



Smart Growth America

Improving lives by improving communities

Surface Transportation Reauthorization Primer

The Process and Path Forward for a Bipartisan Surface Transportation Bill
(13 March 2025)



Presenter



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**Transportation
for America**



National Complete
Streets Coalition



State
**Smart Transportation
Initiative**

LOCUS
Responsible Real Estate
Developers & Investors

FBCI Form-Based
Codes Institute

“We envision a country where no matter where you live, or who you are, you can enjoy living in a place that is healthy, prosperous, and resilient.”



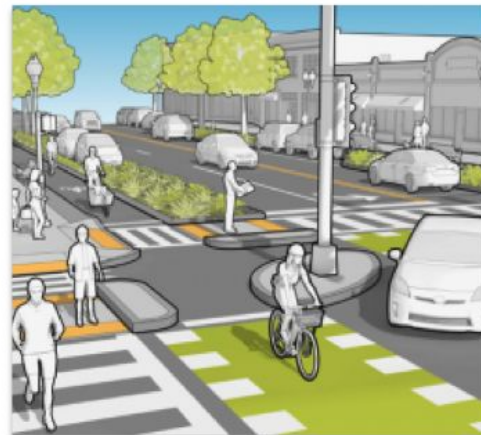
What We Do



Technical
Assistance



Advocacy



Thought
Leadership



Guiding principles for transportation investment

The time has come to elevate the national conversation about transportation beyond the cost—we need a vision for what we expect to accomplish.

America's federal transportation program does not address basic needs, and more money alone poured into this broken federal program will not suffice. Billions of dollars are spent without clear desired outcomes, and there is far too little accountability for accomplishing anything measurable and tangible.

We need to reform the 70-year-old federal program to reflect today's needs and ensure a focus on fixing our existing system first, on improving safety, and on accountability.

Learn more: t4america.org/platform

PRINCIPLE #1

Design for safety over speed

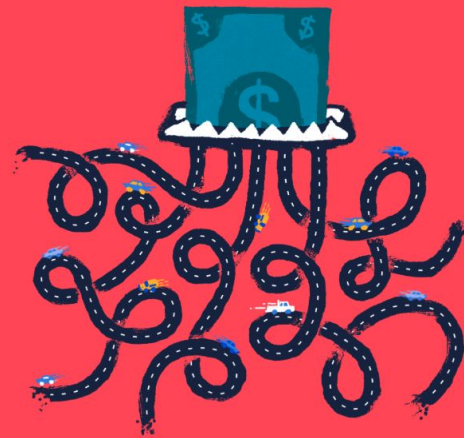
Any serious effort to reduce deaths on our streets and roads requires slower speeds. Federal funding should require approaches and street designs that put safety first.



PRINCIPLE #2

Fix it first

If your house has a leaky roof, you fix that before remodeling your kitchen. The federal transportation program should do the same and prioritize existing maintenance needs ahead of building new things which require decades of additional repair costs.



PRINCIPLE #3

Invest in the rest

For 60 years we've invested hundreds of billions of dollars in highways. Now it's time to **invest in the rest** to create a complete transportation network so more Americans can safely travel by foot, bike, bus, or train.





Who are we designing for?



Vehicles, or People?

No two communities are the same



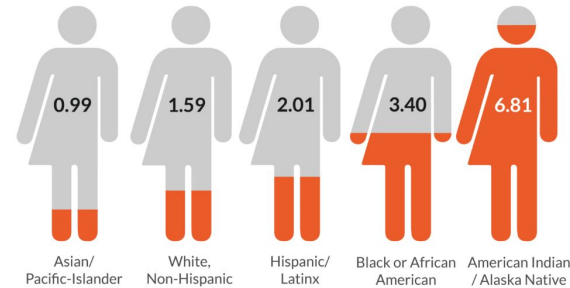


Ongoing Transportation Challenges

- Safety
- Lack of Mobility Choice
- Accessibility
- Climate Change & Resiliency



Pedestrian deaths per 100,000 by race & ethnicity (2018-2022)



Source: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, (2024). Fatality Analysis Reporting System.





We design for 9-to-5 **downtown** work trips.





metrobus

41 10:56 AM

3234

Customer Info 202-674-7800
TTY Relay 202-684-6200

BUS STOP SCHEDULE	
Line	Stop
41	41
42	42
43	43
44	44
45	45
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100	100

BUS STOP
100183

Why Renters Insurance?
Because landlords don't cover your stuff.



TURNING
VEHICLES



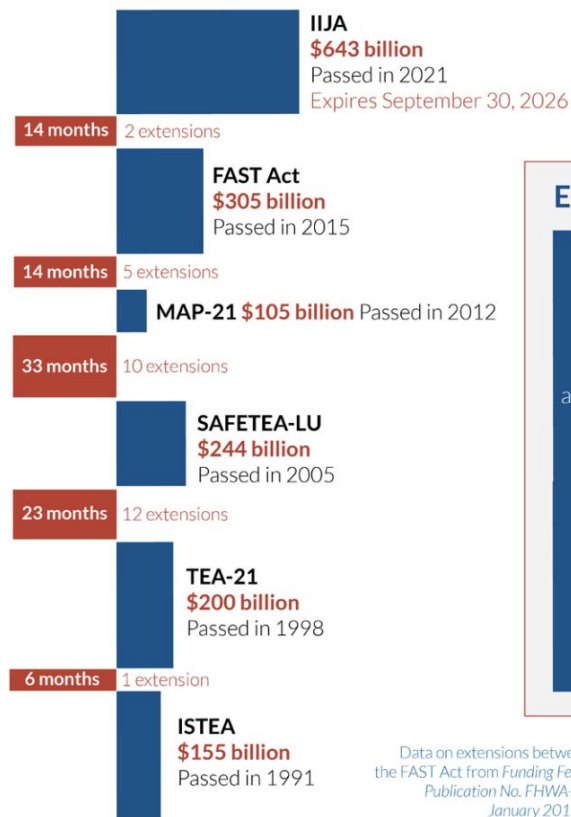
NO STANDING
OR PARKING
METROBUS ONLY
2020

ONE WAY
→





What is reauthorization?



Expect extensions

23 yrs
of normal
authorizations

The federal transportation program has operated on a **short-term extension a third of the time** since 1997.

7.5 yrs
of extensions

Data on extensions between ISTEA and the FAST Act from *Funding Federal-aid Highways*
Publication No. FHWA-PL-17-011
January 2017

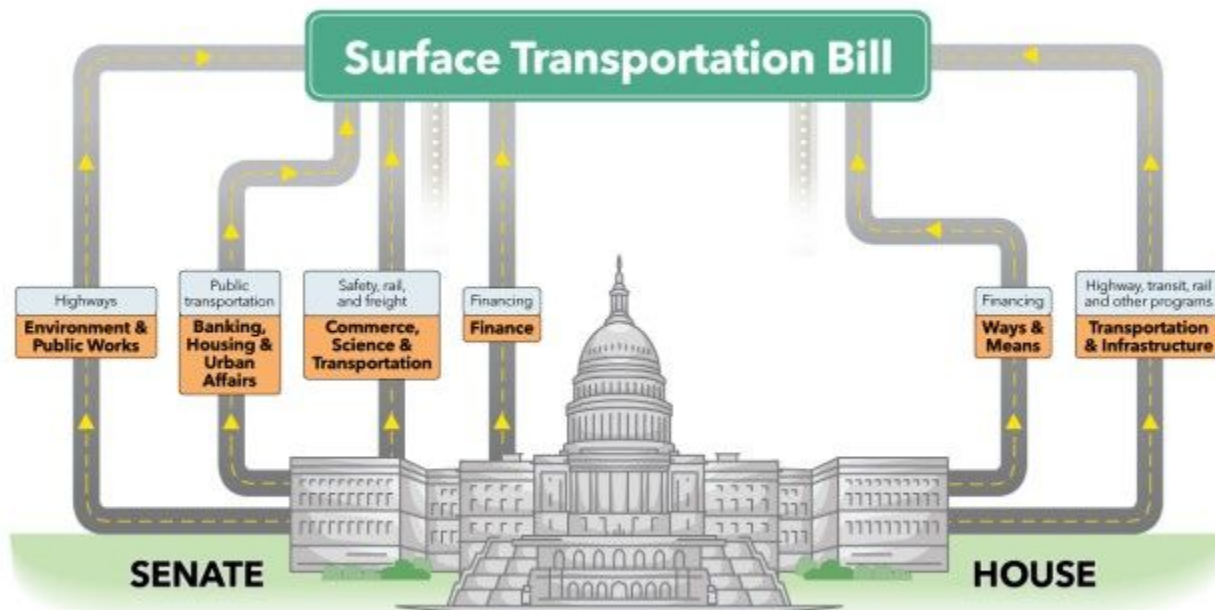




What is reauthorization?

Committees Responsible for Surface Transportation Reauthorization

Several panels will play a role in a long-term reauthorization.



Note: Additional committees – including House Energy and Commerce and Science, Space and Technology – may also be involved in the final bill.

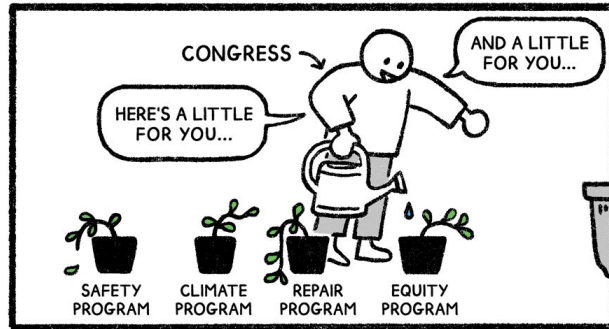
Sources: Bloomberg Government reporting, Congressional Research Service

Bloomberg Government

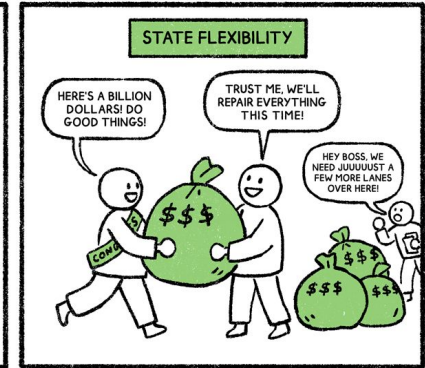
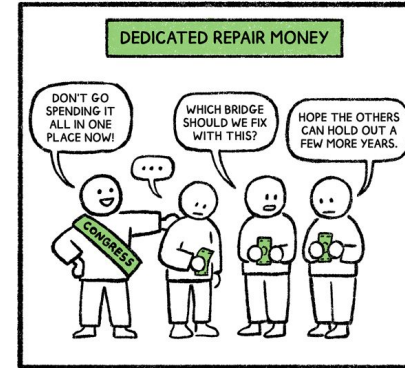


Why is reauthorization important?

WHEN CONGRESS TRIES TO SOLVE BIG TRANSPORTATION PROBLEMS

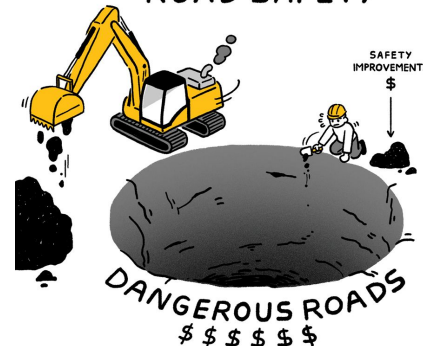


MONEY FOR REPAIRS



BY JEAN WEI FOR Transportation for America

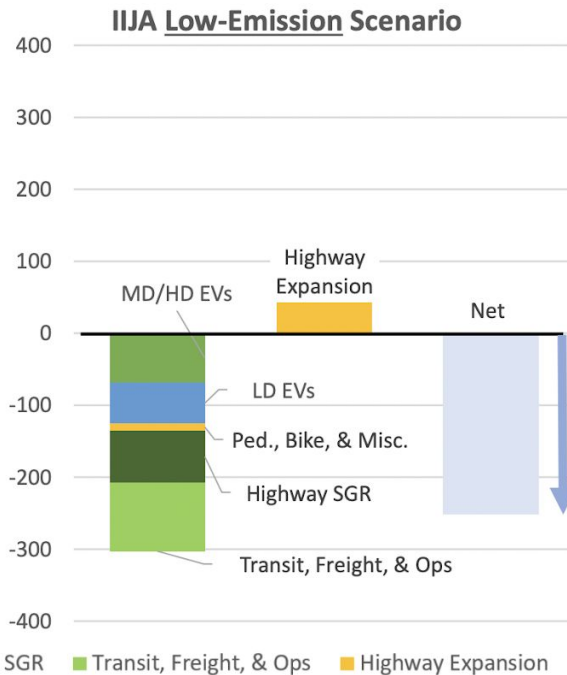
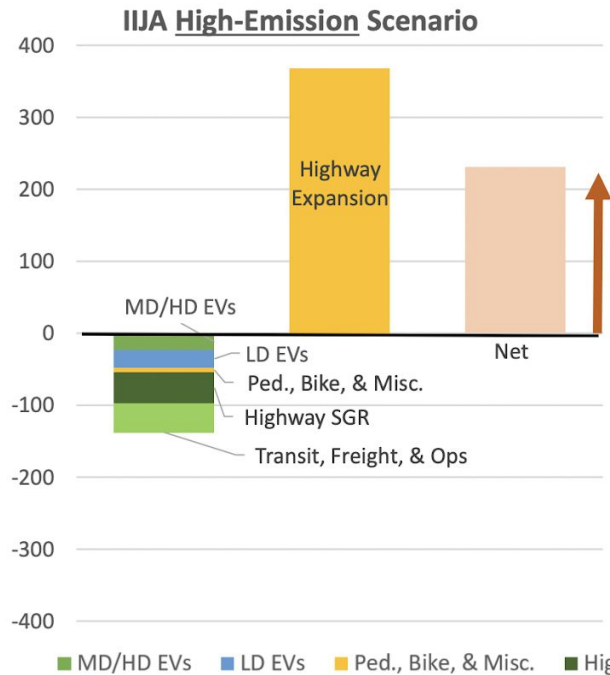
U.S. APPROACH TO ROAD SAFETY



Transportation for America

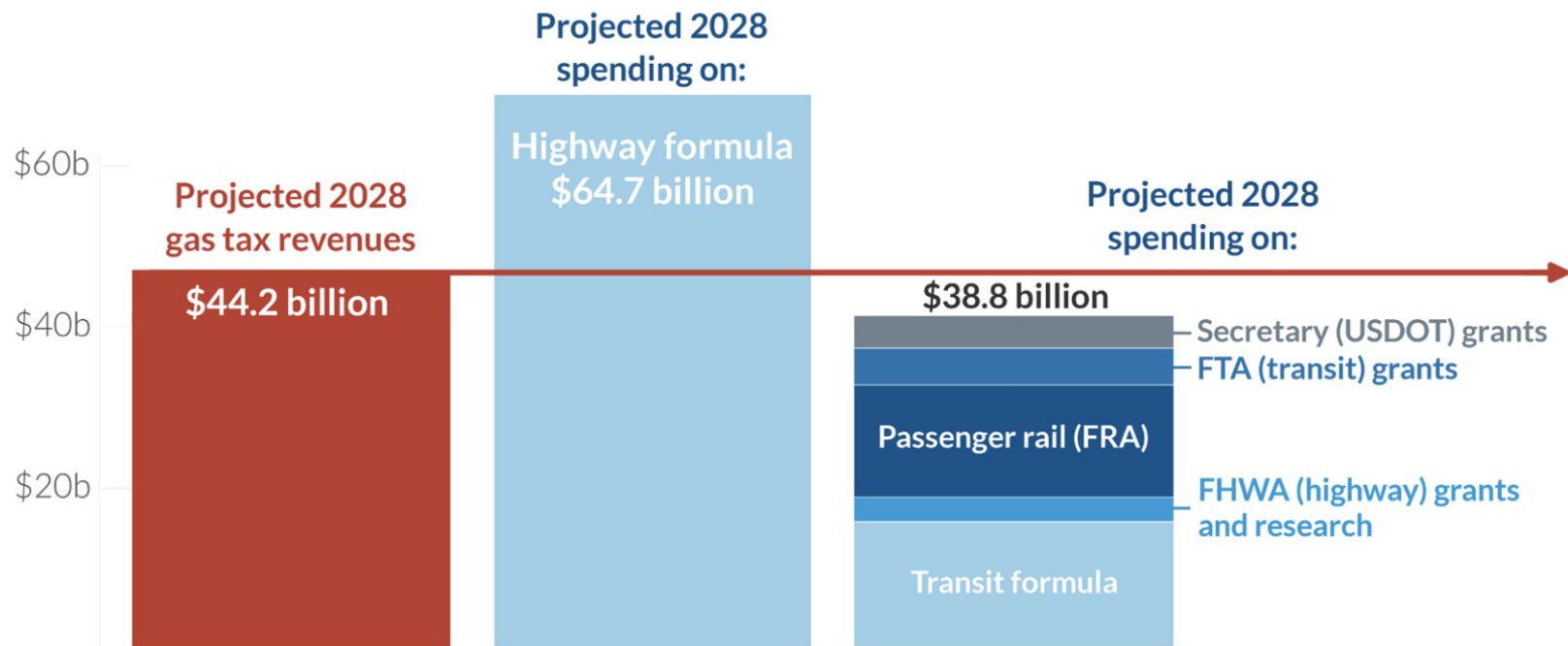


Reauthorization tackling climate?





Projected 2028 Spending in Surface Transportation



Projections for 2028 spending based on assumption of IIJA spending levels carrying forward
Gas tax projections for 2028 based on June 2024 CBO report

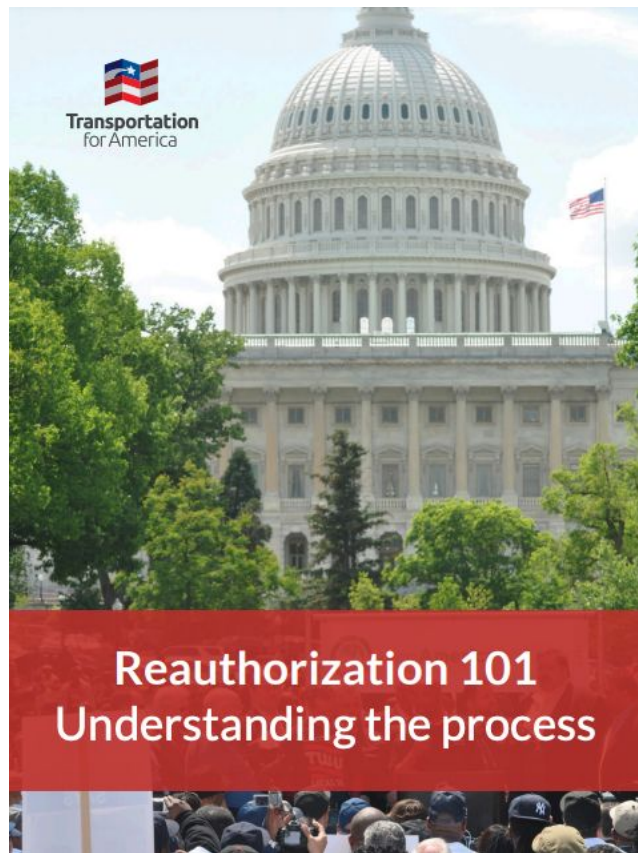
Resources



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Reauthorization 101



Surface transportation reauthorization (sometimes referred to as simply “reauthorization”) is a shorthand term for the legislative process where the federal surface transportation program is renewed—setting all policies, priorities, and funding levels for many years to come.

Our new short guide, [Reauthorization 101](https://t4america.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/T4America-Reauthorization-101-2024.pdf), explains and “dewonks” the transportation reauthorization process.

<https://t4america.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/T4America-Reauthorization-101-2024.pdf>



Fueling the Crisis

Fueling the Crisis

Climate consequences of the 2021

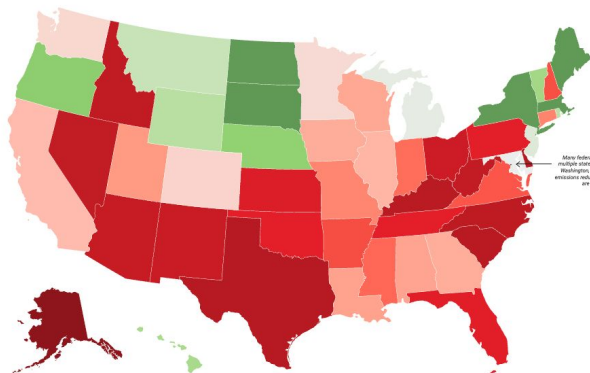


How are IIJA investments affecting carbon emissions shifts in states, per capita?

The IIJA provided states flexibility to spend federal dollars in ways that could either **reduce emissions*** (with investments in electrification, transit, walking, and biking) or **produce emissions*** (investments like highway widening that increase car usage and dependency).

Cumulative, per capita net tonnes CO₂e increase or reduction compared to baseline projections through 2040

-3.00 0.00 1.00



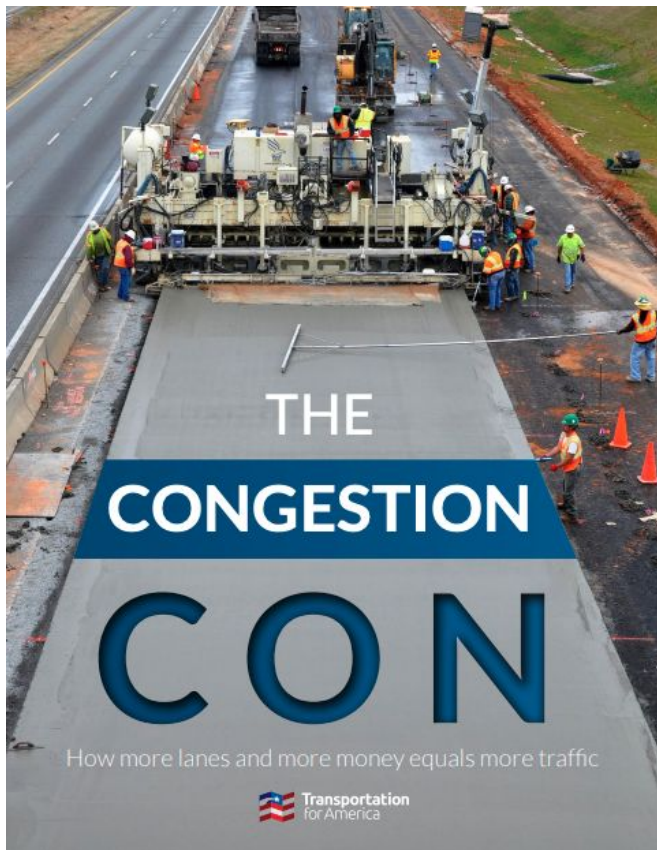
More federal aid investments serving multiple states were logged as positive in Washington, DC. Total emissions and emissions reduction attributable to GCRs are lower than listed.



<https://t4america.org/fueling-the-crisis/>



Congestion Con



Freeway capacity grew faster than population, yet delay exploded



Change in freeway lane-miles, population growth, and annual hours of delay in the largest 100 urbanized areas from 1993-2017. Delay is defined as extra time spent traveling at congested rather than free-flow speeds. While FHWA only provides data on lane-miles of freeway, TTI's delay metrics capture both freeways and arterial roads.

<https://t4america.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Congestion-Report-2020-FINAL.pdf>



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QUESTIONS

