

**2005 Air Innovations Conference**  
**August 25, 2005**  
**Remarks for New Federal Partnerships Session**  
**SAFETEA-LU and Transportation Partnerships**  
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- Good morning. I've been asked to talk about partnerships among Federal agencies that help reduce transportation emissions and to highlight some of the provisions in the new surface transportation authorization that relate to transportation and air quality and to freight programs.
- The U.S. Department of Transportation has made promotion of transportation solutions that enhancing communities and protect the natural and built environment one of its strategic objectives. We are committed to environmental stewardship and reducing air pollutant emissions from transportation and work with many partners.
- Secretary Mineta announced on August 23 a proposal to reform the Corporate Average Fuel Economy program for light trucks and set new light duty truck CAFE standards for model year 2008 and beyond. The new system would set standards for various categories of light trucks, vans and SUVs.
- On August 10 2005, the President signed the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users –or SAFETEA-LU. It authorized \$286.5 billion for highway, transit and highway safety programs through 2009.

**Selected Department of Transportation Partnerships**

**Heavy-Duty Engine Idling**

- U.S. DOT, EPA and DOE have worked together to hold workshops on heavy-duty idle-reduction technologies and projects.
- Idle-reduction projects have been funded through CMAQ, DOE Clean Cities, and EPA idle reduction grants.
- The three agencies are working on a national idle reduction plan on how to help educate government agencies, industry and stakeholders.

**Gateway Communities**

In response to significant increases in freight movements and global trade, the U.S. DOT has begun working with public and private partners to promote more efficient freight movement in key gateways. We have established intermodal freight teams to improve coordination within DOT. DOT has staff working with the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach. Air quality and other environmental concerns are becoming increasingly important at ports. We are coordinating with EPA headquarters staff and in California.

**Oceans Coordination**

Under the President's Ocean Action Plan, a cabinet-level Committee on the marine transportation system has been established to improve Federal coordination, and the first Cabinet-level meeting was held in July. The Plan also directs DOT to carry out the Freight Action Agenda to improve data and tools and coordination, and facilitate nationally significant freight projects. The public-private CREATE (Chicago Regional Environmental and Transportation Efficiency Project) that will make the rail network

more efficient and eliminate grade crossings, with safety, environmental, energy and mobility benefits is an example.

### **Technology**

DOT is a member of a number of partnerships promoting advanced vehicle technology. DOT is active in the International Partnership for the Hydrogen Economy, with a particular focus on standards for safe vehicles and infrastructure.

### **Commuting**

DOT is a founding partner in the Commuter Choice/Best Workplaces for Commuters initiative that works with employers to promote commuting by transit and other alternatives to driving alone.

### **Environmental Stewardship**

DOT leads the Interagency Transportation Infrastructure Streamlining Task Force that is collaborating to enhance environmental stewardship and streamline the decision-making process for major transportation projects. DOT's Center for Climate Change and Environmental Forecasting works within the Department and with others partners to promote awareness of potential links between transportation and global climate change, and to explore policy options to deal with such links.

### **Transportation Legislation- Highlights of Air Quality and Freight Provisions**

**Planning.** To receive Federal transportation funds, State transportation agencies and metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) must develop transportation plans and transportation improvement programs (lists of projects for Federal funding.)

- SAFETEA-LU makes some changes to the plan updates and conformity finding requirements to better align the transportation and air quality planning processes. (Sections 3005, 3006, 6001, 6011) [MPO plan updates must be not less than 4 years in nonattainment areas, 5 in attainment areas. Statewide plan updates are every 4 years. Long range plans must continue to address 20-year needs, but the MPO may elect a shorter time frame for conformity after consultation with air agencies and the public to better align plan horizons.]

**CMAQ.** The Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) has provided over \$14 billion in funds since 1991 for transportation projects that help areas meet air quality targets—projects such as clean bus purchases, trails, intermodal freight projects, and transit and ridesharing services. CMAQ amendments (Sections 1103, 1808) include:

- New ozone and PM nonattainment areas are eligible to receive funds. There are changes to the formula, but changes do not add weighting for PM areas.
- Advanced truck stop electrification projects are explicitly eligible.
- Retrofit of diesel engines is eligible, including construction equipment.
- The EPA Administrator will issue guidance on diesel retrofit technologies.
- States and MPOs will give priority to diesel retrofits and other cost-effective activities to reduce emissions in distributing CMAQ funds.

**Idle Reduction.** States can permit electrification or other idle reduction facilities and equipment in rest areas, and charge fees for use of these facilities (Section 1412).

**HOV Lanes.** States can now allow inherently low emission vehicles to use high occupancy vehicle lanes. States can allow any vehicle to use HOV lanes by paying a toll (“high occupancy toll” lanes). States may allow other low emission and energy efficient vehicles to use HOV lanes for reduced or no toll. States must restrict access by non-HOVs if HOV lane operation becomes degraded (Section 1121).

**Transit.** Funding for transit continues under existing formula and grant categories. Transit agencies can use transit funding to purchase clean fuel buses.

- SAFETEA-LU funds demonstration of buses powered by clean fuel and advanced propulsion technology like fuel cells, and funds further fuel cell bus research (Sections 3010, 3016). [The Clean Fuels Bus Grant Program was authorized in TEA-21, but appropriations have been to the Bus Discretionary Program.]
- Alternative Transportation in Parks and Public Lands Program will provide grants for planning or improvements in national parks and Federal lands (Section 3021).
- SAFETEA-LU authorizes a new grant program administered by EPA for grants to replace school buses with clean school buses or to install retrofit technology (Section 6015).. A similar program is provided by the Energy Policy Act of 2005.

**Bicycle-Pedestrian Projects.** Funding continues for bicycle and pedestrian accommodations and safety projects under CMAQ, Transportation Enhancements, Recreational Trails, Surface Transportation Program, highway safety grants and other programs. A new Safe Routes to School program (Section 1404) is established and a nonroad pilot program is set up in 4 cities (Section 1807).

**Innovative Finance.** SAFETEALU continues innovative finance provisions.

- The Transportation Infrastructure, Finance and Innovation Act program provides Federal credit assistance to States, local governments and State infrastructure banks for highway, transit, rail, or intermodal transportation projects. The program is designed to leverage private investment. Public-private partnerships can now apply directly for TIFIA funds. States may now transfer part of their allocations to finance State infrastructure banks (Section 1601, 1602).
- Private activity bonds may be used for highway or surface freight transfer activities (Section 1143).

**Freight Programs.** Programs that will help fund intermodal freight projects include the Coordinated Border infrastructure Program, which will fund border States actions to improve infrastructure, improve operations, modify procedures, and coordinate international planning and operations (Section 1303); the Corridors of National Significance Program, that will fund major highway construction to promote economic growth and international/interregional trade (Section 1302); and a pilot program of grants to states will fund intermodal freight transportation initiatives and freight distribution infrastructure projects at inland ports and intermodal freight facilities. (Section 1306).

**For more information on SAFETEA-LU, please see:**  
<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/safetealu/index.htm> and  
<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/safetealu/factsheets.htm>

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