



Dear Colleagues –

Before its August recess, Congress passed yet another short-term transportation funding extension, this time until October 29. While the Senate had passed a six-year bill with three years of funding, the House was not ready with its own bill. Thus, as we were quoted in the *Washington Times*, “The discouraging reality is that the clock is again ticking on yet another short-term extension, and after their recess lawmakers will have to accomplish something in about six weeks that hasn’t been achieved in six years – agree on a satisfactory way to pay for a long-term bill and get it to the president’s desk, said David A. Raymond, president and CEO of the American Council of Engineering Companies.”

Along with transportation legislation, both Houses are working on energy bills, and the President is set to unveil unprecedented new environmental regulatory measures designed to mitigate climate change – all of which will be discussed at our Fall Conference in Boston, October 14-17 (more below). [Register now](#) if you haven’t already done so, as rooms are predicted to sell out for this beautiful season in Boston.

Dave

PRESIDENT’S MONTHLY UPDATE

August 1, 2015

General

- Secured Senate passage of the DRIVE Act, a six-year, \$360 billion reauthorization of federal surface transportation programs with three years of funding (through FY 18), including a 12% increase in average annual highway and transit funding; it also includes several ACEC-backed project delivery reforms, and four-year reauthorization of the Export-Import Bank.
- Hosted House T&I Chairman, Bill Shuster, for working dinner with member firm CEOs to discuss state-of-play on Highway funding bill.
- Looking ahead to the ACEC Fall convention in Boston (*Change and Innovation in the A/E Industry: People and Practices that Build Success*), October 14-17, more than 35

business practice sessions, CEO panels, roundtable discussions, and expert presentations will cover leading issues for our membership – infrastructure funding, contractual issues, risk management, private client practice, leadership and management issues, and technology trends; an exceptional line-up of speakers will also include Pulitzer Prize winning author Doris Kearns Goodwin and famous oceanic explorer Robert Ballard.

- The Minuteman Fund awarded a joint grant to ACEC/Metro Washington and ACEC/Virginia to help support an amicus brief in a case before the Supreme Court of Virginia to oppose the establishment of a design professional duty to independently confirm manufacturers' representations regarding products used in engineering design.
- ACEC's summer Executive Committee meeting focused on preparations for the new three-year budget, legislative, political, membership and coalition issues.

Government Advocacy

- The Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee and the House Energy and Power Subcommittee approved ACEC-backed energy bills seek to modernize the nation's energy infrastructure and promote renewable energy through model building codes and other incentives.
- ACEC Action Alert on transportation bill generated more than 500 messages of support from member firm representatives to their senators.
- ACEC-AASHTO Audit subcommittee liaison meeting included more than 20 ACEC member firms and representatives from FHWA and 20 State DOTs who continued their collaboration on Audit Guide implementation and updates, performance and acceptance of cognizant audits, and a review of recent federal regulatory changes.
- Senate Finance Committee approved a two-year extension of ACEC-backed tax benefits, including the R&D tax credit, bonus depreciation, Section 179 expensing, and energy tax provisions.
- Joined a dozen colleague associations on a letter to House Energy and Power Subcommittee in support of H.R. 702 to lift the crude oil export ban.
- Renewed grassroots alert to member firms urging them to contact House and Senate offices in support of the reauthorization of the Export-Import Bank.
- Joined with the Corps of Engineers, FEMA and other associations to form the U.S. Levee Safety Coalition to advance sound engineering practices and public policy; the Coalition will also work with the WRRDA-authorized Committee on Levee Safety.
- The Federal Agencies and Procurement Advocacy Committee met with senior Corps and NAVFAC officials on performance tracking systems (CPARS and ACASS); with House Small Business Committee officials on design-build and other congressional procurement

reform initiatives; and with VA officials on the need for greater engineering involvement in the planning and execution of projects.

- ACEC/PAC hosted House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman Bill Shuster (R-PA); also co-hosted events for Senator Richard Burr (R-NC), Congressmen Rick Larsen (D-WA) and Rob Wittman (R-VA), and Illinois U.S. House candidate Darin LaHood (R).

Business Resources

- With more than 330 participants, July's popular webinar, *Unmanned Aircraft Systems – Regulatory Outlook and Potential Applications for A/E Firms*, examined the operational capabilities and costs of drones, as well as their legislative and regulatory outlook.
- Coalitions' best sellers for July included CAMEE's *Submittal Checklists and Agreement between MEP Engineer and Client for Limited Professional Services*, both available at www.acec.org/bookstore.
- *Senior Executives Institute Class 21*, ACEC's intensive executive leadership development program that begins Sept. 26, 2015, is completely sold-out with 28 registrants; registration for the 2016 class is now open at <http://sei.acec.org/>
- August webinars will include: *What Do You Do When There Are Changes on the Job? - Impacts and Inefficiencies*; *May I Talk to You about Video? – How to Super Charge A/E Social Media*; *Avoid the Leadership Pitfalls of Over-Thinking*; *Design Resource Management: What the Airlines Can Teach Us about Our Industry*; *The One Hour Proposal: How to Spend Less Time on Proposals and More Time On Your Business...and Make It Home for Dinner!*; *Creating a Financially Intelligent Culture through Open Book Management*; *Data Breaches – Why Engineering Firms are at Risk*; *Emerging Technologies for Engineers*.