls, registration fees, and broader taxes like sales and income taxes, along with newer tools such as congestion and carbon pricing. These funding sources affect not only how much revenue is raised but also who pays, and many are regressive, meaning lower-income households often bear a greater burden. While gas taxes remain prominent in public perception, general tax revenues now make up a significant share of funding, and newer approaches like congestion pricing and mileage-based fees aim to better match costs with road use and environmental impacts.
- [🔗 NTSB Recommends School Buses Be Equipped with Alcohol Detection Systems:](#) After a West Virginia school bus crashed as the result of an impaired driver, the NTSB is recommending that all new school buses be equipped with alcohol detection systems that could prevent a bus from starting if a driver is intoxicated. The move follows findings that alcohol impairment among school bus drivers, while rare, is likely undercounted and that even isolated incidents can have severe consequences given the number of children transported daily. The NTSB's proposal would require federal or state action to implement and does not yet include cost estimates, but similar ignition interlock technology already exists in other transportation settings and in parts of Europe. While safety advocates broadly support the idea as a way to better protect students, the recommendation is expected to face resistance from parts of the school transportation industry over cost, implementation, and operational concerns, even as data shows school buses are generally very safe compared to other modes of travel.
- [🔗 Cities May be Hesitant Over Robotaxi Adoption:](#) New York City has ended its pilot of robotaxis operated by Waymo, with city officials showing little interest in expanding the technology as state leaders also pull back on broader legalization efforts. While companies like Tesla and Zoox push ahead in other cities, historian Peter Norton argues that New York's caution reflects lessons from repeated cycles of overhyped transportation innovations that promise transformative benefits but often underdeliver. He warns that autonomous vehicle proponents may be reshaping public perception to make the technology seem inevitable, despite enduring constraints like vehicle size, street space, and safety tradeoffs. Rather than embracing AVs as a breakthrough, Norton contends policymakers should demand clear evidence of public benefit and consider whether doubling down on car-based systems, autonomous or not, actually serves broader mobility goals.

- [🔗 How Will US Drivers React to the On-Going Oil Crisis?:](#) The Brookings Institution released an analysis showing that rising gas prices following recent conflict in the Middle East are putting significant financial pressure on US households, with prices increasing by more than \$1 per gallon in a short period and likely to remain elevated due to ongoing supply disruptions. Although vehicles are more fuel-efficient today, most Americans still rely heavily on driving with limited alternatives, meaning higher prices can disproportionately strain household budgets, particularly for lower-income and rural residents. While the impacts vary by region and income, they contribute to broader economic stress and could influence upcoming elections. Although there are few short-term solutions, the situation may drive longer-term policy changes, including improving fuel efficiency, expanding transportation alternatives, and reducing reliance on driving.
- [🔗 Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia Hosting Webinar on Data Center Development:](#) The Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia is hosting a free webinar on May 11 that will explore the rise of data centers in rural communities, covering economic impacts, workforce needs, and strategies for local preparation. Featuring expert speakers and real-world insights, the session is designed for rural development stakeholders interested in how this trend could shape local economies. Register for the webinar [here](#).

💰 Notice of Funding Opportunities

- [🔗 All Stations Accessibility Program \(ASAP\):](#) Assists in the financing of capital projects to repair, improve, modify, retrofit, or relocate infrastructure of stations or facilities to make all public area of the station accessible to people with disabilities, including those who use wheelchairs.
 - **Deadline:** May 1, 2026
- [🔗 Passenger Ferry Program, Electric or Low-Emitting Ferry Pilot Program, and Ferry Service for Rural Communities Program:](#) The ferry grant programs help modernize terminal infrastructure, launch new ferry routes, and fund new ferries to connect American families to their jobs and communities more efficiently.
 - **Deadline:** May 11, 2026
- [🔗 Safe Streets and Roads for All \(SS4A\):](#) Supports local initiatives to prevent death and serious injury on roads and streets, commonly referred to as "Vision Zero" or "Toward Zero Deaths" initiatives. The SS4A program supports the US Department of Transportation's (DOT) [National Roadway Safety Strategy](#) and a goal of zero deaths and serious injuries on our nation's roadways.
 - **Deadline:** May 26, 2026
- [🔗 Port Infrastructure Development Program \(PIDP\):](#) The Port Infrastructure Development Program (PIDP) is a discretionary grant program administered by the Maritime Administration. Funds for the PIDP are awarded on a competitive basis to projects that improve the safety, efficiency, or reliability of the movement of goods into, out of, around, or within a port.
 - **Deadline:** June 1, 2026
- [🔗 Railroad Crossing Elimination Grant Program \(RCE\):](#) The purpose of the Crossing Safety Program is to fund highway-rail or pathway-rail grade crossing improvement projects, including



but not limited to grade crossing elimination projects, that focus on improving the safety and mobility of people and goods.

- **Deadline:** June 8, 2026
- [🔗 Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements Program \(CRISI\)](#): This program provides funding for projects that improve the safety, efficiency, and reliability of intercity passenger and freight rail.
 - **Deadline:** June 22, 2026
- [🔗 Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities \(BRIC\)](#): Provides federal funds to states, US territories, federally recognized tribal governments, and local governments for hazard mitigation activities by supporting the modernization of infrastructure and promoting community resilience against natural hazards.
 - **Deadline:** July 23, 2026

[➔](#) Access **AMPO's NOFO Tracker** [here](#).

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