**Policy Details**

|  |
| --- |
| **Senate EPW Hearing on Commission Report** |
| 02-01-2008 |
| The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee held a hearing yesterday on the report released by the National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study Commission. The panel was formed to review the current condition of the transportation system and develop recommendations for meeting its future needs. Their report, Transportation for Tomorrow, represented the opinions of a 9 member majority of the 12 person panel. Released on January 15, the report recommends restructuring federal transportation resources to place an emphasis on public transportation, investment in metropolitan areas, upkeep of existing infrastructure, and intercity rail. In order to meet the needs of a growing economy and an aging infrastructure, the panel determined that $225 billion needs to be spent annually over the next 50 years. Committee Chairwoman Barbara Boxer (D-CA) said that the hearings mark the beginning of the process to develop a five-year reauthorization bill, before SAFETEA-LU expires in 2009. Most members of the EPW Committee agreed that there exists a definite need to move more money into the transportation system, but key Republicans objected to the panel’s recommendation that an increase in the gas tax is the way to go about that. Testimony on the report has already been heard by the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, which had a similar reaction to the panel’s advice. Also on the Hill this week: On Tuesday, The Green Transportation Infrastructure Research and Technology Transfer Act (H.R. 5161) was introduced in the House Committee on Science and Technology Subcommittee on Technology and Innovation. Chairman David Wu (D-OR) sponsored the legislation which provides authorization to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to incorporate green infrastructure design and construction training in the National Highway Institute curriculum and for FHWA and the Research and Innovative Technology Administration’s University Transportation Centersto develop research and education programs to advance the understanding of the benefits of green transportation infrastructure and its impact on the environment. This bill will be marked up on February 7 in the Subcommittee on Technology and Innovation.  |