



SRTS Legislative Update: Summing Up and Looking Forward

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Legislative Update





Transportation Bill

- Transportation bill expired September 2009
 - Now operating under an extension till Dec 31, 2010
 - Funds all programs at FY09 levels
- There is little traction for a full transportation bill
 - Highway trust fund is no longer sufficient to fund transportation
 - Members are not interested in raising the gas tax
 - Thus far, no other feasible solution has been found
- Administration has not yet released “principles” for reauthorization





Legislative Platform

- Reauthorize SRTS at \$600 million
 - 3x as many applicants requesting 4x funds available now
 - Just 6% of schools nationwide will receive a grant
 - Would take \$17 billion to award just 1 grant to every K-8 school
- Expand to include high schools
 - 17.6% of high school students are obese; activity levels low
 - Would help transition to life-long habits
- Add Safe Routes to Bus Stops





Legislative Platform

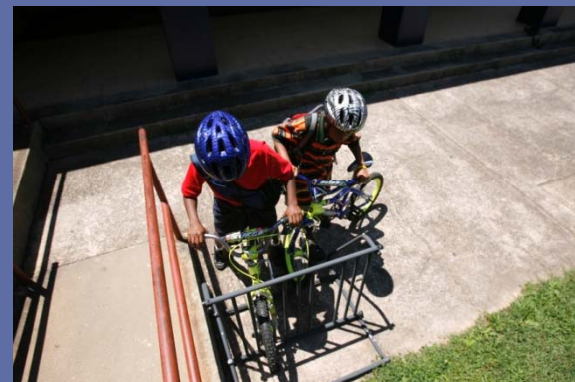
- Improve project delivery and reduce overhead
 - Reduce challenges and delays from “title 23” highway regulations
 - Exempt non-infrastructure projects from these regulations
 - Require FHWA to work with DOTs to speed implementation and reduce overhead
- Require states to track geographic and economic distribution of funds
- Strengthen research and evaluation
 - Require a comprehensive evaluation plan
 - Set aside 1.5-2.5% of overall funding for evaluation
 - Require grantees to collect basic data





Current Status - Senate

- Senate bill introduced, S. 1156
 - “Marker” bill of entire platform
 - Introduced by 5 Senators: Harkin (D-IA), Burr (R-NC), Sanders (I-VT), Collins (R-ME), and Merkley (D-OR)
 - Now have 25 total Senators as sponsors
- SRTSNP Director Deb Hubsmith invited by EPW Chairman Boxer to testify about safety and SRTS
- Ranking Member Inhofe (R-OK) unlikely to oppose
- Overall progress stalled





Current Status - House

- House T&I Committee's "Surface Transportation Authorization Act (STAA):
 - Released summer 2009; delayed since then
 - Includes recommendations to improve project delivery, reduce overhead, & strengthen program
 - Strengthens data collection and evaluation
 - Moves SRTS under new office of livability
 - No funding levels included at this point; Chairman Oberstar (D-MN) has spoken of significantly increasing funding
- H.R. 4021 – Safe Routes to High Schools
 - Oberstar is not supportive of expanding to high schools at this time; this standalone legislation is meant to build support
 - Introduced by Rep. Blumenauer (D-OR) and Rep. Bono Mack (R-CA) with 8 other cosponsors
 - Now have 44 total cosponsors





Building Support and Addressing Concerns

- In summer 2010, House Republican Whip Eric Cantor included SRTS in his “YouCut” initiative
 - SRTS was not selected either time by the voters
 - Advocates placed over 1500 calls and emails to Members of Congress in support of SRTS in 36 hours
 - SRTSNP has met with a number of House Republicans since then to shore up support
 - The program does have bipartisan support
- Twenty state networks are holding educational Member site visits during October 2010
 - Particular focus on Republicans
 - Examples: WI (Petri) and FL (Mica)





Climate Bill

- Goal in a climate bill is to dedicate funding to transportation planning and projects to reduce GHGs
 - CLEAN-TEA marker bill – 10% of all climate revenues for transportation
- Many variations of climate drafts since early 2009
 - April 2010 Senate draft included transportation planning language and \$6 billion per year for transportation
 - Senate coalition of supporters fell apart; not enough votes
- Comprehensive climate bill is dead for this year





Other Legislative Vehicles

- The Healthy CHOICES Act (H.R. 5209)
 - Comprehensive obesity bill
 - Includes expansion of Safe Routes to School to high schools
 - Creates several new grant programs to fund play areas and bike/ped access to playgrounds, joint use agreements, and comprehensive planning for physical activity (including bike/ped and school siting)
- Livable Communities Act (S. 1619)
 - Creates funding for comprehensive planning and sustainable development projects
 - Sen. Merkley (D-OR) added stronger language on bike/ped and school siting
- Complete Streets (HR 1443/S584), ACT Act (HR 4722)





Other 2010 Successes





Successes

Implementation of SRTS

- \$550 million announced; 7500 schools benefit
- \$300 million obligated
- 20 state SRTS networks building relationships with DOTs and SRTS coordinators
- US DOT leadership – LaHood event in April; Mendez event in August



Let's Move Campaign

- First Lady as a spokesperson for solving childhood obesity
- April 9 Childhood Obesity summit – SRTSNP invited; much discussion of SRTS as a solution
- Federal Childhood Obesity Task Force released in May
 - Recommendation 5.11 mirrors our SRTS platform to expand and strengthen the program
 - Sets a benchmark of increasing by 50% by 2015 the number of children 5-18 who walk and bicycle to school





Successes

Health agency leadership

- CDC transportation policy
 - Demonstrates the health impacts of transportation
 - Has whole section on active transportation, including SRTS
- Communities Putting Prevention to Work grants
 - Comprehensive approaches to obesity prevention and tobacco control
 - Focus on policy, systems and environmental change
 - \$400 million for 44 communities; \$120 million for states
 - Many include SRTS, complete streets, active transportation
 - Example: Cook County, IL
- CPPW model being used for Prevention and Public Health Investment Fund grants





Successes

DOT/HUD/EPA Partnership

- Partnership sent letter requesting the agencies focus on SRTS, built environment and school siting
- New funding and opportunities:
 - HUD regional sustainability officers
 - HUD Sustainable Community Challenge planning grants
 - HUD Choice Neighborhoods pilot grants
 - DOT TIGER Grants
 - Example: City of Philadelphia
- EPA school siting focus
 - Grant to National Trust for Historic Preservation
 - SRTSNP participated in School Siting Task Group to push for “healthy” school siting aspects
 - Voluntary school siting guidelines forthcoming
 - Example: Nashville, TN





Looking Forward





Transportation Bill

- Current transportation extension expires Dec. 2010
 - CBO says trust fund is solvent till mid-2012
 - May make it easier for Congress to do another long extension
- No easy funding solution for a long-term bill, unlikely in the near future. Other options:
 - Piecemeal short extensions?
 - Long extension?
 - Shorter 2-3 transportation bill with some policy change?
- Elections will have major impact on next steps
 - House may change control
 - Will have to reintroduce all marker bills
 - May have to be nimble





What You Can Do

- Stay tuned to www.saferoutespartnership.org and alerts for when we need advocates to weigh in
- Get to know your Member of Congress and share SRTS clips, stories and news
- Invite your member of Congress to attend SRTS events—groundbreakings, WTSD events, ribbon-cuttings
- Be patient yet persistent...





For More Information

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- Go to www.saferoutespartnership.org and sign up for our e-news!

