



U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations

PRESS RELEASE

Summary: FY 2012 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations *Conference Report*

	Budget Authority Only	Total Resources
FY 2011 Enacted:	\$55.4 billion	\$109.6 billion
Subcommittee Mark	\$55.6 billion	\$109.4 billion

Washington, DC - Overall, the fiscal year 2012 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations conference report includes budget authority of \$55.55 billion, \$183 million more than the 2011 enacted level. Total funding, including limitations on obligations related to programs funded by the Highway Trust Fund, is \$109.4 billion. The total funding level is \$236 million or 0.2 percent below the equivalent 2011 enacted level.

“As we put together the legislation that funds critical pieces of our federal government, we must do everything we can to cut spending in a responsible way—but we must also make sure we are investing in our future and protecting the most vulnerable among us. And working together, I believe we have accomplished that with this conference report we have agreed to. It preserves housing assistance for low-income families and veterans, and it continues investments in our nation’s roads, bridges, transit systems and airports.” – Senator Patty Murray, (D-Wash.), Chairman

The conference report helps our communities and transportation system by focusing on five priority areas:

- Investing in transportation infrastructure;
- Providing housing and services to our Nation’s most vulnerable;
- Supporting our communities and addressing the foreclosure crisis;
- Ensuring the safety of our transportation system; and
- Providing assistance to disaster impacted areas.

Investing in transportation infrastructure

Funding for Significant Transportation Projects (“TIGER” program): \$500 million for grants to support significant transportation projects in a wide variety of modes, including highways and bridges, public transportation, passenger and freight railroads, and port infrastructure. The funding level included in the conference report is \$27 million lower than the fiscal year 2011 enacted level.

Highway Investments: \$39.9 billion for the Federal-aid Highway program to support essential investments in roads and bridges in every State across the country. This funding level is equal to the authorized level annualized for fiscal year 2012. The conference report does not include any rescission of budgetary resources from the highway program.

Transit Investments: An additional \$358 million above the fiscal year 2011 enacted level for the transit “New Starts” program, for a total of almost \$2 billion. This funding supports projects across the Nation that will provide new or expanded public transportation service.

Airport Investments: \$3.35 billion for capital investments at airports across the country.

Passenger Rail Investments: \$1.4 billion for Amtrak passenger rail service, including continued funding for state supported services and investments in the modernization of the northeast corridor.

Providing housing and services to our Nation’s most vulnerable

Section 8 Tenant-based rental assistance: \$18.9 billion for housing choice vouchers. This level of funding is \$535 million above the fiscal year 2011 enacted level. This funding is critical to ensuring that our Nation’s low-income families, especially those hit hard by the recession, can maintain safe, affordable housing. It includes:

- \$17.24 billion for the renewal of current housing choice vouchers and \$1.35 billion for program administration;
- \$75 million for 11,000 new HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) vouchers for homeless veterans; and
- \$60 million for the Family Self-Sufficiency program.

Public Housing: \$1.9 billion for the public housing capital fund, a decrease of \$165 million below the fiscal year 2011 enacted level. This funding will help preserve and improve public housing. The conference report also includes \$4 billion for the public housing operating fund, which is \$655 million below the fiscal year 2011 enacted level. The language allows the Secretary to offset PHA’s excess reserves, but limits the allowable offset to \$750 million.

Project-based rental assistance: \$9.3 billion for the project-based section 8 program, including over \$9 billion for the renewal of all expiring project-based contracts for a full 12 months. This level of funding is \$82 million above the fiscal year 2011 enacted level.

Homeless Assistance grants: \$1.9 billion for homeless assistance grants. This level of funding is equal to the fiscal year 2011 enacted level. In response to the increase in family homelessness, the conference report includes at least \$250 million for the Emergency Solutions Grant program to prevent families from becoming homeless, or rapidly re-house those that are homeless.

Native American housing block grants: \$650 million for Native American housing block grants. This level of funding will support the housing and community development needs of Native Americans.

Supporting our communities and addressing the foreclosure crisis

Community Development Block Grants (CDBG): not less than \$2.95 billion is provided for CDBG grant funding for States and communities across the Nation. This is \$388 million below the fiscal year 2011 enacted level. This funding will assist states and communities that are still struggling as the economy recovers with their continued efforts to invest in and support the needs of low-income communities.

Choice Neighborhoods: \$120 million for HUD's Choice Neighborhoods Initiative. This initiative will expand the successful HOPE VI program. Last year, \$65 million was included for Choice Neighborhoods as a set-aside within HOPE VI. While continuing to focus on improving public housing, it also will address the needs of other HUD-assisted housing. In addition to improving housing and revitalizing poor communities, it also promotes better access to schools, transportation, jobs and other services.

HOME Investment Partnership: \$1 billion for the HOME Investment Partnership program, which is \$607 less than the fiscal year 2011 enacted level. This funding supports the creation and rehabilitation of low-income housing across the country. The conference report also includes reforms to ensure that funds are used in a timely fashion for worthy projects.

Housing Counseling: A total of \$125 million for housing counseling efforts. This includes \$45 million for HUD's housing counseling activities, including Home Equity Conversion Mortgage (HECM) counseling and pre-purchase counseling. In addition, \$80 million is included for NeighborWorks to continue the National Foreclosure Mitigation Counseling program that began in fiscal year 2008.

Ensuring the safety of our transportation system

Automobile Safety: \$800 million for vehicle and driver safety programs, which will support the full modernization of the National Automotive Sampling System (NASS), research into the vehicle safety defects investigations, and identify ways to improve vehicle crash worthiness.

Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety: Includes \$109 million to support pipeline safety inspections and grants. This funding will improve the agency's ability to ensure the safety of the pipeline infrastructure and the transportation of hazardous materials across the Nation.

Aviation Safety: Provides resources to hire an additional 35 aviation safety inspectors.

Transit Safety: \$150 million is provided for grants to the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) for capital investments. The conference report includes language requiring WMATA to place the highest priority on projects that will improve the safety of the transit system.

Providing assistance to disaster impacted areas

CDBG Disaster Assistance: The conference report includes a total of \$400 million in CDBG disaster assistance to communities most impacted by disasters in 2011. Of this amount, up to \$300 million is provided as a set-aside from the Community Development Fund plus an additional \$100 million that is designated as Disaster Relief under the Budget Control Act.

Highway Emergency Relief: The conference report provides \$1.662 billion in Emergency Relief program funds to help communities recover from disasters, and makes it possible for the Secretary to provide extra assistance to States affected in fiscal year 2011 by Hurricane Irene and certain Missouri River floods.

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