



Dear Colleagues –

ACEC made progress on several fronts in May, most importantly securing improvements in FHWA regulations governing provision of engineering services; among these are protections for QBS in contract negotiations. In addition, the House passed an R&D tax credit extension. We also gained favorable language in the 2016 Congressional budget framework allowing for increased transportation funding contingent on new revenues; however, unfortunately, Congress once again abdicated its core governing responsibility of providing stable highway and transit funding by passing yet another short-term “patch,” this time for two months. The need for robust, long-term investment has never been more obvious, and ACEC continues to hold Congress’ feet to the fire, keeping in mind Winston Churchill’s famous adage that “Americans can always be counted upon to do the right thing, after they have exhausted all other possibilities.”

Dave

PRESIDENT’S MONTHLY UPDATE

June 1, 2015

General

- Launched grassroots Action Alert for ACEC members to contact their Members of Congress on the need to end short-term transportation program extensions and find a sustainable, long-term solution.
- Georgia Governor Nathan Deal signed legislation this month that will increase the state's investment in transportation infrastructure by approximately \$1 billion annually through increases in the state's gas tax and other revenues; the Georgia Transportation Alliance, which was chaired by ACEC/Georgia Executive Director Michael Sullivan, was backed financially by ACEC's Minuteman Fund.
- According to ACEC’s recent membership certification, the Council’s employee strength is now at an all-time high of nearly 558,000.
- *Engineering Inc.* won an international design excellence award (ASTRID Award) for its January/February 2014 cover feature on “Storm Proofing.”

Government Advocacy

- Secured several improvements and clarifications in final FHWA regulations on contracting for engineering and design-related services, including tighter QBS provisions and additional flexibility for firms serving in program management roles; we defeated efforts by public employee unions to mandate in-sourcing of certain activities.
- At the request of Senate Finance Committee Chairman Orrin Hatch (R-UT) and House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Paul Ryan (R-WI), ACEC submitted comments on proposed reforms to the tax code that emphasized the importance of treating corporations and passthrough businesses equally.
- Submitted letter to the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) in support of its proposal to delay the effective date of its *Revenue from Contracts with Customers* accounting standard for one year, giving firms more time to prepare for compliance.
- Joined with AIA and the U.S. Department of Commerce to launch the first joint A/E Trade Mission to Abu Dhabi, UAE and Jeddah and Riyadh, Saudi Arabia on October 18-22, 2015.
- The House and Senate adopted a budget blueprint for 2016 that provides for growth in transportation spending; ACEC and its coalition allies lobbied for the provision.
- Secured ACEC-backed provisions in the House passed FY'16 defense bill which will enhance data gathering on small business contracting and impose additional limitations on reverse auctions in construction projects.
- The House passed the American Research and Competitiveness Act of 2015, which permanently extends the R&D tax credit that incentivizes engineering firms, manufacturers, and other businesses to keep research and development jobs in the U.S.
- ACEC/PAC co-hosted fundraising events for Rep. Mike Kelly (R-PA), Highways and Transit Subcommittee Chairman Sam Graves (R-MO), Rep. Kristi Noem (R-SD), and Rep. Marc Veasey (D-TX).

Business Resources

- Released new CASE Document: *National Practice Guideline on Project and Business Risk*, available at www.acec.org/bookstore.
- Coalitions' best sellers for May included CAMEE's *Mechanical, Electrical, Plumbing and Fire Protection Project Planning Guide* and CASE's *Guideline Addressing Coordination and Completeness of Structural Construction Documents, 2013 Edition* and, both available at www.acec.org/bookstore.
- With 41 participants, May's most popular webinar, "Hey Boomers...Meet the Millennials: Unlocking the Secrets of an Intergenerational Workforce" provided firm leaders with insight into the unique needs of their Millennial and Gen-X staffers, and how to motivate all staff members to function as an efficient intergenerational team.

- June webinars will include: *Are You Fighting Fires Instead of Managing Your Employees; Six Steps to Increase Profitability in Engineering Firms; The 21 Best Differentiators for Your Firm; Why Clients REALLY Select Your Firm; Present With More Power and Less PowerPoint: How to Grow Your Influence AND Your Business; Raising Your Marketing ROI – Using Real-World Numbers to Measure and Manage Your Firm’s Marketing and Business Development Activities; What Can We Expect for the first half of 2015; Best Practices for Highly Effective Boards; Understanding the Selection Processes of Clients, and the Dynamics of Selection Committees; Mobile and Field Technologies for Engineers; Big-Picture Trends Shaping the Future of Engineering Firms.*