



Pikes Peak Area
Council of Governments
Communities Working Together

MEETING AGENDA
PPACG LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE
April 17, 2023, 8:30 a.m.

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

Microsoft Teams

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

Meeting ID: 262 594 569 38

Passcode: DwQgdq

Dial in

Phone Number: (929) 242-8427

Conference ID 825 991 862

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 have recessed until April 17 for the Easter and Passover holidays.

[Lawmakers Question 'Rushed' US-Japan EV Minerals Deal](#)

Congress has been critical of the Biden administration's implementation of electric vehicle subsidy sourcing rules, since it can take years to build out aspects of mineral supply chains. Senator Joe Manchin III (D-WV), who reserved support for the package unless it added new sourcing rules to favor the U.S. and its allies, has especially pressed Treasury to adhere to a stricter interpretation of the law that brings more manufacturing jobs stateside. Manchin was among the lawmakers who decried the Treasury's March 31 guidance, which he and others said would have U.S. tax dollars supporting manufacturing jobs overseas.

Senate Agriculture Committee Set to Ramp Up Farm Bill Reauthorization Process

Senate Agriculture Committee leaders are expected to move quickly drafting a new authorization bill once the Senate returns from recess on April 17. The committee will hold five hearings over five weeks that will focus on nutrition, conservation, and broadband, among other issues. Each has been developed to help inform the draft legislation. It is expected that the most significant debate will focus on the future of federal food assistance funding that currently helps feed more than 42 million low-income Americans. Committee members hope to be able to pass a farm bill before the current bill expires on September 30, 2023. However, the results of the debt ceiling talks are likely to have a significant impact on how the final version turns out. If across the board cuts are made to the budget to gain House Republican agreement to raise the debt ceiling, farm bill programs would have to be reduced, and by substantial amounts, according to Politico. This would cut deeply into farm safety net, trade, research, and other priorities, and severely impact rural economies. Nonetheless, most Agriculture Committee members and aides remain optimistic, and say they will continue to work on a draft farm bill, especially non-controversial pieces from the current farm bill passed in 2018, that should require very minor tweaks.

ADMINISTRATION

[Biden-Harris Administration Announces Nearly \\$300 Million for 9 Bridge Projects as Part of Investing in America Agenda](#)

The U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) announced nearly \$300 million for nine small and medium-sized bridge projects in both rural and urban areas in eight states and the District of Columbia. The grants from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law's Bridge Investment Program are an integral part of President Biden's Investing in America agenda to rebuild our infrastructure and grow our economy from the middle out and bottom up. It comes on top of billions of dollars in other bridge and highway funding already flowing to every U.S. state and territory that is helping communities rebuild, repair, and replace tens of thousands of bridges across the nation and restoring connections that are vital to commuters, emergency responders, truck drivers, public transit riders, and more.

Additional information about the nine bridge projects can be found [here](#).

[Biden-Harris Administration Awards \\$21.15 million Through New Thriving Communities Program to Help 64 Communities Better Access Federal Funding](#)

The U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) announced funding through the Thriving Communities program to help 64 communities across the country have a fair shot to access historic funding opportunities provided by the President's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). The program provides two years of no-cost intensive technical assistance to under-resourced and disadvantaged communities to help identify, develop, and deliver transportation projects that strengthen communities. In the first year of this program a large proportion of the communities

selected had submitted previous applications for federal funding that were unsuccessful in large part because they did not have the same resources to complete their applications. The Thriving Communities Program will grow the pipeline of communities that can successfully compete for federal funding. Thriving Communities funding will help selected communities get technical assistance for a variety of tasks, from preparing application materials and predevelopment activities, to deploying innovative community engagement, workforce development, and clean technology strategies. Interested communities submitted Letters of Interest for support and were selected through a competitive process.

[FTA Announces More than \\$14 Billion in Federal Funding to Support Public Transportation Across the U.S.](#)

As part of its annual support to transit systems nationwide, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) today [published details](#) about the [formula funding](#) that helps communities maintain and operate the trains, buses, and ferries that provide more than half a million transit trips every month. This year, a total of \$14 billion is being invested in states and transit agencies to help improve public transportation, meeting local goals such as upgrading stations and tracks, transitioning to next-generation buses, planning and designing new transit corridors, and providing specialized service for seniors and riders with disabilities. Thanks to President Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, this funding represents the largest-ever annual investment in American public transportation. Formula funding makes up more than two-thirds of the annual \$21 billion transit program. Established according to formulas set by Congress based on population totals and transit ridership data, the funding provides the backbone of transit agency budgets and allows them to maintain and expand service. At least 28 million people in the U.S. are transit-dependent and rely on trains, buses and ferries to get to jobs, school, community services and to see friends and family. Others choose transit to leave their cars behind and reduce their carbon footprint.

[USDOT Announces Effort to Accelerate Surface Transportation Project Delivery under Inflation Reduction Act](#)

As part of an ongoing effort to help deliver surface transportation projects faster, the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) announced a [Request for Information](#) (RFI) seeking public input on environmental review processes that can be improved under the Inflation Reduction Act. FHWA will consider ideas and recommendations from public and private stakeholders on how to reduce project delays through the development of more efficient and effective environmental reviews. The Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) provides guidance and resources to several Federal agencies to facilitate efficient and effective reviews under the National Environmental Policy Act and other Federal processes. This could include identifying new strategies that would mitigate environmental impacts and thereby reduce timeframes for environmental reviews. The IRA includes Environmental Review Implementation Program funds to be administered by FHWA to support environmental reviews of surface transportation projects, including intercity rail projects funded by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and public transportation projects funded by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). In order to use the Environmental Review Implementation Funds optimally, FHWA is seeking information through the RFI on what the agency should consider while implementing the funds.

[In Latest Work to Advance Rail and Hazmat Safety, USDOT Issues New Safety Advisory to Major Freight Railroads to Help Prevent Derailments](#)

In the latest action to improve safety in communities across the country, the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) is calling on major freight railroads to review and update their placement of rail cars and locomotives. The configuration of railcars and how cargo gets loaded can be critical to the risk of derailment. Read FRA's Safety Advisory [here](#). This is the sixth safety advisory the Department has issued since the February 3rd Norfolk Southern derailment in East Palestine, Ohio, all part of the Department's longstanding, ongoing work to hold railroad companies accountable to their workers and to communities across the country.

[To Boost EVs, EPA Proposes Stricter Vehicle Emissions Standards](#)

The Biden administration wants to jolt the electric vehicle market by putting the squeeze on automakers in the form of much tougher standards for greenhouse gas emissions. The standards proposed Wednesday by the EPA for light,

medium and heavy-duty vehicles are by far the strictest ever proposed by the agency, which said they're attainable because of advances in automotive technology. It estimated that through 2055 the standards would avoid nearly 10 billion tons of carbon dioxide emissions and save the average consumer \$12,000 over the lifetime of a light-duty vehicle. EPA officials highlighted the effect the rules will have on air pollution and the adoption of electric vehicles, a necessary step to reach net-zero carbon emissions as set in the Paris Agreement. Under the light-duty vehicle standards, the EPA will require an increasingly stringent greenhouse gas standard. By model year 2032 it would result in an industry-wide average target of 82 grams of carbon dioxide created per mile traveled. That would be 56 percent lower than the model year 2026 standard set in 2021.



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April 14, 2023

New bills for consideration

[HB23-1294](#) – Pollution Protection Measures (House Energy & Environment – not yet scheduled)

[SB23-280](#) – Hazardous Material Mitigation (Senate Finance 04/18/23 @ 2PM)

Priority Bills

Bill #	Title	Position	Status	Hearing
HB23-1052	Mod Prop Tax Exemption for Veterans with Disabilities	Support	Passed House; Passed Senate	Awaiting Governor’s Signature
HB23-1075	Wildfire Evacuation and Clearance Time Modeling	Amend	Passed House; Awaiting Senate Committee Assignment	Not yet scheduled
HB23-1101	Ozone Season Transit Grant Program Flexibility	Amend	Passed House; Passed Senate, Second Conference Committee Appointed	04/17/23 @ 8AM
HB23-1184	Low-income Housing Property Tax Exemptions	Support	Passed House; Assigned To Senate Finance	Not yet scheduled
SB23-016	Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction Measures	Amend	Amended, Passed Senate, Awaiting House Committee Assignment	Not yet scheduled
SB23-036	Veterans with Disabilities Prop Tax Exemption Requirements	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; Assigned To House Agriculture, Water & Natural Resources	Not yet scheduled
SB23-108	Allowing Temporary Reductions in Property Tax Due	Monitor	Passed Senate; Passed House Finance, Awaiting Second Reading	Not yet scheduled
SB23-111	Public Employees' Workplace Protection	Oppose	Amended, Passed Senate Local Govt And Appropriation, Awaiting Second Reading	04/14/23 @ 9AM

SB23-161	Financing to purchase Firefighting Aircraft	Support	Passed Senate; Assigned To House Finance	04/17/23 @ 1:30PM
SB23-166	Establishment of a Wildfire Resiliency Code Board	Amend	Amended, Passed Senate; Awaiting House Committee Assignment	Not yet scheduled
SB23-172	Protecting Opportunities and Workers' Rights Act	Oppose	Passed Senate Judiciary And Appropriations, Awaiting Second Reading	Not yet scheduled
SB23-213	Land Use	Oppose	Assigned To Senate Local Government, Testimony Heard, Awaiting Committee Action	04/18/23 @ 2PM
SB23-214	Long Bill	Monitor for PPAGC Priority Issues	Passed Senate; Passed House; Conference Committee Report Adopted	Awaiting Governor's Signature

Full list of bills

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