



Pikes Peak Area
Council of Governments
Communities Working Together

MEETING AGENDA
PPACG LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE
March 27, 2023, 8:30 a.m.

PPACG Upper Conference Room – 15 S. 7th St., Colorado Springs, CO 80905

www.microsoft.com/en-us/microsoft-teams/join-a-meeting

Meeting ID: 235 959 068 859

Passcode: aHHAhc

Meeting will be held in a hybrid format to allow in-person attendance as well as a remote option.

1. Call to Order – Commissioner Stone and/or Mayor Dixon
2. Federal update
 - A. National Association of Regional Councils (Handout only) ☒
3. Colorado Legislative Update – Dan Jablan
 - A. Review of recently introduced bills
 - B. Review of emphasis bills ☒
 - C. Review of the remaining bill tracking list (time permitting):
<https://www.coloradocapitolwatch.com/bill-tracker-votes/0/6512/2023/0/>
 - D. Questions
4. Member open discussion

The purpose of the Legislative Committee is to draft the annual Policy Statement on Legislative Issues for Board of Directors approval, help develop legislative bills, develop position statements on proposed bills, laws, regulatory actions and other initiatives, meet with elected representatives and lobbyists in order to communicate PPACG's position, to testify before legislative bodies, boards and commissions, and work with other similar agencies and groups in formulating legislative positions.

A quorum of Board members may be present at this meeting.

Federal transportation update provided by the National Association of Regional Councils

CONGRESS

The House and Senate are in session.

Graves and Carbajal Introduce Bipartisan Bill to Relieve Traffic Congestion through Technology

U.S. Congressmen Garret Graves and Salud Carbajal have introduced bipartisan legislation to bring traffic management and planning into the 21st Century. H.R. 1500, the Intelligent Transportation Integration Act, will create a federal program to leverage existing data to actively manage traffic flow today and plan more efficient roadways for tomorrow. The bill will deploy smarter technologies to meet new traffic demands and ensure that data is available to transportation planners who can build a more efficient system.

House Republican Leaders Work To Fuse Support For Energy Package

House Republicans spent the last day of their annual issues conference discussing their top legislative priority, an energy package dubbed HR 1, that will test the new majority's ability to unite around major legislation when it hits the floor next week. If they pass the bill with their slim four-seat majority, it could provide them with a rebuttal to Democratic attacks that Republicans can't coalesce around major economic issues or obtain enough votes on their side for any legislative demands they make around the debt limit. Speaker Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) has already floated provisions to overhaul the energy and infrastructure permitting process, a key component of HR 1, as legislation that could be attached to the debt limit. Other Republicans agree the upcoming debt limit deadline could be an opportunity to push Democrats on the energy policy changes they're proposing in HR 1, although they're focused first on passing the bill in the House.

Vance: Rail safety legislation is not 'big government'

Ohio Republican Senator J.D. Vance attacked the rail industry for criticizing a safety bill he co-sponsored with Senator Sherrod Brown (D-OH) amid worries among others in the GOP that the legislation could put too many regulations on railroads. The bill would require the Transportation Department to establish new safety regulations for trains carrying hazardous materials that are not classified as "high-hazard flammable." Its provisions would require railroads to notify states when they are passing through, limit train length and restrict speeds. The legislation is in response to February's Norfolk Southern train derailment in East Palestine, Ohio, that spilled toxic chemicals into the surrounding community's soil, water and air. The legislation would also require that all trains have a minimum of two crew members aboard and would increase the maximum fine that DOT can issue a rail company for safety violations from \$225,000 to 1 percent of a railroad's annual operating income. Norfolk Southern reported a record operating income in 2022 of \$4.8 billion. Under the bill, it would be liable for up to \$48 million in fines.

House T&I Subcommittee will Hold a Hearing Reviewing the Implementation of BIL Funding

The Subcommittee on Highways and Transit of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure will hold a hearing entitled, "Reviewing the Implementation of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act" on Tuesday, March 28, 2023, at 10:00 a.m. ET, in 2167 of the Rayburn House Office Building

Budget and Appropriations: Can the Budget Be Balanced?

On March 14, the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office (CBO) issued [a letter to Congress](#) on whether and how the budget could be balanced and concluded that a balanced budget would not be possible until 2033 if the 2017 tax changes were made permanent. To achieve balance by 2033, if the tax cuts were made permanent, the budget would have to be cut by 29 percent, when the reduction is applied to all noninterest outlays including Social Security, Medicare, defense, and veterans' programs; 41 percent, when the reduction is applied to all noninterest outlays other than those for Social Security; 57 percent, when the reduction is applied to all noninterest outlays other than those for Social Security and Medicare; and 86 percent, when the reduction is applied to all noninterest outlays other than those for Social Security, Medicare, defense discretionary programs, and mandatory veterans' programs.

Legislation to Enhance 911 Response Introduced

Representatives Adam Smith, (D-WA) and Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA), a former federal prosecutor and FBI special agent, have introduced the [911 Community Crisis Responders Act](#). According to a synopsis provided by Rep. Smith and Rep. Fitzpatrick, the legislation would allocate federal resources to cities, counties, and states to build capacity to coordinate health and social services when a 911 response is required. The legislation would allocate federal resources to cities, counties, states, and tribes to hire unarmed professional service providers and 911 dispatchers; build capacity to better coordinate health and social services with community-based organizations; establish protocols on when mobile crisis responders should act as first responders (rather than law enforcement); and coordinate response and dispatching between 911 and 988 entities. According to Smith and Fitzpatrick, 911 receives more than 240 million calls every year, the majority of which are for nonviolent, non-criminal incidents such as neighbor disputes, nuisance complaints, truancy, reports of “suspicious” activity, requests for wellness checks, and mental health crises. They also note “that police and policing reform advocates often assert that specialized service providers—such as social workers, paramedics, and peer support counselors—are better equipped to handle” these situations, rather than law enforcement.

HUD Announces Changes Coming to CDBG-DR and CDBG-MIT Funding

Last week the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced an overhaul of the agency’s disaster recovery efforts to better serve communities who face the direct impacts of weather-related disasters. Based on the increasing number of disasters and the increasingly important role that HUD is playing in federal government’s preparedness, response, and recovery efforts, the Department is announcing the establishment of the Office of Disaster Management (ODM) in the Office of the Deputy Secretary, and the Office of Disaster Recovery (ODR) within the Office of Community Planning and Development, the addition of dozens of new HUD staff members to help expedite recovery processes, and the allocation of more than \$3.3 billion in Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) funds. The announcement follows [the first-time the Department has asked the public for feedback](#) on how to simplify, modernize, and more equitably distribute critical disaster recovery funds: Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) and Mitigation (CDBG-MIT). This announcement does not include updates or changes to the CDBG formula funding.

For more information click [here](#).

ADMINISTRATION

USDOT Announces State and Local Funding to Improve Hazardous Materials and Pipeline Safety Nationwide

The U.S. Department of Transportation’s Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) announced more than \$25 million available in grant funding through its pipeline and hazardous materials safety programs. These grants are for projects that will train first responders, strengthen safety programs, improve safety, reduce environmental impacts, and educate the public on local safety initiatives. This includes projects that provide support to state inspectors for hazardous materials shipments and pipelines inspections, important safety training and educational programs for emergency response, and advance innovative safety technologies.

Administration Announces \$700M in Grants for Local EV Chargers

The Administration announced last week, the availability of [\\$700 million in grants](#) for local governments to install electric vehicle chargers in those communities where electric vehicle chargers are less likely to be installed by private companies. The funding, which was authorized by the 2021 infrastructure law, will help cities and counties install chargers in rural areas, downtowns, residential neighborhoods, and underserved area. According to the Administration, the bulk of the funding is likely to be used to build Level 2 chargers, rather than the “fast charges” mandated along highways, that are being paid for with grants to states. Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm said, “Extending EV charging infrastructure into traditionally underserved areas will ensure that equitable and widespread EV adoption takes hold,” and will ensure that charging stations are more visible and accessible as more and more Americans switch from gasoline powered vehicles to electric. Among the criteria the Administration will

use to evaluate applications is whether the grants would “promote traffic safety, environmental sustainability, investment in disadvantaged communities and job creation with the grants it awards.”

EPA Announces Ban on PFAS in Water

For the first time, the [Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\)](#) will require water utilities to remove two toxic chemicals “found in everything from waterproof clothing to dental floss and even toilet paper,” according to the EPA. On March 14, the EPA announced that the Administration will require near-zero levels of perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances, or PFAS in drinking water. According to the New York Times, exposure to the chemicals has been linked to cancer, liver damage, fertility and thyroid problems, asthma and other health effects. Called “forever chemicals” because they do not break down and persist in the environment, the chemicals seep into soil and water. A 2020 study that led to a broader ban on the manufacture of PFASs concluded that up to 200 million Americans are exposed to PFAS in their tap water.

EPA will hold a webinar on the proposed regulation and will request public comment once the proposed regulation is published. Once published, public comments can be provided at www.regulations.gov under [Docket ID: EPA-HQ-OW-2022-0114](#). Information on a March 29 webinar on the proposed regulation can be found [here](#).



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March 24, 2023

New bills for consideration

[SB23-198](#) – Clean Energy Plans (4/5/23 @ 1:30 PM in Senate Transportation & Energy)

[SB23-213](#) – Land Use (Assigned to Senate Local Government. Not yet scheduled.)

Priority Bills

Bill #	Title	Position	Status	Hearing
HB23-1052	Mod Prop Tax Exemption for Veterans With Disab	Support	Passed House; Assigned to Senate State Affairs	Not yet scheduled
HB23-1075	Wildfire Evacuation and Clearance Time Modeling	Amend	Passed House Agriculture Committee, referred to Appropriations	Not yet scheduled
HB23-1101	Ozone Season Transit Grant Program Flexibility	Amend	Passed House; Passed Senate Conference Committee formed.	Senate must adopt conference committee report first.
HB23-1184	Low-income Housing Property Tax Exemptions	Support	Passed House Transportation, Housing & Local Govt and Finance; Referred to Appropriations	Not yet scheduled
SB23-016	Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction Measures	Amend	Amended, Passed Senate Trans & Energy and Finance. Referred to Appropriations	Not yet scheduled
SB23-036	Veterans with Disab Prop Tax Exemption Reqmnts	Support	Passed Senate; Passed House State Affairs, referred to Appropriations	Not yet scheduled
SB23-059	State Parks and Wildlife Area Local Access Funding	Support	Amended, Passed Senate Agriculture & Natural Resources, referred to Finance	3/28/23 @ 2PM
SB23-108	Allowing Temporary Reductions in Property Tax Due	Monitor	Passed Senate; Assigned to House Finance	4/3/23 @ 1:30PM
SB23-111	Public Employees' Workplace Protection	Oppose	Amended, Passed Senate Local Govt, referred to Appropriations	Not yet scheduled

SB23-161	Financing to purchase Firefighting Aircraft	Support	Passed Senate Finance, referred to Appropriations	Not yet scheduled
SB23-166	Establishment of a Wildfire Resiliency Code Board	Amend	Amended, Passed Senate Local Govt & Housing, referred to Appropriations	Not yet scheduled
SB23-172	Protecting Opportunities and Workers' Rights Act	Oppose	Assigned to Senate Judiciary	4/5/23 @ 1:30PM

Full list of bills

<https://app.coloradocapitolwatch.com/bill-tracker-votes/0/6512/2023/0/>