

VIEWS AND ESTIMATES
OF THE
COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE
FOR FISCAL YEAR 2021

Overview:

Under current law and House rules, standing committees are required to submit to the Committee on the Budget views and estimates. In accordance with clause 4(f)(1) of House Rule X, views and estimates must be submitted within six weeks after the submission of the budget by the President. The President submitted his Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 Budget request to Congress on February 10, 2020. As such, we submit the views and estimates of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure (Committee).

The Committee believes that modernizing America's infrastructure network is essential to the quality of life of our citizens and the productivity of the U.S. economy. Through direct Federal investment, we can transform our existing infrastructure in order to create jobs, including family-wage jobs, spur economic growth, boost resiliency, and ensure U.S. industries are supported and remain globally competitive in the world. During the second session of the 116th Congress, the Committee will continue to focus on improving and strengthening our Nation's infrastructure and communities to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow.

This year the Committee will focus on reauthorizing numerous key programs and will continue to perform oversight on programs within our jurisdiction. The Committee's bipartisan legislative priorities include: an infrastructure investment bill; a long-term surface transportation bill, including Amtrak and rail programs; a Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) bill; measures to improve economic development programs; reauthorizing the United States Coast Guard, the Federal Maritime Commission (FMC), the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration's pipeline safety and hazardous materials safety programs, and the Clean Water State Revolving Fund.

Transportation and the Economy:

America's transportation networks are critical for job creation, including family-wage jobs, economic growth, and our global competitiveness. Providing the country with this support has long been recognized as a Federal responsibility that is shared with states and local governments. From the Transcontinental Railroad to the Panama Canal to the Interstate Highway System and more, Congress has played a critical role in ensuring the connectedness of our communities and supporting the infrastructure needs of the American people. Throughout U.S. history, economic growth, prosperity, and opportunity have followed investments in our infrastructure.

Today, the U.S. transportation system is an extensive network of highways, airports, railroads, public transportation systems, waterways, ports, and pipelines that provides a means for Americans to travel to and from work and to conduct business. The U.S. transportation system not only provides the foundation of our economy by safely and efficiently moving people and goods, it also employs millions of workers and generates a significant share of total economic output. Economic growth and vitality are also dependent upon high quality water and wastewater

infrastructure systems and upon resilient infrastructure designed to protect lives and properties from more frequent and consequential storms and flooding.

In addition to creating family-wage jobs and facilitating economic growth, our transportation system has a direct and significant impact on the daily lives of nearly all Americans. To the average American, investment in transportation infrastructure will mean cleaner water; shorter commutes that save time, reduced fuel consumption, and lower pollution; lives saved; safer systems to accommodate the transportation of hazardous materials; and fewer delays for the more than 800 million passengers who travel by air each year.

Policies to address the increasing demands on our infrastructure and to provide for a transformative infrastructure network must be guided by strong principles that will create and sustain jobs and promote economic growth, such as:

-) Making smart investments, consistent with the fundamental Federal role, to bring our existing infrastructure to a state of good repair and ensure modern, safe, and resilient transportation infrastructure;
-) Recognizing, promoting, and developing integrated transportation systems;
-) Preserving affordable access to transportation and water systems;
-) Encouraging technological solutions and promoting innovation;
-) Providing flexibility to states and local governments; and
-) Reducing carbon pollution from the transportation sector.

Federal Surface Transportation Programs:

The *Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act* (FAST Act) (P.L. 114-94), which authorized funding to improve U.S. surface transportation infrastructure, including our roads, bridges, public transit, and rail systems, is set to expire on September 30, 2020, making reauthorization of Federal surface transportation programs a major priority for the Committee this year. Over the past year the Committee has engaged in significant outreach to public and private sector stakeholders and Members of Congress, both on and off the Committee, to gather input on key policy priorities for the next bill. Specifically, we have held 20 hearings and roundtables, received policy submissions from stakeholders and Members of Congress, and held structured bipartisan meetings with stakeholder groups.

The Committee will utilize what it has learned and continue to gather input as it crafts a new surface reauthorization bill that provides sustained investment to address our massive infrastructure needs.

-) According to the American Society of Civil Engineers' 2017 Infrastructure Report Card, America's roads receive a D rating, and bridges receive a C+ rating, both unchanged since 2013, and our Nation's transit gets a D-, which is a downgrade from its previous D rating.
-) According to the U.S. Department of Transportation's "Conditions & Performance Report," there is a \$786 billion backlog of unmet capital investment needs for highways and bridges.

- J One in three interstate bridges have identified repair needs, and over 47,000 of the Nation's bridges are structurally deficient, according to American Road & Transportation Builders Association.
- J The average commuter spends 54 hours in traffic a week and incurs over \$1,000 in extra costs due to wasted time and fuel.
- J The cost of bringing the Nation's rail transit and bus systems into a state of good repair is estimated at \$98 billion, according to the U.S. Department of Transportation.
- J The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reports that 36,560 people died in traffic crashes in 2018.

The last two surface transportation reauthorization bills – the *Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act* (P.L. 112-141) in 2012 and the FAST Act in 2015 – generally maintained the amount of Federal investment in our roads, bridges, and public transit systems. The Committee intends to develop a long-term, bipartisan bill that provides a significant increase in investment to meet the documented needs of the Nation's surface transportation network in a way that creates jobs, including family-wage jobs in the U.S., reduces emissions, bottlenecks, and congestion, and strengthens the condition, performance, and safety of our transportation facilities.

The Committee also looks forward to continuing to work with other Committees of jurisdiction to address the challenges facing the Highway Trust Fund to ensure that there is a sustainable revenue stream in place to support enacting a long-term surface transportation reauthorization bill.

Federal Aviation Administration:

On October 5, 2018, the President signed the *FAA Reauthorization Act of 2018* (P.L. 115-254). The law extends the agency's authorities through fiscal year 2023. The Committee will continue to pursue oversight of the U.S. Department of Transportation and Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) implementation of this law, including provisions that address key safety and airline consumer protection issues, advance modernization of the National Airspace System (NAS), improve the FAA's programs and processes, and promote further safe and efficient integration of unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) and commercial space transportation. Another agenda item for the Committee will be to advance an infrastructure bill that increases investment in airports of all sizes, throughout the country, to meet growing demands and projected passenger growth.

In addition, the Committee will pursue efforts to increase investment in and incentivize modernization projects that enhance airport and airspace capacity, reduce aircraft noise and the overall carbon footprint of U.S. aviation, and advance the integration of small and large UAS and other new aircraft into the NAS.

The FAA's FY21 budget request boosts in funding for aviation safety and FAA oversight. The Committee supports this step. In March 2019, the Committee launched an investigation into the design, certification, and production of the Boeing 737 MAX aircraft following two accidents involving the aircraft—Lion Air flight 610 on October 29, 2018, and Ethiopian Airlines flight 302

on March 10, 2019—that resulted in the death of 346 people, including eight U.S. citizens. The Committee has held five 737 MAX related hearings, the Chairmen have written more than one dozen oversight related letters to Boeing and the FAA among others, received nearly 600,000 pages of responsive records, and has conducted multiple interviews with Boeing employees, FAA officials, and others, including a Transcribed Interview with the FAA’s current Associate Administrator for Aviation Safety.

The Committee has also spoken with dozens of aviation, systems engineering and software experts, as well as many whistleblowers about the 737 MAX, some who have provided the Committee with important records about the 737 MAX program and FAA’s oversight of Boeing. The Committee will continue its oversight of the FAA’s aircraft certification process, including the agency’s organization designation authorization program, and investigation into issues surrounding the Boeing 737 MAX to identify technical issues that may have affected the aircraft’s safety, possible lapses in FAA or Boeing oversight, and other issues that may have contributed to the two accidents. The Committee’s investigation is expected to produce findings or recommendations and will inform the development of proposed legislation that seeks to resolve problems identified during the investigation.

Coast Guard and Federal Maritime Commission Authorization Acts:

Last year, the Committee reported, and the House passed, legislation to reauthorize the United States Coast Guard (Coast Guard or Service), one of the Nation’s five armed services, for fiscal years 2020 and 2021, as well as the Federal Maritime Commission (FMC). The Committee continues to work to get this bill signed into law. Additionally, the Committee remains committed to advancing new economic opportunities to revitalize the U.S. maritime and shipbuilding industries. In this respect, the Committee will remain vigilant in its oversight of the Jones Act and will promote ideas to grow and diversify the U.S. coastwise trades.

The global maritime environment is diverse and complex, generating both tremendous opportunities for the U.S. economy and challenges to national security and sovereign U.S. interests in the maritime sphere, especially in the Indo-Pacific region. It remains vital that Congress provide the Coast Guard with the resources, vessels, and information and communication technologies it needs to ensure that the Service can successfully conduct its critical missions of maritime border protection, migrant and drug interdiction, search and rescue, marine safety, oil spill and emergency response, and fisheries and other maritime law enforcement.

In addition, the Arctic is fast becoming a new maritime border and geopolitical concern for the United States. Yet the icebreaking capabilities of the U.S. remain severely limited and in need of recapitalization to meet Coast Guard mission needs in both the Arctic and Antarctic. Moreover, the Committee remains concerned that the Federal government is underestimating the rate of change in the polar regions. Assuming that rates of change will continue to accelerate beyond projected levels, the Committee will assess unmet infrastructure needs in the Arctic, examine strategies to fill gaps in capabilities, and assess international partnerships and agreements.

Our maritime border capabilities also must be fortified for the future, which will require greater investment in Coast Guard air, surface, and unmanned assets to support offshore operations. The Committee will remain focused on its oversight to ensure that critical acquisition programs, such as the Offshore Patrol Cutter, are conducted in a manner that is both transparent and

accountable. Moreover, the Committee is concerned with the Coast Guard's diminished marine safety and prevention competence and will examine options to strengthen Coast Guard capability for this important mission.

The Committee will also conduct oversight of the FMC's implementation of amendments made to the Shipping Act within Title VII of P.L. 115-282 to ensure fair and competitive marine transportation serving the U.S. foreign trades.

The Committee further recognizes that the adoption of stringent emission standards by the International Maritime Organization for oceangoing commercial vessels has spawned rapid interest in the development of a carbon-free global maritime transportation fleet. The Committee will examine the status of research and development in alternative fuels, hydrogen cells, battery technologies and electrification, and innovative vessel designs to determine policy options to support the transition of this critical segment in the global supply chain that feeds the world's economy.

Corps of Engineers Civil Works Program:

The Committee intends to keep the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) on a two-year cycle and has begun work on a 2020 WRDA bill to address the needs of ports, inland waterways, flood damage reduction, environmental restoration, and other civil works programs and activities of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps).

Legislation authorizing activities under the Corps' Civil Works program has been authorized by Congress since the 1800s. Later WRDA legislation established the Inland Waterways Trust Fund (IWTF) and the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund (HMTF) to help pay for the modernization of locks and dams on America's inland waterways system and maintenance of waterways and ports, respectively.

IWTF revenues are derived from a 29-cent per-gallon user fee on diesel fuel used by commercial vessels engaged in inland waterways transportation, plus investment income. The IWTF pays for one-half of the costs associated with the construction, replacement, expansion, and major rehabilitation of federal inland waterways projects, with the other half coming from the Treasury's general fund. Prior to the enactment of a nine-cent diesel fuel increase in 2014 (which brought the tax to the current 29 cents per gallon) the Corps was spending the funds at the same rate that it was collected, and that was insufficient to maintain an efficient construction schedule for existing projects or to begin any significant new investments. In FY 2021, the Congressional Budget Office estimates that the IWTF will collect approximately \$117 million in tax revenues and interest.

The inland waterways infrastructure system is old and in need of repair, replacement, and rehabilitation. Of the 239 lock chambers currently in operation, 139 are more than 50 years old. Investment in the replacement and rehabilitation of these projects is necessary to ensure products and commodities produced in the U.S. remain competitive in the global marketplace. The American Society of Civil Engineers estimates that inland waterways have overall investment needs of \$4.9 billion over the next 20 years.

The HMTF is meant to pay for the Federal share of harbor maintenance needs. Funds are collected through a 0.125-percent tax imposed on the value of cargo loaded or unloaded at

American ports. Fiscal year 2020 appropriations from the HMTF was approximately \$1.63 billion. According to the Congressional Budget Office, the HMTF will collect approximately \$1.7 billion in tax revenues and interest in fiscal year 2021.

In 2019, the Committee moved, and the House passed, H.R. 2440 by a 296-109 vote. This legislation creates a discretionary cap adjustment to fully utilize the revenues in the HMTF for its intended purpose. Consistent with the goal of this legislation, the Committee requests that all revenues collected in fiscal year 2019 be allocated to the Corps in fiscal year 2021, and that the approximately \$9.2 billion balance in the HMTF also be allocated to address the eligible operation and maintenance backlog and future needs of Federal commercial harbors, including authorized jetty and breakwater needs.

Seventy percent of America's imports and 75 percent of its exports go through the U.S. ports. The number of ships calling on U.S. ports is rising, and with the expansion of the Panama Canal, the size of ships is growing. With an expanded Panama Canal, increasingly larger container ships will become the norm, although the number of American container ports that currently receive such ships is limited. The current rate of investment provided by the IWTf and HMTF is inadequate to keep inland waterways and ports a viable part of a multimodal transportation system in the future. Full utilization of both trust funds is necessary in securing the nation's global competitiveness.

In addition, the Corps is challenged with an enormous backlog of Congressionally-authorized projects and deferred maintenance of its aging water resources infrastructure, increased demands, reduced budgets, and severe weather and water conditions. Ensuring that the Corps has the capability and direction necessary to meet expectations requires a thorough review and understanding of its priorities and its ability to manage its portfolio of assets in the context of recent federal budgets. The Committee intends to continue technical and budget oversight of the Corps funding, backlog, and future needs. Additionally, the Committee will continue working with the Administration on completing the implementation of the Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2014 (P.L. 113-121), WRDA 2016 (Title I of the *Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act* (P.L. 114-322), and WRDA 2018 (Title I of the *America's Water Infrastructure Act* (P.L. 115-270).

Finally, the Committee intends to advance a new WRDA for 2020 to address pending water resources development projects, to help ensure the long-term sustainability and resiliency of its water-related infrastructure, and to address concerns raised by communities of all sizes and locations about the affordability of water resources development projects.

Environmental Protection Agency:

Last year, the Committee passed legislation which reauthorized Federal appropriations for the Clean Water State Revolving Fund for the first time since 1987, and we will continue to push for enactment of a renewed Federal commitment to addressing our Nation's wastewater and clean water infrastructure. Increased investment in critical Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) programs like the Clean Water State Revolving Fund, EPA's regional watershed programs, and the Brownfields program, is important both for sustainable long-term economic growth and the protection of human health and the environment. These programs provide substantial returns on

investment and consistently receive more requests for participation than can be met by appropriated funding levels. Congress should continue to provide funds that support these activities, should increase the level of appropriated funds for these programs commensurate with State and local needs, and should pursue efforts to increase the affordability of infrastructure for our communities.

In addition, the Committee recommends robust funding to support the water pollution control and nonpoint source management activities of the states, territories, and tribes, as well as for the programmatic offices at EPA under the jurisdiction of the Committee, including the Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance (OECA) to support the uniform implementation of the Federal environmental statutes under the jurisdiction of the Committee, including the Clean Water Act.

For the Superfund program administered by EPA, the Committee is aware of a 2015 Governmental Accountability Office (GAO) report (GAO-15-812) that documented a general decline in Federal appropriations to the Superfund program over the last decade. The Committee recommends funding at a level that matches its capability, so that no cleanup projects fail to advance due to lack of funding, thereby delaying public health and environmental benefits, as well as economic benefits derived from returning sites to productive use. As with other accounts, EPA should give highest priority to projects that protect human health, water quality, and the environment, while creating the most jobs and economic activities.

Rail Legislation:

Reauthorization of rail programs will be a key component of the Committee's surface transportation reauthorization legislation. The FAST Act (P.L. 114-94), which expires on September 30, 2020, included the reauthorization of Amtrak, Amtrak's Office of Inspector General, and the Northeast Corridor Commission. The FAST Act also included reforms to provide greater accountability and transparency for Amtrak, improve our rail infrastructure, enhance rail safety, accelerate project delivery, and leverage innovative financing.

The FAST Act reorganized Amtrak's authorization structure into the Northeast Corridor (NEC) and National Network lines of business, to ensure NEC profits are reinvested in the Corridor, while authorizing, in certain circumstances, Amtrak to transfer funding between the two accounts. The FAST Act also created a State-Supported Route Committee to promote cooperation and planning pertaining to the rail operations and performance of Amtrak and related activities of trains operated by Amtrak on state-supported routes.

The FAST Act also restructured and consolidated rail grant programs administered by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) for passenger, freight, and other rail activities. These include: Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvement Grants to improve safety, reliability or efficiency for passenger and freight rail projects; Federal-State Partnership for State of Good Repair Grants to reduce the state of good repair backlog for assets used to provide intercity passenger rail service, particularly on the NEC; and, Restoration and Enhancement Grants to initiate, restore, or enhance intercity passenger rail service.

Additionally, the FAST Act authorized several activities to improve the safety of highway-railway grade crossings and strengthened passenger and commuter rail safety, including use of speed limit action plans and locomotive cab alerters. It improved track and bridge safety by reviewing

innovative technologies and creating a process for states to monitor bridge conditions, and it provided commuter railroads with competitive grants and loans funded out of the Highway Trust Fund to spur timely positive train control (PTC) implementation. The FAST Act also applies highway and transit streamlining provisions to rail, speeding up timelines, enhancing coordination among agencies, and ensuring public investment early in the environmental review process. Moreover, it unlocked the underutilized Railroad Rehabilitation and Improvement Financing (RRIF) loan program with programmatic and process reforms and enhanced transparency for RRIF applicants.

In October 2015, Congress enacted the *Positive Train Control Enforcement and Implementation Act of 2015*, as part of the *Surface Transportation Extension Act of 2015* (P.L. 114-73), which extended the deadline for installation of PTC to December 31, 2018. The *Positive Train Control Enforcement and Implementation Act of 2015* required each railroad carrier to report annually to the Department of Transportation on its progress toward implementing PTC systems; the FRA requires additional reporting on a quarterly basis. At the end of 2018, the FRA reported that, according to the railroads' self-reported progress, all railroads required to meet the positive train control mandate had either met the December 31, 2018, deadline or had submitted requests for extensions for up to two years. Railroads must be fully compliant no later than December 31, 2020.

Finally, in December 2015, the *Surface Transportation Board Reauthorization Act of 2015* (P.L. 114-110) was signed into law, reauthorizing the Surface Transportation Board (STB) for the first time since the agency's creation in 1995. The Act authorized the STB through fiscal year 2020 and included a series of reforms to improve the STB's efficiency and responsiveness to allow the railroad industry to better serve its customers. It gave the STB authority to investigate issues of national or regional significance on its own initiative; directed the STB to modify its voluntary arbitration process; and made important structural changes, such as establishing the STB as a fully independent agency and expanding STB membership from three to five members.

This year, the Committee will continue to monitor the implementation of the programs, policies, and funding authorized in the *Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008* (P.L. 110-432), the FAST Act, the *Surface Transportation Extension Act of 2015*, and the *Surface Transportation Board Reauthorization Act*.

Pipelines and Hazardous Materials:

The FAST Act also reauthorized the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration's (PHMSA) hazardous materials safety program and included several reforms for the safe transportation of hazardous materials. It is the Committee's intent to reauthorize these programs in its surface reauthorization legislation this year.

The FAST Act authorized grants to assist communities in preparing for and responding to hazardous materials accidents; required railroads to provide information on the identity, quantity, and location of crude oil movements to states and local responders; and improved the process for review of special permits and approvals. In addition, the FAST Act enhanced safety by requiring new tank cars to be equipped with "thermal blankets" and top fittings protection and by requiring that all legacy tank cars to be retrofitted to the new standards. Finally, the FAST Act provided the PHMSA with authority to respond during national emergencies.

Moreover, Congress reauthorized the PHMSA's pipeline safety program in the 114th Congress by enacting the *Protecting our Infrastructure of Pipelines and Enhancing Safety Act of 2016* (PIPES Act) (P.L. 114-183). The PIPES Act ensured the agency completed its responsibilities under the *Pipeline Safety, Regulatory Certainty, and Job Creation Act of 2011* (P.L. 112-90); provided for a number of assessments of the current safety program; included the establishment of minimum standards for underground natural gas storage systems and liquefied natural gas facilities; provided PHMSA with emergency order authority to impose emergency restrictions on pipeline operations and safety measures on owners and operators of pipeline facilities to abate imminent hazards; created a working group to develop recommendations on how to create an information sharing system; and required the PHMSA to report on the feasibility of establishing a national integrated pipeline safety regulatory inspection database to improve communication and collaboration. The PIPES Act expired in September 2019.

Last year, the Committee considered and passed a reauthorization of PHMSA's pipeline safety programs that included provisions to enhance the safe transportation of gas and hazardous liquids by pipeline, address methane emissions through leaking pipelines and operational practices, and support PHMSA in finalizing rulemakings in a timelier manner. This bill has not yet been brought to the House floor. The Committee will continue to review the PHMSA's implementation of the mandates included in the FAST and PIPES Acts, and the *Pipeline Safety, Regulatory Certainty, and Job Creation Act of 2011* (P.L. 112-90), much of which remains to be implemented.

General Services Administration – Federal Real Property and Public Buildings:

The Committee intends to advance legislation related to the General Services Administration (GSA). The GSA continues to face significant asset management challenges because of chronic underfunding of its maintenance and repair budget, difficulties in disposing of surplus property, and an aging inventory. For these reasons, in 2003, the GAO placed real property management on its list of "high risk" government activities, where it remains today.

With respect to the GSA's leasing program, over one-half of the GSA's office space inventory consists of privately leased buildings, and an unusually large number of those leases expire over the next five years. This large turnover of GSA leases is taking place at a time when vacancy rates for commercial office space remain high and market rents low in some markets where the GSA has large lease holdings. The Committee intends to explore ways to help the GSA maximize this market opportunity by accelerating long-term lease replacements and improving utilization rates. The Committee also intends to examine GSA's outlease program.

The Federal Buildings Fund (FBF), the primary source of funding for the GSA's capital investment program, is struggling to maintain a balanced portfolio of owned properties through construction or purchase of new federal buildings and the repair of existing buildings. The FBF is supported by rental payments charged to federal agencies occupying space in the GSA's facilities.

The Committee recommends that the Administration carefully review the need for any new space, and base determinations of whether to lease or own on what would provide the greatest return on investment to the taxpayer. The Administration should also address issues related to the high number of old buildings in the federal inventory that drain resources from the FBF and are no longer efficient for modern office space. The Committee will also continue to take steps to ensure that federal agencies decrease office space, improve space utilization, and increase efficiency to lower

costs. In addition, the Committee will push GSA to further reduce the impact of federal buildings on our environment.

Furthermore, the GSA has several statutory authorities that, if used appropriately, could reduce costs and result in ownership opportunities in federal real estate. The Committee will examine how these authorities could be used more effectively to address space underutilization, reuse vacant space, convert long-term leased space into owned space, and provide more efficient space by leveraging concessions from private landlords. The Administration should examine how these authorities could be best used; however, the Administration should work with Congress when using these authorities and there should be authorization and strong congressional oversight of such projects.

Finally, the GSA's repair and alteration program has been underfunded in previous years and has failed to meet projected demand for the modernization of the GSA's aging inventory of retained federal buildings. The Committee continues to believe that the GSA should adhere to criteria in modernization and efficiency priorities that target investment in federal buildings that maximize space utilization and dispose of underutilized assets where appropriate. The Committee will also examine whether opportunities exist to leverage private sector interests in federal real estate, not only in providing new office space but also in modernizing existing inventory.

Federal Emergency Management Agency:

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) supports State, local, tribal, and territorial governments and manages and coordinates the Federal response to, and recovery from, major domestic disasters and emergencies of all types, in accordance with the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, as amended. FEMA leads the U.S. in preparing for, preventing, mitigating the effects of, responding to, and recovering from all domestic disasters, whether natural or man-made, including terrorist attacks.

Last year was another devastating year for natural disasters across the United States. While 2017 and 2018 will be remembered for three back-to-back hurricanes (Harvey, Irma, and Maria); the tragic wildfire that devoured Paradise, California; Hurricane Michael's wrath in the Florida panhandle; Anchorage, Alaska, and the surrounding area being subjected to a 7.0 magnitude earthquake; and Category 5 Super Typhoon Yutu slamming into the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, 2019 still saw more than a hundred new Stafford Act declarations. FEMA is now supporting State, local, tribal, and territorial governments hit by these 2019 disasters while still dealing with the catastrophic floods, wildfires, and earthquakes that affected hundreds of thousands of Americans in the two years prior. The Committee has been, and will continue to be, actively involved in providing assistance and guidance to Members of Congress whose districts have been impacted by these disasters.

In 2018, the Committee advanced the *Disaster Recovery Reform Act* (DRRA), which was signed into law in October 2018 as part of the broader FAA reauthorization package (P.L. 115-254). The DRRA increases the Federal focus on disaster mitigation to proactively reduce loss of life and property by lessening the impact of future disasters and requires stronger, more resilient rebuilding after disaster strikes. It makes other critical reforms to FEMA's disaster response and recovery programs that will help communities better prepare for, respond to, recover from, and mitigate

against disasters of all kinds. The Committee has been very aggressive in its oversight of FEMA's implementation of DRRA and will continue to be throughout 2020 as the Agency readies the Building Resilient Infrastructure in Communities (BRIC) grant program, its update to the Pre-Disaster Mitigation program.

The Committee will continue to conduct oversight on FEMA's disaster response and recovery activities—especially the 2017 hurricanes that caused record-breaking destruction in Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Florida, and Texas—as well as identify any additional necessary reforms to ensure FEMA is able to effectively support its State, local, tribal, and territorial partners. Additionally, the Committee will also continue its oversight as FEMA continues to implement the Sandy Recovery Improvement Act authorities enacted in early 2013. Additional mitigation reforms were also enacted as part of the *Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018* (P.L. 115-123).

Conclusion:

This report was circulated to all Members of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure for their review and comment and was approved in a Full Committee meeting on February 26, 2020. While the report reflects a bipartisan effort, the Committee wishes to emphasize that not all Members of the Committee necessarily agree with every aspect of the report. Accordingly, the Committee reserves its flexibility to determine program needs, and recognizes the potential for funding changes as the Committee and Congress work their will through the legislative process.