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Congressional Votes on Surface Transportation Authorizations, 1978-2021

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Prior to 1978, Congress enacted separate highway and public transportation authorization acts. Congress began passing multiyear surface transportation authorization acts in 1978. These acts were often extended prior to the passage of subsequent multiyear acts. This report compiles congressional votes on enacted multiyear legislation related to surface transportation authorizations as well as information regarding the extensions of these acts. CRS obtained the information presented in this report from Congress.gov, the *Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, and the Federal Highway Administration.

The current surface transportation authorization, which is Division A of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (P.L. 117-58), expires on September 30, 2026. The BUILD America 250 Act (H.R. 8870), a surface transportation authorization bill, was introduced in the House of Representatives in May 2026.

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Surface transportation authorization acts are multiyear legislation that authorize spending on federal highway and public transportation programs, surface transportation safety and research, and, since 2015, intercity passenger rail programs. The current authorization, which is part of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA, P.L. 117-58), expires on September 30, 2026.¹ The BUILD America 250 Act (H.R. 8870), a surface transportation authorization bill, was introduced in the House of Representatives in May 2026. Historically, Congress has extended surface transportation authorizations beyond their expiration dates before passing new authorization bills. In anticipation of the September 30, 2026, expiration, Congress may decide to extend funding provisions of the IIJA, pass a new surface authorization bill, or let authorities expire.

This report compiles congressional votes on enacted surface transportation authorization legislation since 1978 as well as dates and expirations on extensions to surface authorization acts. It does not include votes on proposed authorization legislation that did not become law. The report also provides summary information on short-term extension legislation of the multiyear acts since 1991. CRS obtained the information presented in this report from Congress.gov, the *Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, and the Federal Highway Administration.

Surface Transportation Authorization Acts and Votes: 1978-2021

Prior to 1978, Congress enacted separate highway and public transportation authorization acts. Congress began passing multiyear surface transportation authorization acts in 1978. These acts were often extended prior to the passage of subsequent multiyear acts. Between 1978 and 1987, for instance, Congress passed three surface transportation authorization acts. These acts created, reauthorized, and (in some cases) changed a range of transportation programs. For example, the Surface Transportation Assistance Act of 1978 (P.L. 95-599) extended the Highway Trust Fund for five years and authorized highway funding for four years, up from two years in the previous highway specific authorization act. The Surface Transportation Assistance Act of 1982 (P.L. 97-424) increased the federal gasoline tax by five cents a gallon and increased funding for existing programs.² The Surface Transportation and Uniform Relocation Assistance Act of 1987 (P.L. 100-17) authorized funding for federal-aid highway and public transportation programs through FY1991 and extended the Highway Trust Fund through September 30, 1993.³

This report provides tallies of votes on final passage for each enacted measure of surface transportation authorization from 1978 and extending to 2026. The process of congressional consideration of bills through the legislative process can be complex, and attempting to interpret the intent of votes prior to the final vote on a measure may yield various—and sometimes conflicting—interpretations. This report provides vote information on only the final passage of each enacted measure.

Table 1 provides information on all enacted multiyear surface transportation authorization measures from 1978 to 2021, beginning with the most recent act. The bill number and public law columns of the table provide links to Congress.gov bill summary and status information for each measure. Links to complete roll call vote information on final enactment of measures also appear in the table back to 1990. Roll call vote summary tally data appear for all identified measures back to 1978.

¹ See P.L. 117-58, Division A—Surface Transportation.

² For more information on increasing the gasoline tax, see the section titled “Existing Highway Taxes” in CRS Report R47573, *Funding and Financing Highways and Public Transportation Under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA)*, by William J. Mallett.

³ For more information on the Highway Trust Fund, see CRS Report R48472, *The Highway Trust Fund’s Highway Account*, by Ali E. Lohman.

Table I. Votes on Enacted Measures for Surface Transportation Authorizations

1978-2021

Bill Number (Year)	Title	Fiscal Years of Authorization	Final House and Senate Vote Tally and Date of Votes		Public Law Number and Date of Enactment
			House	Senate	
H.R. 3684 (2021)	Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, Division A—Surface Transportation	2022-2026	228-206 11/5/2021	69-30 8/10/2021	P.L. 117-58 11/15/2021
H.R. 22 (2015)	Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act	2016-2020	359-65 12/3/2015	83-16 12/3/2015	P.L. 114-94 12/4/2015
H.R. 4348 (2012)	Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21 st Century Act	2013-2014	373-52 6/29/2012	74-19 6/29/2012	P.L. 112-141 7/6/2012
H.R. 3 (2005)	Safe, Accountable, Flexible and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users	2005-2009	412-8 7/29/2005	91-4 7/29/2005	P.L. 109-59 8/10/2005
H.R. 2400 (1998)	Transportation Equity Act for the 21 st Century	1998-2003	297-86 5/22/1998	88-5 5/22/1998	P.L. 105-178 6/9/1998
H.R. 2950 (1991)	Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991	1992-1997	372-47 11/27/1991	79-8 11/27/1991	P.L. 102-240 12/18/1991
H.R. 2 (1987)	Surface Transportation and Uniform Relocation Assistance Act of 1987	1987-1991	350-73 3/31/1987	67-33 4/2/1987	P.L. 100-17 4/2/1987
H.R. 6211 (1982)	Surface Transportation Assistance Act of 1982	1983-1986	180-87 12/21/1982	54-33 12/23/1982	P.L. 97-424 1/6/1983
H.R. 11733 (1978)	Surface Transportation Assistance Act of 1978	1979-1982	Voice Vote 10/15/1978	Voice Vote 10/15/1978	P.L. 95-599 11/6/1978

Source: Compiled by CRS using Congress.gov; annual *CQ Almanac* volumes; and Federal Highway Administration, “Funding Federal-Aid Highways,” January 2017, <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/policy/olsp/fundingfederalaid/02.cfm>.

Notes: The table excludes the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1981 (P.L. 97-134), which made amendments to the Surface Transportation Assistance Act of 1978 (P.L. 95-599) and included provisions for related purposes. The table also excludes the TEA 21 Restoration Act (P.L. 105-206), which provided technical corrections to P.L. 105-178.

Table 2 provides information on recent short-term extensions of enacted multiyear measures—including bill titles, enacted dates, expiration dates, and the total number of extensions—from 1991 to 2021. The bill number column of the table includes links to Congress.gov bill summary and status information for each measure. This table is limited to 1991-2021.

Table 2. Extensions to Surface Transportation Authorization Acts
1991-2021

Bill Number (Year)	Title	Enacted Date	Original Duration (# of FYs)	Expiration Date	Number of Extensions	Total Duration
H.R. 58 (2021)	Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act	11/15/2021	5	9/30/2026	n/a	n/a
H.R. 22 (2015)	Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act	12/4/2015	5	9/30/2020	3	14 months
H.R. 4348 (2012)	Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21 st Century Act	7/6/2012	2	9/30/2014	5	14 months
H.R. 3 (2005)	Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users	8/10/2005	5	9/30/2009	10	33 months
H.R. 2400 (1998)	Transportation Equity Act for the 21 st Century	6/8/1998	6	9/30/2003	12	23 months
H.R. 2950 (1991)	Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991	12/18/1991	6	9/30/1997	1	6 months

Source: CRS table based on Federal Highway Administration, “Funding Federal-Aid Highways,” January 2017, Table 1, <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/policy/olsp/fundingfederalaid/02.cfm>.

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