

IBTTA and the 115th Congress

The International Bridge, Tunnel and Turnpike Association (IBTTA) is the worldwide association for the owners and operators of toll facilities and service providers to the toll industry. Our mission is to advance toll financed transportation. Founded in 1932, IBTTA has more than 60 toll agency members operating in 35 states in the U.S. and hundreds more in 20 countries on six continents. The 115th Congress has many important issues to address in 2017, the following are IBTTA legislative priorities for we will advocate to Congress and the Administration.

Remove Prohibitions on Tolling Existing Non-Tolled Interstate Highways

IBTTA is asking that the states be given maximum flexibility to meet their individual transportation funding challenges, including through the use of tolling on existing Interstate System routes. IBTTA believes relaxing federal constraints related to tolling of the existing Interstate System should be a priority in any further program extensions or authorizations. Removing the barriers to tolling would encourage states to begin the massive effort to reinvest in failing highways and build new ones. That investment, in turn, will create jobs and help strengthen the economy.

Responding to the Administration's proposals for Infrastructure Improvements

The Trump Administration has suggested a significant effort to address outstanding national infrastructure needs by expediting opportunities for private capital to play a role as well as greater reliance on non-Federal revenue sources (i.e. state and local governments). We anticipate helping to communicate the long-standing utility of toll authorities and concessions in providing well-maintained, safe and efficient transportation facilities that also generate their own revenues to support their operation.

Implementation of the Interstate System Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Pilot Program (ISRRPP)

The 2015 FAST Act made IBTTA supported changes to the Interstate System Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Pilot Program (ISRRPP) which allows three instances of converting an existing Interstate highway to a tolled facility as part of a major reconstruction of the facility. The changes require any "slot holders" to show progress in bringing the project forward or else step aside to allow other projects to be advanced. We anticipate that FHWA will, in the near future, announce the availability of two or more opportunities for new entrants to apply for the demonstration program.

TIFIA (Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act)

TIFIA provides Federal credit assistance in the form of direct loans, loan guarantees, and standby lines of credit to finance surface transportation projects of national and regional significance. This credit assistance provides improved access to capital markets, flexible repayment terms, and potentially more favorable interest rates than can be found in private capital markets for similar instruments. TIFIA can help advance qualified, large-scale projects that otherwise might be delayed or deferred because of size, complexity, or uncertainty over the timing of revenues. Many surface transportation projects – highway, transit, railroad, intermodal freight, and port access – are eligible for assistance.

The TIFIA program was first enacted in 1998 as part of TEA-21 (Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century) and was substantially modified in MAP-21 by establishing clearer metrics and timetables for program participation. Toll projects have been performing well and IBTTA supports the continuation of this program going forward.

Interoperability

The 2012 MAP-21 legislation established a calendar target (2016) by which national interoperability for electronic toll collection should exist. The legislation was silent on how this should be accomplished, which IBTTA interpreted as acquiescence with our request to Congress that this task be left to the toll industry to address.

Through IBTTA's Interoperability Committee, we have been working on this task since 2010 and have made significant progress through the cooperative efforts of IBTTA, the Alliance for Toll Interoperability (ATI), the E-ZPass Group and many others. Our intent is to continue making progress to comply with the 2016 goal, also recognizing that compliance is ultimately a decision to be made by the individual toll operators throughout North America.

Summary

These priorities represent the major policy goals of IBTTA in 2017. We also regularly respond to new or recurring Congressional and Federal issues such as toll rate "transparency," FCC spectrum and other issues that affect electronic toll collection and various regulatory rulemakings.

If you have any questions about any of our legislative issues, please contact Neil Gray, Government Affairs Director at 202-659-4620 (ext. 14) or by email at: neilgray@ibtta.org.