USDOT Announces INFRA Grants and Safety Data Initiative Challenge this June

On June 14 the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) announced the “Solving for Safety: Visualization Challenge”. Individuals and teams will compete for $350,000 in cash prizes by developing innovative, analytical visualization tools to gain insights or informed decisions to reduce fatalities and serious injuries on U.S. road and rail systems. Stage I submissions must be submitted by 11:59 PM, Eastern Time on July 31, 2018.

USDOT also announced nearly $1.5 billion in INFRA Grants on June 8. ITS America board members Utah DOT and Pennsylvania DOT, as well as ITS America Advocacy Trust members Wyoming DOT, Texas DOT, and Colorado DOT were all awarded grants.

Before FCC and in Social Media, Cable Industry Ratchets Up Rhetoric Against 5.9GHz Connected Car

In a May 24, 2018 ex-parte filing, NTCA stated that they believe FCC’s pending 5 GHz proceeding (ET 13-49), and in particular the 5.9 GHz band, presents the best near-term opportunity to make additional unlicensed spectrums available to support further economic growth. We urge the FCC to act expeditiously to enable unlicensed access to the 5.9 GHz band. NTCA tweeted out a video on June 26th about 5.9GHz and stated “Every day, more devices depend on Wi-Fi to access the internet. As a result, the
unlicensed spectrum that Wi-Fi relies on has become crowded. The gigabit technologies of today and tomorrow are going to need more spectrum to keep up with demand. Enter 5.9 GHz!

**FCC Commissioner Rosenworcel holds up San Jose Carrier Agreement as Model for 5G Deployment in Cities**

Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Commissioner Jessica Rosenworcel published copies of the deals between AT&T, Verizon and Mobilities and the City of San Jose as model agreements for other municipalities to deploy 5G. The city negotiated to allow the carriers to install 5G small cells on roughly 4,000 city-owned light poles. As part of the agreements, the companies will collectively contribute $24 million over the next decade to San Jose's Digital Inclusion Fund- a program that expands digital access. The negotiation between the city and the carriers is emblematic of telecom industry assertion that municipal fees only cover the cost a city incurs in the permitting process, and should not be tied to other considerations.

**NTSB Issues Initial Findings in May Florida Tesla Crash - Three other Automated Vehicle Investigations Proceeding**

The National Transportation Safety Board issued a preliminary report on a May 8, 2018 Lauderdale, Florida crash. The driver of a Tesla that crashed and then exploded last month was speeding at the time of the crash and lost control when he tried to switch lanes. NTSB said it will continue to search the car's data for further details and will continue to examine the procedures for extinguishing battery engine fires. In response, Tesla recently rolled out a new speed-limiting feature as part of its latest over-the-air software update, which allows vehicle owners to set a maximum speed between 50 and 90 mph. Tesla dedicated the feature to the son of a Tesla owner who died in the Fort Lauderdale crash. NTSB is also investigating three other automated vehicle crashes from last March (Mountain View, CA [Tesla and Barrier] and Tempe, AZ [UBER/Volvo and Pedestrian]) and January (Culver City, CA - [Tesla and Fire Truck]).
Senate Panel Narrowly Approves Heidi King to Lead NHTSA

The Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation approved on June 27, 2018, by a slim margin, the nomination of Heidi King to lead the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). The vote was 14 Republicans supporting her nomination and 13 Democrats opposing. Committee Ranking Member Bill Nelson, (D-FL), and other Democrats are not satisfied with King's commitment to holding vehicle manufacturers accountable for the Takata airbag recall and questioned her commitment to protecting consumers. Senator Nelson said he believed King "lacks the fire in the belly to protect consumers from something which is killing" people. King's nomination moves now to the Senate floor.

Senate Commerce Committee Approves Geoffrey Starks Nomination for FCC Commissioner

The Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation unanimously approved on June 27, 2018, Democratic Federal Communications Commissioner (FCC) nominee Geoffrey Starks to fill the FCC Commissioner's seat left vacant by Mignon Clyburn.

Thune and Schatz Introduce the STREAMLINE Small Cell Deployment Act

Senator John Thune (R-SD), Chairman of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, and Senator Brian Schatz (D-HI), the Ranking Member of the Committee's Subcommittee on Communications, Technology, Innovation, and the Internet, announced on June 28, 2018, the introduction of S. 3157, the Streamlining The Rapid Evolution And Modernization of Leading-edge Infrastructure Necessary to Enhance Small Cell Deployment Act or STREAMLINE Small Cell Deployment Act.

The S. 3157 would impose a shot clock of 60 days for collocation and 90 days for all other requests and includes a deem granted provision to enforce the shot clocks. The bill would provide additional time for small municipalities (fewer than 50,000 residents). It would allow the Federal
Communications Commission (FCC) the authority to grant a one-time 30-day waiver of the timeframes required for action upon request by a state or local government. The bill would also allow state and local governments to require fair and reasonable compensation for attachment or access to their poles or other property, so long as they are based on actual and direct costs, as opposed to fair rental payments.

State and Local Policy Updates

D.C. Council Votes to Raise Taxes on Ride-Hailing Companies

On June 26, 2018, the D.C. Council voted unanimously to hike the gross receipts tax on ride-hailing services from 1 percent to 6 percent. The tax increase would help fund part of the District’s $178.5 million annual commitment of dedicated funding for Metro.

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