

**Bill:** H.R. 2495

**Author:** U.S. Representative Maxine Waters (D-CA/43)

**Status:** Referred to House Committee on Appropriations / House Committee on Budget

**Position:** Support

### **RECOMMENDATION**

**Staff recommends that the Board adopt a SUPPORT position on H.R. 2495 – TIGER Grants for Job Creation Act.**

### **SUMMARY**

**H.R.2495 (Waters)** – The TIGER Grants for Job Creation Act would, if enacted into federal law, provide an emergency supplemental appropriation of \$7.5 billion over the next 6 years for the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) discretionary grant program.

### **ISSUE**

According to the American Society of Civil Engineers, the United States has an \$846 billion funding gap for surface transportation infrastructure. Since 2012, federal funding for surface transportation programs has been flat and the current debate happening in Congress regarding the reauthorization of surface transportation programs has only focused on funding programs at current levels – as authorized by MAP-21.

### **DISCUSSION**

Greater investment in infrastructure nationwide is supported by a wide range of organizations including the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the AFL-CIO. It is widely understood by economists, labor groups and the business community that a strong national infrastructure is needed for the United States to remain economically competitive and to provide an enhanced quality of life for all Americans.

The Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant program was originally created as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 to provide funding for innovative infrastructure projects that create jobs. The TIGER grant program has continued to receive funding annually through the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development Appropriations Bill. Participation in the TIGER

program has been continually oversubscribed by applicants looking for direct funding for transportation projects. Last year, Congress appropriated \$600 million for the TIGER program, but the program received 797 applications seeking more than \$9.5 billion in project funding. This fact vividly illustrates the national demand for the flexible funding provided through the TIGER discretionary grant program.

This month, our agency submitted two TIGER grant applications to the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) for their review and consideration as part of the 2015 TIGER grant application program. The applications include a request of \$21.3 million in TIGER grant funds for our Rail to Rail Active Transportation Corridor Connector Project and \$10.3 million for our All-Door Bus Boarding Project.

### **DETERMINATION OF SAFETY IMPACT**

Staff has reviewed this proposal and has determined that the legislation could have a favorable impact on safety should the TIGER program fund projects in Los Angeles County that enhance the safety of pedestrians, bicycle riders, transit riders or those operating autos and trucks.

### **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

Staff has determined this bill could favorably impact our agency by providing a larger amount of federal transportation funding that Metro could apply for on a competitive basis.

### **ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED**

The U.S. Department of Transportation has submitted the Grow America Act for consideration by Congress that would fund the TIGER Grant program at the same level as H.R. 2495 authorizes.

### **NEXT STEPS**

Should the Board decide to SUPPORT H.R.2495, staff will draft a support letter and work with the Los Angeles County Congressional Delegation to advocate for the TIGER Grants for Job Creation Act to be included in any surface transportation authorization bill adopted by Congress and signed into law by the President.