

Background:

The *Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century* (MAP-21) Act was signed into law by President Obama on July 6, 2012. The Act called for funding surface transportation programs at over \$105 billion for FY 2013 and 2014, and was the first long-term highway authorization enacted since 2005. The Act is scheduled to expire on September 30 of this year and laid the groundwork for a robust freight transportation program. The Act specifically stated that “It is the policy of the United States to improve the condition and performance of the national freight network to ensure [it] provides the foundation for the United States to compete in the global economy.”

Current Issue:

The United States still faces a lack of investment in our nation’s freight mobility infrastructure. Based on estimates of freight system needs identified by groups such as the Coalition for America’s Gateways and Trade Corridors (CAGTC), a minimum of \$2 billion in additional public investment in freight infrastructure is needed on an annual basis.

According to the Bureau of Transportation Statistics, “Productivity growth in freight transportation has long been a driving force for the growth of U.S. overall productivity and contributed directly to the growth of the U.S. GDP.”

Representing 85 percent of our national economy, our country’s five major economic sectors – manufacturing, retail, agriculture, natural resources and transportation providers – are reliant on efficient freight movement to be successful in both the national and world marketplace.

Recommendations:

The Florida Ports Council recommends that the MAP-21 reauthorization:

- Modify the national freight transportation policy to make it multimodal and designate a national multimodal freight network.
- Authorize dedicated, sustainable funding for multimodal freight Projects of National and Regional Significance (PNRS) or a similar freight infrastructure program.
- Ensure that federal and state investment is made in all modes of freight mobility, and that these funds are leveraged with private investment when possible and appropriate.
- Streamline and expedite regulations that unnecessarily delay the development and completion of freight infrastructure projects and activities.
- Identify and commit to the exploration of sustainable sources of revenue for infrastructure projects across all freight mobility modes.

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