



Highway Trust Fund

Timeline of Key Recent Federal Actions on the Highway Trust Fund

- July 2014 ○ **Highway and Transportation Funding Act of 2014:** A \$10.8 billion law keeping the fund solvent until May 2015, as a temporary patch prior to the August recess and projected insolvency.
- May 2015 ○ **Highway and Transportation Funding Act of 2015:** A further two month extension of the Highway Trust Fund is passed by Congress; Republicans, including House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) and House Ways and Means Chairman Paul Ryan (R-WI) suggest paying for a more permanent extension of the fund by generating revenue through tax reform.
- July 2015 ○ **Surface Transportation and Veterans Health Care Choice Improvement Act of 2015:** On the brink of insolvency, the House passes a short term 3-month extension to allow for more time to negotiate a 6-year bill. The bill passed in the Senate as well, right after the Senate passed the DRIVE Act, which reauthorizes highway spending for 6 years but only plans 3 years of funding. The President signs the 3-month patch.
- Oct 2015 ○ **Surface Transportation Extension Act of 2015:** Congress approves a three-week patch to prevent a shutdown of the federal transportation funding.
- Nov 2015 ○ **Surface Transportation Extension Act of 2015, Part II:** Congress approves two-week patch before the Thanksgiving recess to avoid a shutdown in federal transportation funding.
- Dec 2015 ○ **Compromise Framework:** House and Senate negotiators agree on a 5-year, \$305 billion highway bill. Full vote is expected by December 4th.

Potential Actions in 114th Congress

- While there might be a sufficient balance to maintain the solvency of the Fund through the third quarter of FY 2016, many of the programs funded through Highway December 4, 2015. New obligations cannot be started until the Highway Trust Fund is authorized before December 4th.
- On December 1st negotiators agree on a 5-year bill, the bill is expected to reach the floor of each chamber by Friday, December 4th, before funding runs out.
- Congress hopes to increase revenue without increasing the gas-tax by tapping into other sources including the sale of oil from the nation's emergency stockpile.

Sources: Brian Ethridge, "Highway Trust Fund 2014: Timeline of Events," Equipment World, August 15, 2014; Keith Laing and Cristina Marcos, "House passes summer road funding fix," The Hill, May 19, 2015; Library of Congress, "H.R. 3038 – Highway and Transportation Funding Act of 2015, Part II," July 22, 2015; Siobhan Hughes and Kristina Peterson, "Senate Reaches Preliminary Agreement on Highway Funding Bill," Wall Street Journal, July 21, 2015; Kathleen Miller, "Senate Sends Latest Stopgap U.S. Highway Funding Bill to Obama," Bloomberg, July 30, 2015; Keith Laing, "Feds: Highway Funding Will Last Until June 2016," The Hill, September 8, 2015; Keith Laing, "Senate Approves Three-Week Highway Bill," The Hill, October 28, 2015; Keith Laing, "Obama Signs Two-Week Highway Bill with Autopen," The Hill, November 20, 2015; Siobhan Hughes and Paul Page, "Lawmakers Research Compromise on Five-Year Highway Bill," The Wall Street Journal, December 1, 2015.