

POLITICO

Foxx speaks, dogs for Amtrak, T&I football - DeFazio blasts Mica chairmanship - Questions on driverless cars

By: Adam Snider – November 20, 2013

THE LEDE — Today in transportation: It's another busy day in the transportation world. The highlights: Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx and a slew of big transpo voices all speak at a U.S. Travel Association conference, House and Senate negotiators get together for the first formal WRDA conference and some dogs — oh, and lawmakers too — will be at Union Station to promote a bill letting pets on Amtrak. At least you can unwind after the busy day by watching your favorite House T&I members play some football against the Capitol Police.

TRANSIT AND HOTELS: In conjunction with the USTA conference, today APTA and USTA put out a new study looking at how rail-friendly cities with good transit connections between airports and hotels attract more travelers than “non-rail cities.” Some key findings: The nightly room rate is nearly 50 percent more for hotels within a quarter-mile of a rail station and hotels in cities with a direct airport-downtown connection get 11 percent more revenue per room, totaling \$313 million extra in various “rail cities” around the country. <http://bit.ly/17JIYhR>

Still stuck: Also at today's conference, Building America's Future co-chair Ed Rendell will unveil a new version of his group's “I'm Stuck” app that lets Americans report transportation infrastructure problems to their member of Congress. The revised app has a new look, new interface and an option for bikers.

WOOF WOOF: Some furry four-legged friends will be on hand to help push for a bill that would let pets on Amtrak trains. Bill author and rail panel Chairman Jeff Denham will be joined by Steve Cohen, Michael Grimm, an official from the Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council and the Hallmark Channel's “pet lifestyle expert” and dog-trainer. The measure would let Amtrak riders take their pets on the train in a crate for an additional fee. <http://bit.ly/HYnTmH>

ARE YOU READY FOR SOME FOOTBALL? Some of the Hill's top transportation lawmakers sure are. The 6th biennial game pitting members of Congress against Capitol Police officers is tonight, and the House Transportation Committee will be well-represented on the congressional roster. Chairman Bill Shuster will be a coach for a team that includes Railroads Chairman Jeff Denham and fellow committee members Markwayne Mullin, Rodney Davis and Tim Walz. Infrastructure bank advocate Rep. John Delaney is also on the roster, as are Richard Hudson and Cedric Richmond, leaders of the Homeland Security panel with jurisdiction over the TSA. Proceeds from the \$10 tickets will go to the Capitol Police Memorial Fund, among other charities. The game starts at 7 p.m. at the D.C. Armory. Buy tickets and learn more about the game: <http://bit.ly/17IWaWz>

WEDNESDAY/MIDWEEK/HUMPDAY. Thanks for reading POLITICO's Morning Transportation, your daily tipsheet on trains, planes, automobiles and ports, where on this day in 1923, 46-year-old inventor, newspaperman and child of two former slaves Garrett Morgan was awarded a patent for the first "three-position" traffic signal. It wasn't the first traffic signal ever, but was the first to have something in between "stop" and "go" — a huge safety improvement for drivers and pedestrians alike. Please send me your tips, news and insights: asnider@politico.com. And follow me on Twitter: [@AdamKSnider](https://twitter.com/AdamKSnider).

"I went to the station, down in the yard. Gonna catch me a freight train ..." <http://bit.ly/1jh6LnU>

HOW THE TIMES HAVE CHANGED: Rep. Peter DeFazio, in a chat with MT yesterday, ended up talking about just how bad committee relations got under then-T&I Chairman John Mica and how Shuster has turned things around: "Bill Shuster is a world of difference. We were actually, really consulted [on WRRDA]. Even though John Mica would say 50 times he had consulted with or shared [MAP-21] with us, he hadn't. We'd never seen anything. In fact I don't think they had seen it — I believe the original draft they passed out of the House committee was written by some outside interest group because some of the provisions were so crazy... This is way different; we're way back toward where we used to be. There's still some friction, some push and pull, but if you look at the water bill in the end, a lot of the tea party people who've been questioning the government's role in infrastructure came around. So hopefully it will continue to evolve."

EN FUEGO: Kathryn reports for Pros: "Elon Musk, the transportation visionary with space-age dreams, has gotten caught up in the basest of fights: a he-said, she-said spat with federal safety regulators over the raft of fires plaguing his high-end electric car. The crux of the dispute: Whose idea was it for the federal government to investigate the fires in the Tesla Model S?" Read her full story: <http://politico.pro/1h2C49k>

MOST WANTED, DELAYED: The shutdown dominoes keep falling. The NTSB's "Most Wanted List" of its most important safety goals won't come out until early next year thanks to the 16-day government shutdown last month, according to an email from an agency official that was obtained by MT. The report is normally out in mid-November, the email reads, but "since we had the shutdown in October, we lost some ground and are facing a condensed calendar to complete other activities before the end of the year. As a consequence, we have decided to postpone the announcement of the Most Wanted List until January 16, 2014."

IT'S THE END OF THE TSA AS WE KNOW, AND CATO FEELS FINE: John Mica might regret creating the agency he now despises. But he's not the only TSA-hater out there. From Chris Edwards, the Cato Institute's director of tax policy studies: "We would be better off without a monolithic federal agency that controls all major aspects of aviation security. ... Congress should abolish TSA. The TSA activities that have not shown substantial benefits should be eliminated. Passenger and baggage screening — which represents about two-thirds of TSA's budget — should be moved to the control of airports and opened to competitive private bidding. And the remaining parts of TSA — including intelligence and analysis activities — should be moved to other federal agencies." More: <http://bit.ly/13tLMA>

A message from [POWERJobs](#): New jobs on our radar this week: **Press Secretary at Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget, **Assistant Director of Strategic Initiatives** at APHSA and **VP, Federal Affairs** at AHIP. Interested? Apply to these jobs and more at www.POWERJobs.com; finally, a career site made for YOU!**

THIS STORY WON'T READ ITSELF: Kevin reports for Pros: "The dream of roadways filled with driverless cars that rarely crash, cause traffic jams or search endlessly for parking spots may not become a reality anytime soon if the questions raised by lawmakers Tuesday aren't sorted out. While members of the House Transportation Committee's highways panel were clearly smitten — even 'titillated,' in the words of Rep. Dina Titus — by the possibility of driverless cars, they were also deeply skeptical of what Rep. Steve Cohen called 'Star Wars' technology." Full story: <http://politico.pro/17Jlu4K>

INHOFE'S SON REPORTED PROBLEMS BEFORE FATAL PLANE CRASH: Sen. Jim Inhofe's son Perry apparently had engine and control problems prior to the small plane crash that killed him, the NTSB said in a preliminary report (<http://1.usa.gov/18NnQAR>) issued Tuesday.

THE AUTOBAHN (SPEED READ)

- T&I member Trey Radel got a bit of trouble in late October. POLITICO broke the news:

<http://politi.co/1878EEr>

- The California High-Speed Rail Authority has spent nearly \$600 million on consultants before construction has started. Fresno Bee: <http://bit.ly/1aQuq9u>

- One key to the Boeing 777X's fuel efficiency? Lots of small holes. Wired: <http://wrd.cm/1aFo54i>

- The defeat of Pennsylvania's transportation bill is a setback for Gov. Tom Corbett. Pro:

<http://politico.pro/1fU7lbn>

- Among Mental Floss's interesting 10 flight attendant secrets: Diet Coke fizz lasts a long time at 35,000 feet. <http://bit.ly/1aFq34t>

- Murphie Barrett, a professional staffer with House T&I's Highways and Transit panel, will be the subcommittee's new staff director after Jim Tymon's departure for AASHTO. <http://1.usa.gov/1fcYZxX>

- LAX shooter Paul Ciancia has been released from the hospital and is in police custody. KABC:

<http://bit.ly/1aQsQEz>

- MADD announces its 2013 "legislative champions." <http://bit.ly/1eHAX5>

- The troubled Silver Spring Transit Center needs even more repairs. WaPo: <http://wapo.st/1bPi4qV>

COMING TOMORROW — 'CAPITAL PLAYBOOK': Capital New York, the online publication recently acquired by POLITICO Publisher Robert Allbritton, will announce this morning that it's relaunching Tuesday, Dec. 3 and that tomorrow it will debut 'Capital Playbook.' Modeled after the must-read, early-morning newsletter POLITICO Playbook, Capital Playbook will be full of scoops and storylines for

knowledgeable New Yorkers. Capital Playbook will be written by Capital reporters Azi Paybarah and Jimmy Vielkind with POLITICO Playbook's Mike Allen. Sign up for the email here: <http://bit.ly/HYrMbb>

THE COUNTDOWN: Surface transportation policy is up in 315 days and FAA policy in 680 days. The mid-term elections are in 349 days. DOT appropriations run out in 57 days.

CABOOSE — Don't try this at home: You can't bring your favorite weapon on your flight — but what if you could build one after going through TSA screening, from items easily bought in a shop? Some videos from “independent security researcher” Evan Booth hint that it's not that hard. Videos and more via PolicyMic: <http://bit.ly/l2usos>

A message from [POWERJobs](#): Tap into the power of POWERJobs for the newest job opportunities in the Washington area from the area's top employers, including **U.S. Department of Transportation, SAIC, METRO and **the U.S. Chamber of Commerce**. Powered by names you trust — POLITICO, WTOP, WJLA/ABC-TV, NewsChannel 8 and Federal News Radio- POWERJOBS is the ultimate career site with more than **2 million job searches** and nearly **17,000 applications submitted** this year so far. Connect through Facebook or LinkedIn, search jobs by industry and set up job-specific email alerts using www.POWERJobs.com, the site for Washington's top talent.**