

| Delania Hardy from AMPO:

House and Senate are drafting bills and they are very preliminary at this point. She received many calls regarding TMA's and what type of obstacles they face.

- There is a big proposal about the threshold of MPOs and grandfathering of existing MPOs. The proposal was 100,000 and there's new discussion that the threshold may be elevated to 200,000. The language does not have strong words for grandfathering MPOs of 50,000 – 200,000. [For these MPOs to continue they must demonstrate technical capacity to continue and it will be at the discretion of the Governor and then the approval of the Secretary of Transportation.](#) Without an okay, than new non-MPOs would be turned over to the state and must come up with a two year exit plan. They would be able to continue to receive planning funds during the two years.
- There is also discussion of threshold issues from the US Census Bureau with urbanized areas; hops, skips and jumps. There are a number of changes in definition; 2.5 miles for 2000 and moving it to 1.5 miles and may cause some MPOs to go away. Census bureau has had some disagreement on this and [UZAs are to be released in October 2012.](#)
- There is a lot of reference to performance measures and it not clear to have it designated within one department at this time. For smaller MPOs, which are [Tier II MPOs that are below 1 million;](#) there are performance measure requirements; but they are not going to be penalized if you are not able to achieve the goals. They basically are required to do a lot of monitoring for the type of measurements laid out. Certification will now be done with state aid with states having an increased role. [The Secretary may delegate a “fact-finding authority” to the state for certification.](#)
- Public participation would likely increase to ensure they are actively involved and larger MPOs are going to be impacted by this.
- Goals to transportation plans in terms of land use, economic development, with the limits of local money that we have to take into consideration.
- This is all staff related – with congressional staff calling AMPO regarding questions. Not sure what will be picked up at this time. Some confusion here and there regarding a metropolitan statistical areas, etc. For both AMPO and NADO; we have brought on key former congressional staffers.

Matt from NADO

Even though it was a leaked bill and we know the career staff biases are and there is great influence there. This threat is real. We can't wait for the House Transportation and the Senate Environment bill to be submitted. Chairman Mica wants to release his bill after Memorial Day and hopefully get it to the floor.

Senator boxer, Chairman of the Senate Environment and Public Works held a press conference on May 25 on the progress of the bipartisan authorization draft. [The draft is to be released in 2 weeks, hearings in mid-June, and a mark up before the July 4 recess. Now is the time that MPOs of 50,000-200,000 take action today.](#)

We need strong local involvement and control; local governments across the country but we need a national seamless transportation system in both state and federal levels. In these times when we are trying to tie into land use and economic development, these are local issues and they need the involvement of MPOs.

With limited or no earmarks, local officials need to be involved. Small metropolitan areas are not going to be able to earmark their way to transportation improvements.

Green Bay, Wisconsin MPO

Who do we send the correspondence to?

Response: Talk to chief of staffs and legislative directors in D.C. Message; we need you to talk to directly in the Senate with Chairman Barbara Boxer and Congressman John Mica. You need your members of Congress talking directly but this needs to be happening quickly. I need you to contact the leadership of these committees and express your concerns.

MPOs [that are solely dependent on Federal source funds](#) are forbidden from lobbying—[planning funds cannot be used for this. If you are an MPO like this, contact the electeds on your MPO board or](#) perhaps have coffee with them or the mayor of your community. [They can jump in and show why you are important.](#)

Pleasant County [\(Denver area\)](#), Colorado MPO:

Is there a fact sheet – is something that we can give them?

Response: No impact to their MPO since they are above 200,000. MPOs larger than 1 million will have additional responsibilities. Articulate your issues and have them call us and we can walk them through. As D.C. lobbyists, it is important you make them aware of some the discussions. Purpose of call is to help the non-TMAs.

#### Florida MPO Advisory Council

Can you give a little background on why they are moving in this directly and who is pushing this? You indicated both the House and Senate are looking to have the bills marked up soon? What is the timeline?

Response: Part of it is philosophical and part is because of budget. Current bill is \$283B over 6 years; but may stay at the level or may even decline. The core programs or new core programs will probably be the same SAFETEA-LU programs and will probably decline with no new resources found. There [may be between 30-40](#) new MPOs with new census. With the discussion of the climate change; what level should MPOs have to be? There is some concern over the organizational capacity of MPOs.

Schedule: Congressional process is fluid and things will continue to get postponed; as of this morning, John Mica wants a bill introduced in 3-4 weeks and it may slip. Senate wants to introduce within the next two weeks; it may not go anywhere since there is no funding element yet. Performance measurements, etc. is being drafted as we speak. No specific language – administrative draft is not law and not even a bill. Just a rumor and thinking at this point. It gets hard to change it once a bill gets introduced. Best thing is that we are overreacting.

#### Flagstaff MPO

Should we advocating for grandfathering. Planning requirements wouldn't change.

Response: Grandfathering is a good concept.

#### Florida MPO

Any discussions regarding MPO redesignation language or the current balance between the Governor and the MPOs? Redesignation is going to give the state more authority and unilateral effort.

Response – The choice is up to [MPO](#). It seems they would provide financial encouragement to do so. This may mean two UZAs grew into each other, MPOs that may share a UZA, a smaller MPO within the planning area of a larger MPO, etc. AMPO has not heard that the redesignation would be force but up to the MPOs.

#### Southern Oregon MPO

Air quality measures and air quality determination. How are they going to [address](#) those air quality issues and how they do the planning when they do away with the MPO and ask the city to do their own planning?

[Response: like with non-MPO areas, the state does it. Comment that the state is supporting the smaller MPOs](#) --In their interest for the smaller MPOs are – New York DOT – will include it in their position papers.

Flagstaff MPO - Is there a common title for this issue? Response: MPO threshold.

Vermont MPO – Any discussion about a minimum per state? Response: None seen.

Virginia MPO

Census projections for urbanized areas – likely designated as a TMA under the current designation. Would we be in a limbo?

Response: Congress has to pass a bill and FHWA has to write the regulations. There is no [mention of](#) TMA defined in [“leaked administration”](#) bill. Last time it took them nearly 2 years to put regulations together. There would be field hearings and public comments.

Waco, Texas MPO

A lot of MPOs are not looking at [TIPs](#) and MTPs being a maintenance only plan; if you don't have resources even in 20-25 years, what's the point of having a planning process. What are the true needs of our smaller regions, perhaps we need to relay that thought to our leaders and why we need to exist.

[Texas is a state with a strong statewide association of MPOs. These unified groups are in](#) across Florida, Texas, and New York [for example. Talk with the larger MPOs to help with](#) smaller MPOs [and give the Hill a statewide letter.](#)

[Ashby Johnson, AMPO Policy Committee Chair](#): working on a conference call with our non-TMAs in Texas.

Bob from NACO

When you speak to your members in Congress, this is all about disenfranchising small areas and local elected officials. There is nothing inherently different from a local elected official from a 200,000 plus MPO and less than 200,000. In these days; do not send an email. A letter is taken for security reason longer to be delivered.

Call your offices directly and ask to speak to your transportation staff person. That is the most effective way to do it. This is very timely. First choice: status quo – 50,000. Second choice: grandfathering.

Call or email Delania [for a](#) one on one discussion. Work with your larger MPOs in the state. Keep in mind it's a system. We need to keep our local elected officials at the table. And not give authority to decision makers outside the local areas.