



Talking Points for Congressional Meetings

Transportation

Relevant Committee

NATaT Opposes the SHIP IT Act (H.R. 471)

- Bill would allow larger, heavier trucks on our roads and bridges.
- The current weight limit for trucks operating on interstate highways is 80,000 pounds and this bill would increase that limit 91,000 pounds or higher.
- The bill would create a nationwide 91,000-pound pilot program and unlimited weight for battery powered trucks.
- NATaT has major safety and infrastructure concerns.

HOUSE: TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE; AGRICULTURE; EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE; WAYS AND MEANS

SENATE: COMMERCE, SCIENCE, TRANSPORTATION; AGRICULTURE

Note: there will be an effort to include these provisions in the Farm Bill.

NATaT Supports the Rebuilding Rural Roads Act (H.R. 3002)

- The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law created the Rural Surface Transportation Grant Program.
- This competitive grant program defines “rural areas” as 200,000 population or less.
- This bill would reduce that definition from 200,000 to 20,000 giving rural communities a greater opportunity to access these grant funds.

HOUSE: TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

SENATE: COMMERCE, SCIENCE, TRANSPORTATION; ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

NATaT Cautions Against VMT

- NATaT is concerned that a Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) fee would affect rural drivers disproportionately higher than others.
- NATaT is open to exploring other ideas for funding the Highway Trust Fund, such as:
 - Tax overseas corporate profits
 - Raise the federal gas tax and index it to inflation

HOUSE: TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

SENATE: BUDGET; COMMERCE, SCIENCE, TRANSPORTATION; ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

- Replace the existing per-gallon tax with sales tax on the cost of fuel
- Introduce a per barrel of oil fee
- Introduce a federal vehicle registration fee
- Introduce a federal tax on rental cars
- Introduce a federal tax on automobile parts and vehicle maintenance

Broadband

NATaT Supports the Protecting Community Television Act (H.R. 907/S. 340)

HOUSE: ENERGY AND COMMERCE

SENATE: COMMERCE, SCIENCE,
TRANSPORTATION

- NATaT opposes any federal efforts that further limit the authority of local franchising authorities (LFAs) to regulate and assess fees on cable operators and other providers of wireline video and broadband services.
- NATaT supports the Protecting Community Television Act, which would reverse the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) 2019 order requiring that cable-related, in-kind contributions be subjected to the statutory five percent franchise fee cap.

NATaT Supports the Reforming Broadband Connectivity Act (H.R. 1812/S. 975)

- The FCC's Universal Service Fund (USF) promotes the availability of quality telecommunications services at reasonable prices for all consumers, especially for those living in areas that are rural or underserved.
- USF is funded through assessments on revenues generated by the sale of telecommunications services, such as service over traditional circuit-switched or mobile lines.
- These assessments, which make up the contributions base of revenues that fund USF, are declining dramatically as customers migrate from traditional telecommunications services to broadband and other services that contribute at lower rates or not at all.
- NATaT supports the Reforming Broadband Connectivity Act, which would direct the FCC to initiate a rulemaking process to reform the USF contributions system in a fair and equitable manner to ensure the long-term stability of Universal Service.

Farm Bill

NATaT Supports Enhanced Access to Farm Bill Programs

HOUSE: AGRICULTURE

SENATE: AGRICULTURE

- Changing programs from direct and guaranteed loans to grants will improve access to farm bill programs.
- NATaT supports decreasing or eliminating local cost share requirements for certain programs and applicants.
 - A local match requirement is cost prohibitive for our more disadvantaged towns and townships.

NATaT Supports Funds Directed to Capacity Building in Rural Areas

- Rural capacity building and preparedness will help ensure that rural towns and townships have access to Farm Bill resources.
 - This can be in the form of technical assistance, funding for grant administration, or staff education.

NATaT Supports Efforts to Bridge the Digital Divide

- NATaT supports increased authorizations for the Rural Broadband, Community Connect, and Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant Programs.
- NATaT supports the Middle Mile Infrastructure Program, which did not receive a multi-year authorization in the 2018 Farm Bill. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law provided one-time middle mile funding, but Congress has never appropriated funding specifically for middle mile, which helps reduce the cost of bringing high-speed Internet to unserved and underserved communities.
- NATaT also supports a multi-year authorization of the ReConnect Loan and Grant Program.
 - Congress currently reauthorizes the program annually through the appropriations process.

General Government

NATaT Supports the FIRE STATION Act (H.R. 1814/S. 977)

- The FIRE STATION Act is bipartisan legislation that would authorize the Federal Emergency Management Agency to administer a competitive grant program, which award funds could be used to:
 - Build, rebuild, or renovate fire and EMS department facilities.
 - Upgrade existing facilities to install exhaust emission control systems, install backup power systems, upgrade, or replace environmental control systems (such as HVAC systems), remove or remediate mold, and construct or modify living quarters for use by male and female personnel.
 - Upgrade fire and EMS stations or build new stations.
- This grant program would provide a needed resource to cash-strapped departments across the country to build and upgrade fire and EMS facilities.

HOUSE: SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY; TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

SENATE: HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Taxes

NATaT Supports Reintroduction of Volunteer Driver Tax Appreciation Act

- The federal business driver mileage reimbursement is 65.5¢/mile and the federal volunteer driver mileage reimbursement is 14¢/mile and has been that rate for decades.

HOUSE: WAYS AND MEANS

SENATE: FINANCE

- NATaT supports efforts to raise the volunteer mileage rate to the standard business rate for volunteers who drive their vehicles on behalf of charitable nonprofits to transport property or individuals.
- With increased transportation and energy costs, many individuals have stopped donating their time to help others.
- Eliminating the difference between the charitable mileage rate and the standard business rate will allow volunteers to defray one of the largest costs associated with volunteering.