



The National Beat

February 6, 2026

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Feature Focus

USDOT Grant Rescissions, FY26 Appropriations Update, and the SELF Drive Act of 2026

[DOT and CDC to Cut \\$1.5 Billion in Grants](#)

On Feb. 4, OMB instructed USDOT and the CDC to **rescind over \$1.5 billion in grants** from Democrat-led states based on claims that they had wasted and mismanaged taxpayer funding. **USDOT was ordered to cancel \$943 million, mostly funding for EV infrastructure**, and the CDC was ordered to cancel \$602 million in funding for disease-specific research and health-related research targeted for noncompliance with administrative priorities. The states that have been most impacted so far include California, Colorado, Illinois, and Minnesota.

There is currently no press release or list of cancelled projects by USDOT. Projects that have been identified include those involving EV charging stations and particularly those a part of the Charging and Fueling Infrastructure Grant Program ([CFI](#)). Specifically, the projects impacted in Colorado and San Francisco were CFI [Round 1B Recipients](#), and the Illinois and Minnesota EV projects were CFI [Round 2 Recipients](#). In total, CFI has awarded over \$1 billion in funding to 100 recipients, and OMB has expressed that additional grant cancellations can be expected.

This news has followed multiple statements from the administration that funding cuts could be targeting states that either do not comply with [federal CDL standards](#) or those that have implemented “[sanctuary city](#)” policies. This action is likely to be challenged through litigation especially following the recent [funding freeze by HHS](#) over social services in California, Colorado, Illinois, Minnesota, and New York.

Impacted projects are listed below and we will be monitoring any further cancellations. If your MPO has been contacted regarding any of your awarded grants, please reach out to Katie Economou, Legislative Director, at keconomou@ampo.org.

State	Project	Funding
Illinois	A state Environmental Protection Agency project to build EV charging stations.	\$100 million
	A research study to translate the Commercial Driver’s License test into Spanish.	\$3.6 million
Minnesota	A project to place EV chargers in poor neighborhoods and in environmental justice communities.	\$15 million
Colorado	A project to place EV chargers in low- and moderate-income neighborhoods.	\$4.9 million
California	A project to create accessible EV charging stations in disadvantaged communities in nine counties around San Francisco.	\$4.9 million
	Funding would go toward the State’s climate change adaptation plan.	\$2 million

[FY2026 Federal Appropriations Update](#)

Recap:

Last week, **Congress advanced the final set of FY2026 appropriations bills** covering Defense, Financial Services and General Government, Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, the Department of State, National Security, Housing and Urban Development, and Transportation (Read AMPO's analysis of THUD [here](#)). Funding for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) was removed from the package and instead extended through a short-term continuing resolution to allow negotiations to continue.

The House had previously passed the full appropriations package with broad support (**341-88**), but new disagreements in the Senate regarding immigration enforcement required DHS funding to be addressed separately (Read AMPO's analysis of FY26 Appropriations [here](#)).

What Happened:

- The Senate passed the House appropriations package with bipartisan support and support from the White House. DHS funding was stripped out and instead funded through **Feb. 13, 2026**.
- Because the Senate modified the House legislation, the House was required to vote again this week, after returning from recess. This delay triggered a **partial government shutdown that started on Jan. 30**.
- The House expedited the legislative process and passed the amended Senate package by a narrow vote (**217-214**) despite some reservations among House Republicans.
- On Feb. 3, President Trump signed [HR 7148](#) into law, funding the Department of Transportation and the rest of the federal government through September 2026, while extending **DHS funding only through Feb. 13**.
- The partial shutdown only lasted **four days**, and negotiations over full-year DHS funding are now ongoing ahead of the new Feb. 13 deadline.

[SELF DRIVE Act](#)

On Jan. 13, 2026, the House Energy & Commerce Committee held a [hearing](#) on legislative options to strengthen vehicle safety, affordability, and consumer choice. While the intent of the hearing was to discuss sixteen auto-related bills, much of the focus was centered on the bipartisan [SELF Drive Act](#). Introduced by Rep. Bob Latta (R-OH) and Rep. Debbie Dingell (D-MI), the bill would be the foundation of a national federal framework for autonomous vehicles (AVs) by setting safety standards, creating a national crash data repository, and clarifying federal and state regulatory roles.

***The TL;DR:** The SELF Drive Act would establish a national framework for regulating autonomous vehicles by requiring manufacturers to prove their systems are safe, creating a federal crash-data reporting system, and setting performance standards for AV operation. It*



also clarifies federal authority over AV regulation while allowing deployment of fully driverless vehicles under defined safety rules.

Background and Context

AV development has accelerated over the past few years with major commercial deployment by companies such as Waymo, Tesla, and Aurora. The federal government has yet to establish a regulatory framework, relying instead on local and state laws, and on limited federal safety exemptions. The SELF Drive Act was previously introduced in 2017 and 2021 but failed to receive enough congressional support to become law. Now, the sentiment among the House, [Senate](#), and [Secretary Duffy](#) has changed, with growing interest in establishing a national AV framework.

What the Bill Would Do

- 1. Update AV Safety Requirements:** The bill updates federal statute to define automated driving systems (ADS) and requires manufacturers to submit a USDOT-compliant **Safety Case** demonstrating their system is safe. Safety cases must address the following:
 - Hardware and software
 - Sensors, braking, steering, and computing
 - System redundancies
 - Operational Design Domain (where the vehicle can safely operate)
 - Hazard analysis and validation testing
 - Crash-avoidance capability
 - How the vehicle responds to emergencies and failures
 - Communication and warning systems to surrounding road users

The legislation would also establish baseline ADS performance expectations, including detecting vulnerable road users, complying with traffic laws, and the ability to safely perform full driving tasks.

- 2. Create a National Automated Vehicle Crash Data System:** Manufacturers must report qualifying crashes involving ADS vehicles, including fatalities, injuries, police-reported incidents, involvement of vulnerable road users, whether the vehicle operated outside its intended conditions, and crash details. The system would provide public access to non-confidential data, allow state regulators access to crash information, and require quarterly reporting of miles driven with ADS engaged.
- 3. Establish Federal Preemption:** The bill would prevent local governments and states from enacting any regulation or law that restricts AV deployment for manufacturers that have developed safety cases compliant with federal requirements.
- 4. Establish Testing Exemption for Commercial Use:** The bill would allow exemptions for manufacturers to engage in commercial operations involving freight and passengers with AV vehicles that do not have certain manual controls (such as steering wheels) usually required by federal motor vehicle safety standards ([FMVSS](#))

The Road Ahead:

Support for a federal AV regulatory framework continues to grow across Congress and within USDOT, with both chambers holding hearings on AVs and the Secretary Duffy signaling interest in advancing [AV deployment and innovation](#). However, concerns remain regarding [USDOT and NHTSA's capacity](#) to implement and enforce the legislation, the reliability of the safety case



model, and potential impacts on labor and other stakeholders. Until these issues are addressed, the bill's legislative path forward remains uncertain.

Helpful Resources:

- [Draft Legislative Text](#)
- [Senate Commerce AV Hearing](#)
- [House E&C AV Hearing](#)



Federal Roundup

Congress: Reauthorization and Legislative Activity
Administration & Agencies: USDOT Updates



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 actively exchanging draft sections. Titles covering **NHTSA, FMCSA, FTA, and FHWA have already 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.
 - House timing remains aggressive. Bill text is *expected* to be released in early 2026, with markups anticipated in Q1 and potential floor consideration in early spring. Chairman Graves has stated his **goal of passing a bill out of the House this spring**. 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, Environment and Public Works (EPW) is furthest along. Chair Capito (R-WV) has indicated plans to release draft text and hold a markup in early March 2026, but she recently indicated that an **introduction of the bill may not happen until April or May**. Text exchanges and early negotiations between majority and minority EPW committee staff are beginning to take shape, suggesting the committee is further along in developing base reauthorization language. By comparison, the Commerce and Banking Committees are continuing early-stage drafting, and their timelines remain less defined.



- **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 appropriations work, expected policy debates, and the long history of surface transportation bills missing deadlines, a CR remains possible. 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 major provisions becomes significantly harder via amendment.

Congressional Buzz on Reauthorization

-  **[USDOT Proposes to Remove Federal Funding from Free Bus Transit Systems:](#)** Cities that offer **free transit service may be at risk of losing federal transit funding** following a new proposal by USDOT. This would impact cities like Kansas City, Richmond, Albuquerque, and potentially New York City. The policy is intended to address financial sustainability and safety concerns, though experts note fare-free systems can increase ridership and improve access to jobs and services. Certain exemptions would apply for seniors, students, veterans, and major events like the World Cup or Olympics, and the proposal would require congressional approval to be enacted.
-  **[Senate Commerce Committee Holds Autonomous Vehicle Hearing:](#)** At a recent Senate Commerce Committee hearing, Chairman Ted Cruz emphasized the need for Congress **to establish a clear federal framework for autonomous vehicle (AV) deployment.** Sen. Cruz argued that national standards could improve safety, support innovation, and maintain American competitiveness as AVs increasingly operate on roads today. He urged lawmakers to use the upcoming surface transportation reauthorization as a way to establish AV rules that provide regulatory clarity for safety, liability, and consumer confidence.
-  **[Senate EPW Holds Hearing on Permitting Reform:](#)** Republican and Democratic senators stressed the need for project certainty in federal permitting reform at a Senate EPW hearing, arguing that developers should not fear that approved projects will be halted by changing political priorities. Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse (D-R.I.) said progress on bipartisan reform depends on the federal agencies reversing actions that have stalled renewable energy projects like wind and solar, which he described as undermining trust needed to move forward. Lawmakers from both parties emphasized that **reforms should make the permitting process more predictable and durable** so energy and infrastructure projects can proceed without stoppages.

Introduced Legislation Related to Reauthorization

-  **[Senate Bill 3728:](#)** Senator Tim Sheehy (R-MT) introduced S.3728 to remove the requirement that the Secretary of Transportation consider committed or anticipated non-Federal funding for long-distance intercity passenger rail routes under the Corridor



Identification and Development Program. The bill was introduced in the Senate and referred to the Senate Commerce Committee.

- [🔗 Senate Bill 3742](#): Senator Edward Markey (D-MA) introduced S.3742 to improve incident reporting for certain autonomous vehicles and address related safety and regulatory issues. The bill was introduced in the Senate and referred to the Senate Commerce Committee.
- [🔗 House Resolution 7353](#): Representative Yvette Clarke (D-NY) introduced HR.7353 to require automatic emergency braking and similar crash-avoidance technology in light vehicles to detect and respond across a wider range of driving scenarios. The bill was introduced in the House and referred to House E&C.
- [🔗 Senate Bill 3773](#): Senator Tom Cotton (R-AR) introduced S. 3773 to **condition Federal Highway funding on State compliance with Federal immigration enforcement policies** related to driver's licensing and information sharing. The bill was introduced in the Senate and referred to Senate EPW.

Industry Perspectives on Reauthorization

- [🔗 The APA's 2026 Policy Priorities](#): The American Planning Association's federal policy priorities center on strengthening communities through coordinated infrastructure investment, housing supply, climate resilience, and equitable economic development. The agenda emphasizes modernizing transportation, supporting data-driven planning, and ensuring federal programs better align with local and regional needs, particularly as communities face growth, climate risks, and evolving mobility demands. Notably, APA priorities **reinforce the role of MPOs, calling for stronger federal support for regional planning capacity, improved coordination across jurisdictions, and policies that give MPOs the tools and resources needed to lead long-range transportation, housing, and infrastructure planning**. The priorities stress that MPOs are essential for integrating land use, transportation, and climate goals at the regional scale and for ensuring federal investments are implemented efficiently and equitably.
- [🔗 AASHTO President Russell R. McMurry Outlines his Priorities](#): AASHTO recently released a Presidential Profile for their 2025-2026 president, Russell R. McMurry. As the current president of AASHTO and the Commissioner of the Georgia Department of Transportation, the profile highlights both McMurry's career and current emphasis areas for the coming year. McMurry's priority focus for the next year will be on surface reauthorization, **ensuring that states have predictable and stable funding** to plan and deliver transportation projects. He is also focused on **project delivery**, emphasizing the need to streamline the concept to construction process. He is lastly committed to ensuring safety through the implementation of **new technology** and in establishing **safe system approaches** to reduce roadway fatalities.

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

- [🔗 Senate Commerce Committee Advances Key USDOT and Transportation Related Nominees](#): The **Senate Commerce Committee advanced five nominations** for

transportation related positions. Notably, John DeLeeuw was nominated to be a Member of the National Transportation Safety Board, Daniel Edwards was nominated to be an Assistant Secretary of Transportation, and Ryan McCormack was nominated to be Under Secretary of Transportation for Policy at USDOT.

-  [The House Plans to Vote on Critical Housing Bill](#): House leadership is targeting the week of Feb. 9 for a vote on the bipartisan Housing for the 21st Century Act ([HR 6644](#)), which aims to address the growing housing affordability crisis. The bill, cleared by the House Financial Services Committee in December, includes 25 provisions to expand housing supply, modernize local development programs, enhance rural and manufactured housing, strengthen protections for borrowers, and promote transit-oriented development (TOD). Passage in the House could give members leverage in negotiating with the Senate's ROAD to Housing Act, though differences between the chambers' versions may force negotiations around the final legislation.
-  [Democratic Lawmakers Urge USDOT to Reverse CAFE Standards Ruling](#): A group of 78 Democratic lawmakers led by Rep. Doris Matsui, Sen. Ed Markey, and Rep. Sharice Davids is urging the Trump administration to **withdraw a proposed rollback of federal vehicle fuel-efficiency (CAFE) standards**. They argue the change would raise costs for consumers, weaken vehicle efficiency, and increase U.S. reliance on foreign oil, while undermining decades of innovation that have improved fuel economy and lowered fuel expenses for drivers. The lawmakers also warned that the proposal would sharply lower required fleetwide fuel economy for future vehicles and eliminate credits that help reduce electric-vehicle manufacturing costs, and they called on the Department of Transportation to maintain existing standards to keep vehicles cleaner, more affordable, and more efficient.



Administration & Agencies

USDOT

-  [New Jersey and New York Attorneys Sue USDOT Over the Gateway Tunnel Project](#): New Jersey and New York, joined by the Gateway Development Commission, have filed a federal lawsuit against USDOT alleging the federal government is illegally withholding **roughly \$15 billion in previously committed funding** for the \$16 billion Gateway Tunnel project connecting New Jersey to New York City. Plaintiffs warn the funding freeze threatens a critical Northeast transportation corridor, thousands of jobs, and ongoing construction, which could halt as early as Feb. 6 despite more than \$1 billion already invested and construction already ongoing. The lawsuit claims USDOT breached grant and loan agreements and suggests the funding freeze may be politically motivated, while Governors Mikie Sherrill and Kathy Hochul and state attorney general's say they will seek emergency relief in court to force the federal government to restore funding and prevent the project from stalling.
-  [USDOT Plans to Roll Back Heavy-Duty Pickup Trucks and Vans Vehicle Mileage Standards](#): USDOT announced plans to roll back fuel economy standards for heavy-duty pickup trucks and vans, reversing stricter targets set under the previous administration. NHTSA Administrator Jonathan Morrison said the move is aimed at ensuring "realistic standards" that



do not harm American consumers or commercial vehicle operators. Past USDOT rules would have required the nation's heavy-duty fleet to reach 35 mpg by 2035, but the new administration is now moving to reset those targets along with future efforts potentially targeting standards for passenger cars and light trucks.

- [!\[\]\(97d7445697a94970d6443da16b12b5fa_img.jpg\) **USDOT Request for Information-Research to Support the Creation of a National Strategy for Transportation Digital Infrastructure:**](#) The USDOT's Office of the Assistant Secretary for Research and Technology is seeking input from the public, industry, and transportation agencies on research and development priorities to modernize the nation's transportation system through large-scale digital infrastructure. Responses to this request for information will help shape a coordinated national strategy for Transportation Digital Infrastructure, guiding future operations, safety, asset management, and technology deployment across all modes, including highway, rail, air, maritime, transit, and pipelines. Written **comments are due by March 6, 2026**, and should be submitted to TDI-Strategy-RFI@dot.gov.
- [!\[\]\(258b828d223cb6b35d2b001cf8c6c1e7_img.jpg\) **USDOT Blocks Federal Funding for City Traffic Cameras:**](#) USDOT is **blocking cities from using SS4A grants for automated cameras** that target speeding or other traffic violations, with the exception of places like school or work zones, signaling a broader shift away from safety measures that could slow vehicle travel. The move affects projects aimed at reducing crashes and fatalities, while still allowing some exceptions for transit stops, roundabouts, and other limited curb extensions, and has drawn criticism from safety advocates who call speed and red-light cameras "proven lifesaving tools." The administration's stance, coupled with political opposition from some House Republicans, highlights ongoing tensions over balancing road safety, traffic enforcement, and roadway capacity for cars.
- [!\[\]\(3ae3791b31be30fab239cd4ec63dfafe_img.jpg\) **Federal Judge Rules that USDOT Illegally Withheld \\$1B in EV Charging Funding:**](#) A federal judge ruled that USDOT illegally **withheld about \$1 billion in National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Formula** funding from 20 states and the District of Columbia, finding that the FHWA acted outside their authority in suspending the program. Since the program was designed under IIJA, states had already had plans approved when funding was halted.
- [!\[\]\(7835479178eea406b1967e30c6fcf845_img.jpg\) **FTA Terminates Transportation Planning Rulemaking:**](#) The FTA has **formally terminated its rulemaking on updates** to statewide, nonmetropolitan, and metropolitan transportation planning regulations, withdrawing it from the Spring 2025 Unified Agenda. The agency cited that further rulemaking does not align with FTA's current priorities, objectives, or needs, though it may revisit the issues in the future under a new regulatory process. The termination reflects the administration's broader effort to review and streamline regulations deemed unnecessary or burdensome.

USDOT Enforcement Actions on CDL Compliance

USDOT is significantly escalating enforcement of federal commercial driver's license (CDL) requirements, signaling that states that fail to correct identified violations risk losing substantial federal transportation funding. These actions continue to raise legal, operational, and workforce concerns across several states. Read the [Jan. 9, 2026 National Beat](#) for additional context.

- [!\[\]\(3b1126276ab595460f0818d2b853c7d3_img.jpg\) **USDOT Defends their CDL Rule:**](#) FMCSA is defending its controversial rule tightening restrictions and data collection for non-domiciled CDLs and commercial learner's permits, even as a coalition of 19 states has legally challenged the policy and a federal court has

temporarily blocked enforcement. The agency says it needs better data and stricter verification to ensure states properly issue and track CDLs so that drivers' legal work authorization and compliance with safety standards can be audited and enforced. Despite state objections that the rule oversteps FMCSA's authority, duplicates existing federal efforts, and burdens state licensing agencies, the administration plans to seek a three-year extension of the data collection and proceed with enforcement once the legal stay is lifted.

- [!\[\]\(ef9d0f80c5c0f7b4bed9fcc98d310922_img.jpg\) **Judge Denies California Push to Resume Non-Domicile CDL Licensing:**](#) A federal judge refused to order the California DMV to resume issuing and renewing non-domiciled CDLs to immigrant truck drivers, rejecting a request from a group representing Chinese American drivers seeking to compel the state to defy federal restrictions. **The decision upholds the freeze on these CDL renewals** amid a broader conflict between California and federal officials over compliance with new CDL eligibility and verification standards. The ruling leaves California's pause on non-domiciled CDL issuance while legal and administrative disputes continue over how the state must implement federal driver-licensing rules.
- [!\[\]\(999a5e3fc9b7a6ab64b477dbcd2c0571_img.jpg\) **Tennessee Considers Legislation Impose Criminal Penalties for CDL Violations:**](#) Tennessee lawmakers are considering bills that would impose strict liability on motor carriers if undocumented drivers operating commercial motor vehicles cause injury or property damage, including mandatory minimum punitive damages of \$1 million. The legislation, introduced as Senate Bill 1587 and House Bill 1706, also creates a Class A misdemeanor for undocumented persons driving CMVs and allows law enforcement to notify federal immigration authorities. The bills include a "qui tam" provision, enabling private individuals to sue on behalf of themselves and the state, with a portion of any settlement or award going to the plaintiff.
- [!\[\]\(4a22a098f67aa2577f972ec4d67f1799_img.jpg\) **USDOT, FMCSA Seeks Public Input on Non-Domiciled CDL Information Collection:**](#) FMCSA is seeking public comments on its plan to request full three-year approval for the collection of information on non-domiciled CDL records. This follows the September 2025 interim final rule restricting states' ability to issue CLPs and CDLs to individuals domiciled outside the U.S., which was previously approved on an emergency basis set to expire February 28, 2026. Comments on the proposed information collection must be submitted by March 2, 2026, through the federal comment portal.
- [!\[\]\(cc98cec0bccb74dd8513e7d4ab71b1e8_img.jpg\) **USDOT Closes 7,500 CDL Schools:**](#) Secretary Duffy announced a federal crackdown on CDL training schools, warning that programs failing to meet federal safety and training standards could face enforcement action. The move is part of a broader effort to tighten oversight of the trucking workforce, improve highway safety, and ensure drivers are properly qualified. Federal officials signaled increased audits and potential penalties for noncompliant schools as the administration pushes stricter enforcement of existing commercial driver requirements.
- [!\[\]\(387c11e31cceec9930b7807a52410275_img.jpg\) **USDOT Declares English Proficiency Safety Zones:**](#) FMCSA issued new guidance clarifying where truck drivers will not be placed out of service (OOS) for failing English Language Proficiency (ELP) requirements. While the Trump administration previously mandated strict nationwide enforcement, the agency created geographic exceptions within designated commercial border zones, where inspectors may cite violations but allow drivers to continue operating. Outside those zones, updated inspection software automatically classifies ELP failures as OOS violations, and failing the language test can also trigger formal driver disqualification proceedings.



National News

- [🔗 Reforming Permitting Could Cut Emissions and Accelerate Renewable Energy:](#) The Bipartisan Policy Center completed an analysis looking at how delays and uncertainty in federal permitting for energy infrastructure are slowing the deployment of clean power, ever increasing our reliance on higher-emitting fossil generation, and raising greenhouse gas emissions. Utility-scale renewable projects, including solar and wind, face disproportionately long NEPA reviews and higher litigation risk compared to fossil fuel projects, which benefit from permitting precedents and categorical exclusions. Reforming permitting to make reviews faster and more predictable, without weakening environmental protections, would accelerate the clean energy development and reduce power-sector emissions.
- [🔗 Waymo Begins Service at the San Francisco International Airport \(SFO\):](#) San Francisco International Airport (SFO) has approved Waymo to begin offering its fully autonomous passenger ride service to and from the airport, launching the final phase of a pilot program that started in September 2025. Initially available for select passengers, Waymo vehicles will pick up and drop off at the SFO Rental Car Center Level 1 curbside, with access to the main terminals via the AirTrain, and the service is expected to expand over time. Airport and city leaders highlighted this as a new safe, sustainable, and innovative transportation option that enhances the traveler experience and supports San Francisco's economic recovery.
- [🔗 How Improving Road Safety also Helps the Climate:](#) An Evergreen Action analysis argued that improving road safety can also deliver major climate benefits, with stronger federal safety accountability projected to cut emissions equivalent to taking about 1.5 million cars off the road over the next 20 years. Because transportation is the nation's largest source of greenhouse gas emissions, policies that push states to reduce traffic deaths can also encourage investments in safer, lower-emission options like transit, walking, and biking. The piece underscores that safety policy, even when not labeled as climate action, can be a powerful tool for reducing emissions while saving lives.
- [🔗 President Trump Announces that DC will Host an IndyCar Race:](#) President Trump announced that Washington, D.C., will host the first-ever street IndyCar race in the nation's capital on Aug. 23, part of the America250 celebrations. The Freedom 250 Grand Prix will feature a route near the National Mall and iconic monuments, with city and federal agencies working alongside organizers to finalize a suitable course. Trump and Secretary Duffy emphasized the spectacle and patriotic theme, noting the race will be free to the public.
- [🔗 Study Shows Correlation between Electric Vehicle Use and Improving Air Quality:](#) Researchers at the Keck School of Medicine of USC have found that neighborhoods in California with more zero-emissions vehicles saw significant reductions in nitrogen dioxide pollution, with every 200 new zero-emission vehicle linked to a 1.1% drop in nitrogen dioxide levels. Using satellite data from 2019 to 2023, the study confirmed that the shift to electric and plug-in hybrid cars is already improving air quality and public health, even before widespread adoption. The findings, published in *The Lancet Planetary Health*, suggest that continued zero-emission vehicle adoption could lead to further health benefits, and researchers are now exploring correlations with asthma-related hospital visits.
- [🔗 A Call for Stable Intercity Rail Funding:](#) U.S. intercity passenger rail has historically relied on inconsistent federal funding, which has limited long-term planning, delayed projects, and



constrained modernization efforts. IIJA provided five years of advanced appropriations, allowing Amtrak and partners to expand staff, address backlogs, and fund major capital projects, resulting in record ridership and revenue. Policymakers now face a choice to either establish a permanent, predictable funding framework to sustain rail efficiency and service expansion or risk reverting to the unstable, short-term funding model that undermines progress.

Notice of Funding Opportunities

-  [Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Grant Program – National:](#) Provides funding for capital projects that reduce the state of good repair backlog, improve performance, or expand or establish new intercity passenger rail service, including privately operated intercity passenger rail service, if an eligible applicant is involved.
 - **Deadline:** Feb. 6, 2026
-  [Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development \(BUILD\) Grant Program:](#) The goal of the program is to fund projects that will have a significant local or regional impact and improve transportation infrastructure.
 - **Deadline:** Feb. 24, 2026
-  [Port Infrastructure Development Program \(PIDP\):](#) Supports port and industry stakeholders to improve port and freight related infrastructure. PDIP funding specifically supports projects that improve the safety, efficiency, or reliability of the movement of goods into, out of, around, or within a port.
 - **Deadline:** Feb. 28, 2026

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