



## AGENDA – Administration Committee

Thursday, February 19, 2026

5:45 PM

- I. Roll Call
- II. Approval of the January 15, 2026 Administration Committee Minutes

RECOMMENDED MOTION: To approve the Minutes of January 15, 2026 Administration Committee Meeting of the DuPage Water Commission.

- III. Request for Board Action: Travel and related expenses for two (2) Commission employees for Factory Control Panel QA/QC Testing for Medium Voltage Switchgear in Cucamonga CA, travel and related expenses for three (3) employees to attend AWWA ACE in Washington DC.
- IV. Request for Board Action: Authorization of a Consulting Agreement with Marquardt & Humes, Inc, in an amount not to exceed \$40,000.
- V. Request for Board Action: Authorization of a Consulting Agreement with Jason Tai & Associates, in an amount not to exceed \$120,000.

RECOMMENDED MOTION: To recommend approval of Items 2 through 4 of the Administration Committee Report section of the Commission meeting agenda.

- VI. Old Business
- VII. New Business
- VIII. Executive Session

RECOMMENDED MOTION: To go into Executive Session to discuss security procedures pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(8), to discuss matters related to personnel pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1) and (2), to discuss acquisition of real estate pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(5), to discuss the setting of a price for sale or lease of property owned by the DuPage Water Commission 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(6), to discuss pending, probable, or imminent litigation pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(11), and/or to discuss minutes of closed meetings pursuant to 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(21) (Roll Call).

RECOMMENDED MOTION: To come out of Executive Session (Voice Vote).

- IX. Adjournment

Minutes of a Meeting  
of the

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**ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE**

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DuPage Water Commission  
600 E. Butterfield Road, Elmhurst, Illinois

January 15, 2026

- I. Commissioner Romano called the meeting to order at 6:22 PM.  
Commissioners in attendance: A. Honig, K. Romano, D. Van Vooren  
Commissioners absent: S. Greaney  
Also in attendance: P. May, D. Mundall
- II. Commissioner Romano asked for a motion to approve the Minutes of the November 20, 2025 Administration Committee Meeting. Commissioner Honig moved, seconded by Commissioner Van Vooren, unanimously approved by a voice vote. All aye, motion carried.
- III. Commissioner Romano asked for a motion to approve a Request for Board Action - Recommendation for the adoption of an administrative policy with respect to the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI). Commissioner Honig moved, seconded by Commissioner Van Vooren, all aye, motion carried.
- IV. Commissioner Romano asked for a motion to approve Request for Board Action - Travel and related expenses for two (2) Commission employees for Factory Valve QA/QC Testing for High Lift Pump Cone Valve Rebuilds in York Pennsylvania, travel and related expenses for one (1) employee to attend training at Utility Locator Staking University in Manteno Illinois. Commissioner Van Vooren moved, seconded by Commissioner Honig, unanimously approved by a voice vote, all aye, motion carried.
- V. Commissioner Romano asked for a motion to approve Resolution No. R-11-26 A Resolution Authorizing the General Manager to Execute a 12-Month Janitorial Service Contract with Multisystem Management Company for Periodic Janitorial Services at the DuPage Pumping Station and Administration Building, no cost for this action. Commissioner Van Vooren moved, seconded by Commissioner Honig, unanimously approved by a voice vote, all aye, motion carried.
- VI. Old Business  
No Old Business was offered.
- VII. New Business  
No New Business was offered.

VIII. Executive Session

No Executive Session was required.

IX. Adjournment

Commissioner Honig moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:26 PM, seconded by Commissioner Van Vooren, unanimously approved by a voice vote. All aye, motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 6:26 PM.



**Resolution #: RFBA**

**Account: 01-60-613301, 01-60-613200**

**Approvals:** *Author / Manager / Finance / Admin*

**RCB RCB CAP PDM**

## REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION

**Date:** 2/12/2026

**Description:** Travel and related expenses for two (2) Commission employees for Factory Control Panel QA/QC Testing for Medium Voltage Switchgear in Cucamonga CA, travel and related expenses for three (3) employees to attend AWWA ACE in Washington DC.

**Agenda Section:** Administration Committee

**Originating Department:** Administration

- Factory Control Panel QA/QC Testing – Upon approval of the fabrication of redundant power supplies for the Medium Voltage Switchgear for the DuPage Pumping Station, it is imperative that each panel control circuitry be inspected and tested at the fabrication facility in Cucamonga, CA prior to shipment back to Elmhurst for installation and commissioning. This request is for DWC staff to travel to the fabrication facility, inspect and witness test the proper operation of inputs and output signaling and monitoring devices.
- American Waterworks Association Annual Conference and Exposition (AWWA-ACE) - This annual conference provides the opportunity to meet with national and international waterworks industry leaders and other subject matter experts. The program provides several technical sessions to maintain certifications and Professional Engineering licensure. DWC staff are on the technical agenda as presenters and will receive a discounted registration cost.

Dates	Location/Event Description	Attendees	Budgeted/Estimated Expenditure
May-June 2026 (Dates TBD)	Factory QA/QC Testing for Medium Voltage Switchgear Control Panel Fabrication in Cucamonga, CA.	[Redacted], Senior Instrumentation Technician [Redacted], Senior Instrumentation Technician	Estimated at \$2,500 (including Lodging, Transportation and per diems)
June 21-25, 2026	American Waterworks Association Annual Conference and Exposition (AWWA-ACE) – Washington DC	[Redacted] – General Manager [Redacted] – Manager of Water Operations [Redacted] – Systems and Information Technology Supervisor	Estimated at \$7,700 (including Registrations, Lodging, Transportation and per diems)

**Recommended Motion:**

To authorize Business-Related Travel Expenses for Travel and related expenses for two (2) Commission employees for Factory Control Panel QA/QC Testing for Medium Voltage Switchgear in Cucamonga CA at an estimated expense of \$2,500, travel and related expenses for three (3) employees to attend AWWA ACE in Washington DC at an estimated expense of \$7,700 as included in the FY-25/26 and FY-26/27 Management Budget and as listed above.

**DUPAGE WATER COMMISSION - PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
OVERNIGHT/OUT OF STATE TRAVEL REQUEST**

Request Date	February 12, 2026
Name of Attendee	
Job Title	Manager of Water Operations
Department	Administration

Purpose of Travel	This annual conference provides the opportunity to meet with national and international waterworks industry leaders and other subject matter experts. The program provides several technical sessions to maintain certifications and Professional Engineering licensure. DWC staff are on the technical agenda as presenters and will receive a discounted registration cost.
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Destination	Washington, DC
Date of Departure	June 21, 2026
Date of Return	June 25, 2026

**Please indicate the estimated amount for each applicable expense:**

Air Fare:	\$350.00
Rental Car:	\$0.00
Other Transportation (Mileage/Parking/Shuttles/Taxi/Rideshare):	\$0.00
Lodging:	\$1,850.00
Registration (including reference materials):	\$0.00
Meals and Tips:	\$300.00
*Miscellaneous (describe below):	\$0.00
<b>Total Estimated Expense:</b>	<b>\$2,500.00</b>

*\*Explanation of Miscellaneous if included in estimates above:*

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Recommendations for Approval:

Department Head:		Date:	
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**DUPAGE WATER COMMISSION - PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
OVERNIGHT/OUT OF STATE TRAVEL REQUEST**

Request Date	February 12, 2026
Name of Attendee	
Job Title	Systems and Information Technology Supervisor
Department	Systems and Information Technology

Purpose of Travel	This annual conference provides the opportunity to meet with national and international waterworks industry leaders and other subject matter experts. The program provides several technical sessions to maintain certifications and Professional Engineering licensure. DWC staff are on the technical agenda as presenters and will receive a discounted registration cost.
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Destination	Washington, DC
Date of Departure	June 21, 2026
Date of Return	June 25, 2026

**Please indicate the estimated amount for each applicable expense:**

Air Fare:	\$350.00
Rental Car:	\$0.00
Other Transportation (Mileage/Parking/Shuttles/Taxi/Rideshare):	\$0.00
Lodging:	\$1,850.00
Registration (including reference materials):	\$0.00
Meals and Tips:	\$300.00
*Miscellaneous (describe below):	\$0.00
<b>Total Estimated Expense:</b>	<b>\$2,500.00</b>

*\*Explanation of Miscellaneous if included in estimates above:*

Recommendations for Approval:

Department Head:		Date:	
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**DUPAGE WATER COMMISSION - PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
OVERNIGHT/OUT OF STATE TRAVEL REQUEST**

Request Date	February 12, 2026
Name of Attendee	[REDACTED]
Job Title	Senior Instrumentation Technician
Department	Operations and Instrumentation

Purpose of Travel>	Upon approval of the fabrication of redundant power supplies for the Medium Voltage Switchgear for the DuPage Pumping Station, it is imperative that each panel control circuitry be inspected and tested at the fabrication facility in Cucamonga, CA prior to shipment back to Elmhurst for installation and commissioning
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Destination	Cucamonga, CA
Date of Departure	TBD
Date of Return	TBD

**Please indicate the estimated amount for each applicable expense:**

Air Fare:	\$450.00
Rental Car:	\$250.00
Other Transportation (Mileage/Parking/Shuttles/Taxi/Rideshare):	\$0.00
Lodging:	\$400.00
Registration (including reference materials):	\$0.00
Meals and Tips:	\$150.00
*Miscellaneous (describe below):	\$0.00
<b>Total Estimated Expense:</b>	<b>\$1,250.00</b>

*\*Explanation of Miscellaneous if included in estimates above:*

Recommendations for Approval:

Department Head:		Date:	
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**DUPAGE WATER COMMISSION - PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
OVERNIGHT/OUT OF STATE TRAVEL REQUEST**

Request Date	February 12, 2026
Name of Attendee	
Job Title	General Manager
Department	Administration

Purpose of Travel>	This annual conference provides the opportunity to meet with national and international waterworks industry leaders and other subject matter experts. The program provides several technical sessions to maintain certifications and Professional Engineering licensure. DWC staff are on the technical agenda as presenters and will receive a discounted registration cost.
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Destination	Washington, DC
Date of Departure	June 21, 2026
Date of Return	June 25, 2026

**Please indicate the estimated amount for each applicable expense:**

Air Fare:	\$350.00
Rental Car:	\$200.00
Other Transportation (Mileage/Parking/Shuttles/Taxi/Rideshare):	\$0.00
Lodging:	\$1,850.00
Registration (including reference materials):	\$0.00
Meals and Tips:	\$300.00
*Miscellaneous (describe below):	\$0.00
<b>Total Estimated Expense:</b>	<b>\$2,700.00</b>

*\*Explanation of Miscellaneous if included in estimates above:*

Recommendations for Approval:

Department Head:		Date:	
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**DUPAGE WATER COMMISSION - PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
OVERNIGHT/OUT OF STATE TRAVEL REQUEST**

Request Date	February 12, 2026
Name of Attendee	[REDACTED]
Job Title	Senior Instrumentation Technician
Department	Systems and Information Technology

Purpose of Travel>	Upon approval of the fabrication of redundant power supplies for the Medium Voltage Switchgear for the DuPage Pumping Station, it is imperative that each panel control circuitry be inspected and tested at the fabrication facility in Cucamonga, CA prior to shipment back to Elmhurst for installation and commissioning
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Destination	Cucamonga, CA
Date of Departure	TBD
Date of Return	TBD

**Please indicate the estimated amount for each applicable expense:**

Air Fare:	\$450.00
Rental Car:	\$250.00
Other Transportation (Mileage/Parking/Shuttles/Taxi/Rideshare):	\$0.00
Lodging:	\$400.00
Registration (including reference materials):	\$0.00
Meals and Tips:	\$150.00
*Miscellaneous (describe below):	\$0.00
<b>Total Estimated Expense:</b>	<b>\$1,250.00</b>

*\*Explanation of Miscellaneous if included in estimates above:*

Recommendations for Approval:

Department Head:		Date:	
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**Resolution #:** RFBA

**Account:** 01-60-628000, \$40,000

**Approvals:** *Author / Manager / Finance / Admin*

**PDM - CAP PDM**

## REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION

**Date:** 2/6/2026

**Description:** **Authorization of a Consulting Agreement with Marquardt & Humes, Inc, in an amount not to exceed \$40,000**

**Agenda Section:** Administration Committee

**Originating Department:** Administration

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It is recommended that the consulting services agreement with Marquardt & Humes, Inc be authorized for a one-year period. This service is for state legislation/lobbying services, which DWC finds to remain of value at this time as there are a number of DWC initiatives which are expected to be underway over the next several years for which this service is likely to be valuable. A scope of expected activities is included in the proposal.

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**Recommended Motion:**

To authorize the execution of a Consulting Agreement with Marquardt & Humes, Inc, in an amount not to exceed \$40,000.



February 9, 2026

DuPage Water Commission  
Chairman Jim Zay  
600 E Butterfield Rd  
Elmhurst, IL 60126

Dear Chairman Zay,

We very much appreciate the opportunity to represent the Commission in Springfield and are grateful to be considered for a contract renewal. Scott and I are proud of the high level of personalized service that we offer to our clients, we strive to be accessible and accountable. I will be highlighting our services below for your review, but our services are certainly not limited to the ones below. Our relationships and understanding of the political landscape make us a valuable partner in regard to any issue that arises within the Commission. Our primary focus for the 2026 legislative session is to advocate for the successful passage of SB3381/HB4951, our design build legislation.

Detailed personalized legislative tracking, this includes bill filed that contain key words provided by the Commission. In addition, we track those flagged bills progress and also any amendments.

Communication with staff and the Chairman regarding any bills that affect the Commission and developing a strategy to support/oppose.

Assistance in regulatory issues affecting the commission.

Detailed session reporting, weekly during session and a minimum of once a month in off session months.

Advocating on behalf of the Commission with other units of Government including the County Board and staff.

Thank you for the opportunity to be considered.

  
John W. C. Humes

600 S. SECOND ST., SUITE 400    2001 BUTTERFIELD ROAD · SUITE 1110  
SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS 62704    DOWNERS GROVE, ILLINOIS 60515

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# MARQUARDT & HUMES, INC.

## Marquardt & Humes, Inc. Firm Profile and Overview

Relationship Building

Legislative Support

Strategic Consulting



600 S. Second St. • Suite 400 • Springfield, Illinois 62704  
311 S. County Farm Rd. • Suite I • Wheaton, Illinois 60187  
2001 Butterfield Rd • Suite 1110 • Downers Grove, IL 60515  
Phone: (217) 523-4200 • Email: [Scott@marquardtco.com](mailto:Scott@marquardtco.com)



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**FIRM OVERVIEW**

## Experienced. Effective. Respected.

For thirty years, the consulting firm of Marquardt & Humes, Inc. has through dedication and perseverance, gained respect and proven results in representing its clients before the Illinois General Assembly and the executive branch of state government.

Our expansive network across all branches of government in Illinois allows Marquardt & Humes to effectively assist our clients with their needs. Over the years we have worked hard to develop and build on our relationships with legislators and staff members in all four caucuses as well as with officials in the executive branch. Today, we are proud of our ability to effectively work with legislators on both sides of the aisle, and on both sides of the rotunda, including those in Senate and House Leadership.

Additionally, our numerous contacts with legislators and staff members in the Illinois General Assembly afford us the opportunity to receive "up-to-the-minute" information regarding critical legislation, often before the legislation is introduced. We have also invested in technology which allows us to more effectively track and monitor vital legislation from our offices in Springfield and Downers Grove Illinois.

The varied employment and political experience of the members in our firm have afforded us the opportunity to develop extensive relationships across the state of Illinois with numerous legislators, political leaders and government executives. This demonstrated ability is documented through our success in obtaining and maintaining client contracts. We feel we successfully work with Democrats and Republicans in both legislative chambers, including those serving in committee and caucus leadership positions very effectively.



Marquardt & Humes, Inc. is comprised of two full-time in-house lobbyists in addition to one full-time client relationship specialist. Our lobbying team includes:

- **Mr. Scott R. Marquardt, Esq.**
- **Mr. John “Chip” Humes**
- **Carrie A. VanTilburg**



**OUR TEAM**

**SCOTT R. MARQUARDT, ESQ.**  
Partner and Chief Legal Counsel

Scott R. Marquardt serves as a Partner and Chief Legal Counsel to Marquardt & Humes. Mr. Marquardt has been an independent lobbyist and consultant for various corporations and companies since 1996. Since becoming President of Marquardt & Company in 2002, Mr. Marquardt has focused his attention on assembling a team of consultants capable of providing our clients with the most comprehensive level of representation available.

Mr. Marquardt was born and raised in DuPage County. In fact, he is a 4<sup>th</sup> generation DuPage County resident. Mr. Marquardt began his professional career as a prosecutor in the DuPage County State's Attorney's Office. While an Assistant State's Attorney, he was responsible for prosecuting traffic, misdemeanor, and felony offenses and ultimately was placed in charge of the unit responsible for making charging decisions on high-level cases. Upon leaving the State's Attorney's Office after four years of service, Mr. Marquardt entered private practice and eventually became a partner and president of the Wheaton-based law firm of Marquardt & Belmonte, P.C. Today, Marquardt & Belmonte, P.C. is one of the largest firms of its kind in DuPage County.

In addition to his business and legal expertise, Mr. Marquardt also possesses a wide array of political campaign management experience -- which further enhances our firm's statewide network. He has managed numerous local campaigns and provided advice and counsel to dozens of candidates and elected officials at all levels of government.

Mr. Marquardt is a graduate of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and of the Chicago-Kent College of Law and remains active in his community by serving as a precinct committeeman.



**OUR TEAM**

**JOHN “CHIP” HUMES**  
Partner

John “Chip” Humes serves as a Partner to Marquardt & Humes. As a former funeral director and co-owner of Humes Funeral Home in Addison, he has served families and the community for many years. His commitment to serving others and tending to their needs is as prevalent now as when he served as a paramedic and firefighter.

This drive to serve others and his community has given him great experience. As a former small business owner himself, he understands the concerns, needs and issues that small businesses have.

This led him to serve as President of the Addison Chamber of Commerce for three years. During his time as President, he worked to address the needs of businesses in Addison and advance the issues important to them; as well as to attract new businesses to the area.

Chip began his lobbying career in 2012 as a Consultant with Roger C. Marquardt & Company. He continues to work with members of state and local government to enhance the firm’s statewide network. Throughout his tenure with Roger C. Marquardt & Company he has contributed to the vast growth of the firm and is now a partner.

Chip is a graduate of Driscoll Catholic High School in Addison. He then attended College of DuPage and the Elgin Fire Academy, becoming a firefighter and certified paramedic. He later graduated from Worsham College of Mortuary Science. He proudly serves as a board member of DuPage Health Matters and is an avid supporter of the IL State Police Heratige He has served as a member of the Driscoll Catholic High School board, treasurer of the Adventist Glen Oaks Hospital Foundation, past president of the Addison Chamber of Commerce and Industry, member of the Addison Historical Commission. Mr. Humes is also a fourth degree Knight of Columbus.



**OUR TEAM**

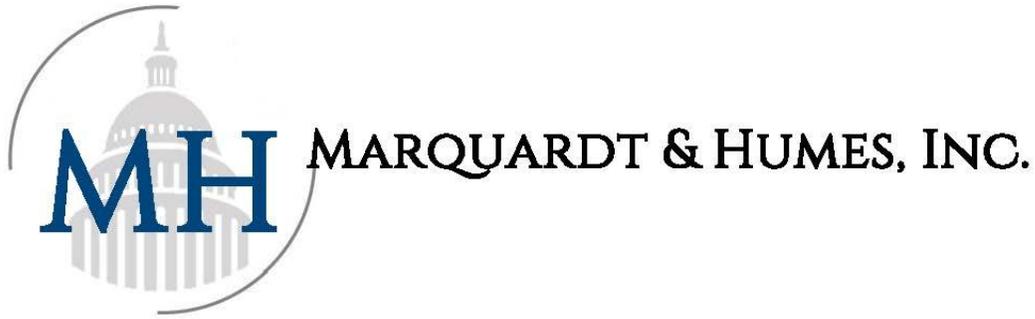
**CARRIE A. VANTILBURG**  
Client Relationship Specialist

Carrie VanTilburg is the Client Relationship Specialist at Marquardt & Humes. She joined our firm in 2001 after attending Illinois State University where she majored in political science and sociology. From 2002-2007, Ms. VanTilburg was one of Marquardt & Humes's registered lobbyists.

Ms. VanTilburg is responsible for monitoring and keeping Marquardt & Hume's clients informed of the day-to-day status of the legislative initiatives and other developments important to them. She also assists our clients in their reporting and compliance obligations with the Illinois Secretary of State's Index Department. During the legislative session, Ms. VanTilburg uses her considerable knowledge of Springfield-area venues to help our clients plan and coordinate meetings, receptions, dinners, and other events with members of the General Assembly.

In addition to her work with Marquardt & Humes Ms. VanTilburg is the legal assistant at Marquardt & Belmonte, P.C. and the administrative assistant for the Illinois Public Airports Association. She is also the event planner for the association's annual fall conference each year.

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## CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT

This Agreement is made on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of February 2026, between MARQUARDT & HUMES, INC. ("M&H INC.") having its principal place of business, at 600 So. Second Street, Suite 400, Springfield, Illinois 62704 and DUPAGE COUNTY WATER COMMISSION., having its principal place of business at 600 Butterfield Rd., Elmhurst IL 60126

IN CONSIDERATION of CLIENT., retaining M&H INC., it is agreed as follows:

### I. COMPENSATION AND TERMS

CLIENT. Retains M&H INC. and M&H INC. hereby agrees to CLIENT. in the capacity of:

Professional Lobbying Services

The terms and compensation of this Agreement is as follows:

Term: February 1, 2026 through January 31, 2027

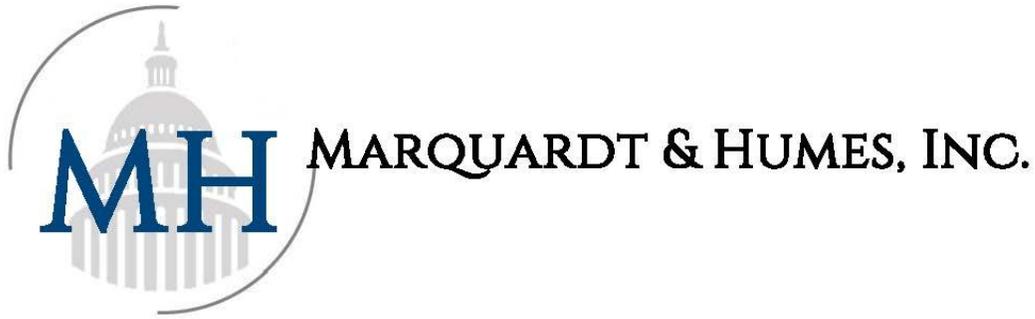
Compensation: \$48,000.00/year payable in 4 payments of \$12,000.00

Scope of Services include:

- Track legislative initiatives, bills, and committee hearings; advise DWC on the same.
- Assist in the preparation and evaluation of DWC led initiatives and associated legislation
- Identify and foster relationship with elected officials supportive of DWC initiatives
- Identify and foster relationships with elected officials sharing opposition with DWC to initiatives opposed by DWC or the water sector.
- Identify and foster relationship with stakeholders and industry groups supportive of DWC initiatives
- Identify and foster relationships with stakeholders and industry groups sharing opposition with DWC to initiatives opposed by DWC or the water sector.
- Provide notice and information regarding funding opportunities or changes to the same
- Provide notice and information regarding proposed regulatory changes or modifications
- Assist in coordinating introductions to legislators representing the DWC service area, and scheduling meetings/appointments/introductions upon request.

### II. WARRANTIES BY M&H INC

M&H INC represents and warrants to CLIENT. that it has the experience and ability to perform the services required by this Agreement; that they will perform said services, in a professional, competent and timely manner, as represented and suitable for the performance of the Agreement; and that they have the



power to enter into and perform this Agreement; and that their performance of this Agreement shall not infringe upon or violate the rights of any third party or violate any federal, state and municipal laws.

### III. INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR

M&H INC acknowledges that the services rendered under this Agreement shall be solely as an independent contractor. M&H INC shall not enter into any contract or commitment on behalf of the CLIENT, M&H INC further acknowledges that they are not considered an affiliate or subsidiary of CLIENT. and are not entitled to any of CLIENT. employment rights or benefits. It is expressly understood that this undertaking is not a joint venture.

### IV. BUSINESS PRACTICES

M&H INC hereby represents and covenants that they:

- have no knowledge or information that any unlawful payments, disbursements, assignments

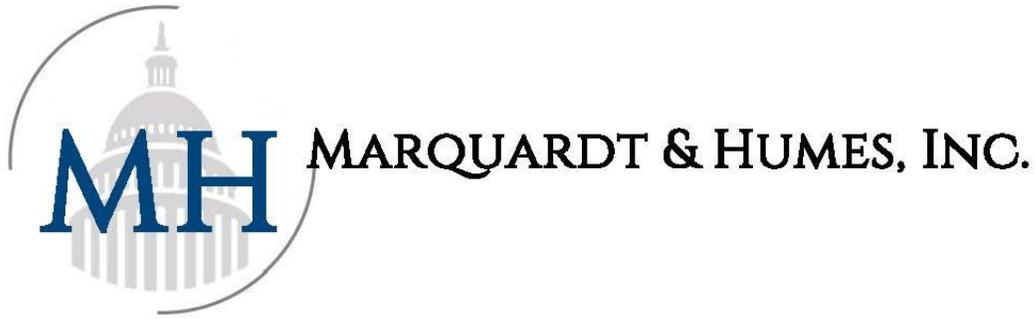
- or transfers of property of any type have been made, or promised to any governmental official or to any intermediary, broker or agent who shall in turn, directly or indirectly unlawfully pay, disburse, assign or transfer property to any governmental official, to unlawfully influence any act or decision of any governmental official;

- will take all reasonable steps to ensure that no unlawful payments, disbursements, assignments

- or transfers of property of any type be made to any governmental official, or to any intermediary, broker or agent who shall in turn, directly or indirectly unlawfully pay, disburse, assign or transfer property to any governmental official, to unlawfully influence any act or decision of any governmental official.

### V. CONFIDENTIALITY

M&H INC recognizes and acknowledges that this Agreement creates a confidential relationship between M&H INC and CLIENT. and that information concerning CLIENT., or its operation, whether written or oral, is confidential in nature. All such information concerning CLIENT. is hereinafter collectively referred to as "Confidential Information". M&H INC will not use, disclose to any third party, directly or indirectly, for its own benefit or the benefit of others, both during the term of the Agreement and subsequent to its termination, any Confidential Information which M&H INC may acquire or develop in connection with or as a result of the performance of this agreement. M&H INC further agrees to bind their employees and subcontractors to the terms and conditions of this Agreement.



VI. GRANT

M&H INC agrees that their work product produced in the performance of this Agreement shall remain the exclusive property of CLIENT., and that they will not sell, transfer, publish, disclose, display or otherwise make the work product available directly to third parties without CLIENT., prior written consent. Any rights granted to CLIENT under this Agreement shall not affect CLIENT., exclusive ownership of the work product.

VII. ENTIRE AGREEMENT AND NOTICE

This Agreement contains the entire understanding of the parties and may not be amended without the specific written consent of both parties. Any notice given under this Agreement shall be sufficient if it is in writing and if sent by certified or registered mail.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, CLIENT, and MARQUARDT & HUMES, INC. do hereby affirm that they understand the provisions contained herein. Therefore, in consideration of the mutual covenants contained herein, CLIENT., and MARQUARDT & HUMES, INC. have caused this contract to be executed, by witness of the signatures following, as of the day and year first written.

CLIENT

MARQUARDT & HUMES, INC.

BY: \_\_\_\_\_

BY: \_\_\_\_\_

TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_



**Resolution #: RFBA**

**Account: 01-60-772500, \$120,000**

**Approvals:** *Author / Manager / Finance / Admin*

**PDM - CAP PDM**

## REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION

**Date:** 2/6/2026

**Description:** **Authorization of a Consulting Agreement with Tai, Ginsberg & Associates, in an amount not to exceed \$120,000**

**Agenda Section:** Administration Committee

**Originating Department:** Administration

It is recommended that the consulting services agreement with Tai, Ginsberg & Associates be extended for a one-year period. This service is for Federal, State, labor, and RxR legislation/lobbying services, which DWC finds to remain of value at this time as there are a number of DWC initiatives which are expected to be underway over the next several years for which this service is likely to be valuable. A scope of expected activities is included in the proposal.

Tai, Ginsberg & Associates have been extremely productive since first retained in 2024, facilitating in-person and virtual meetings with nearly every federal legislator that represents the DWC service area, and assembling submittals and support documents for Congressional Directed Spending (CDS) earmarks, which were successful in assigning funding marks in the amount of \$1.5M for the source water project; \$1M from Congressman Krishnamoorthi, and \$500K from Congressman Casten.

**Recommended Motion:**

To authorize the execution of a Consulting Agreement with Tai, Ginsberg & Associates, in an amount not to exceed \$120,000 for 12-month term.



## TAI GINSBERG & ASSOCIATES, LLC

February 9, 2026

Chairman James F. Zay  
DuPage Water Commission  
600 East Butterfield Road  
Elmhurst, IL 60126

Dear Chairman Zay:

This letter serves as an agreement for Tai Ginsberg & Associates, LLC to provide federal strategic grants consulting – and advocacy services as needed – in Washington, DC on behalf of the DuPage Water Commission (DWC) in support of the Source Water Project. Efforts will focus on funding opportunities in the FY 2025 & 2026 Appropriations process in Congress. This engagement will involve the continued strategic partnership with Raucci & Sullivan Strategies, LLC.

1. **COMPANY.** Focused on bipartisan federal advocacy services within the transportation and infrastructure space, including municipal water infrastructure needs, Tai Ginsberg & Associates, LLC (TG&A) provides a strong depth of knowledge to our diverse set of clients in the private and public sectors. TG&A is proud of our strong understanding of federal agencies and programs, the Congressional appropriations process, and other opportunities that help our clients navigate the federal landscape.

TG&A's team has a combined 50+ years of professional experience in policy and government relations. Our service includes extensive work with the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate, developing or modifying policies and programs to meet client objectives, and building relationships for our clients to leverage. TG&A also maintains strong relationships with stakeholders in the infrastructure space and can provide a continuous liaison with other Washington, D.C.-based and infrastructure-based organizations and coalitions.

Key personnel on this engagement would include:

**Jason Tai, Principal**

Jason has over two decades of broad and substantive experience in federal and state government with expertise in transportation and infrastructure issues. He represents a diverse group of clients ranging from public sector agencies, Fortune 500 companies, mid-market businesses, and start-ups. He has proven successful in negotiating and securing significant federal and state funding for a variety of critical projects and managed complex

governmental and political processes to achieve results. Prior to joining the private sector government relations field, Jason served as Chief of Staff for two Members of Congress where he oversaw and managed all policy, projects, communications, intergovernmental, and political issues. Jason also served as a Professional Staff Member on the U.S. House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee. Jason also served in state government. The Governor of Illinois appointed him as a senior executive at the Illinois Department of Transportation serving dual appointed positions as Director of Public and Intermodal Transportation and Senior Policy Advisor to the Secretary. In the roles, he was responsible for a \$548 million budget, which funded statewide transit and rail operating and capital needs and administered federal and state funding for 52 transit agencies across Illinois and advising the Secretary on its federal policy issues in Washington.

**Matt Ginsberg, Principal**

Matt has extensive and diverse government relations experience including campaign, federal governmental, and over a decade of private sector lobbying experience. He has expertise in drafting and passing legislation, performing business development services, coordinating lobbying strategies, securing federal funding, and representing clients before Congress, executive branch agencies, and industry associations. Over the course of his private sector tenure, he has successfully secured over hundreds of millions of dollars in federal discretionary grants for his clients through direct advocacy and strategic technical assistance.

Matt's client base is primarily focused on a mixture of public agencies and high-profile corporate clients. He represents clients ranging from airports, local governments & municipalities, railroads, transit agencies, highway departments, technology start-ups and other private sector domestic and international clients. In 2020, Matt was named to the Top 40 Under 40 list by Mass Transit Magazine for his government relations work in the transit industry.

Previously, Matt worked for Congressman Jared Polis (D-Colorado-2) in his Washington, D.C. office. During the 2008 election cycle, Mr. Ginsberg worked for Media Strategies and Research, a political media consulting firm in Denver, Colorado, where he helped manage the communications strategy for a major presidential campaign. He also previously worked for Senator Ken Salazar (D-Colorado) in his Washington, DC office.

Mr. Ginsberg received his BA, *magna cum laude*, for a double major in Political Science and International Affairs from the University of Colorado in Boulder, Colorado.

*Additional Illinois-based partners on this initiative include Raucci & Sullivan Strategies, LLC (RSS):*

**Dave Sullivan, President**

Dave Sullivan was appointed to the Illinois State Senate in 1998 to represent Chicago and the Northwest suburbs. He was duly elected in 2000 and was reelected in 2002 without

opposition. In his nearly two decades as a lobbyist, he has won the annual Golden Horseshoe Award for Best Illinois Lobbyist five times. Most recently, he was elected by his peers as the Speaker of the Illinois Third House for 2022.

Recognized as a leader during his legislative career for health care, children's issues, adoption, and education, as well as being a leader in telecommunication, labor, and energy policies. Sullivan has been the recipient of numerous awards from associations, labor groups and children's advocacy organizations. Since 2005 he has been integral in the passage of 2 state constitutional amendments, The Marriage Equality Act, energy legislation, infrastructure funding, tax incentives, Medicaid reforms and many other initiatives.

Sullivan is a graduate of Marquette University with a B.A. in Political Science. He and his wife Dru reside in Park Ridge. They have four children and six grandchildren.

### **Marc Poulos**

Marc Poulos joined RSS in 2018, the same year he was recognized with the Golden Horseshoe Award for Best Illinois Lobbyist. Marc served as a member of the transition team of Governor JB Pritzker. He spent several years managing the International Union of Operating Engineers Local 150 labor-management and Governmental Affairs operations. Among his Legislative successes: he spearheaded the effort to successfully amend the Illinois Constitution to protect Road Fund money from being diverted for other purposes.

Poulos earned his law degree from Chicago-Kent College of Law. He resides in Naperville with his family.

2. **SCOPE OF WORK.** TG&A proposes to utilize its expansive knowledge and relationships in the water infrastructure and policy space to provide as-needed advocacy services and strategic counsel to DWC specifically related to the Lake Michigan Source Water Project.
  - a. **Federal & State Grants Strategic Consulting & Advocacy Services**
    - i. Track state and federal legislative initiatives, bills, and committee hearings; advise DWC on the same.
    - ii. Assist in the preparation and evaluation of DWC led initiatives and associated legislation.
    - iii. Identify and foster relationships with state and federal elected officials supportive of DWC initiatives.
    - iv. Identify and foster relationships with state and federal elected officials sharing opposition with DWC to initiatives opposed by DWC or the water sector.
    - v. Identify and foster relationship with stakeholders and industry groups supportive of DWC initiatives.

- vi. Identify and foster relationships with stakeholders and industry groups sharing opposition with DWC to initiatives opposed by DWC or the water sector.
- vii. Provide notice and information regarding funding opportunities or changes to the same.
- viii. Provide notice and information regarding proposed regulatory changes or modifications.
- ix. Assist in engaging labor representatives and business representatives supportive of the DWC initiatives.
- x. Assist in coordinating introductions to legislators representing the DWC and Northeastern Illinois service area, and scheduling meetings, appointments, and introductions upon request.
- xi. Assist in identifying prospective funding sources and strategic development of grant application documents.
- xii. Assist in establishing introduction / easement negotiation meetings and fostering relationships with prospective strategic partners, including but not limited to (ACOE, IDNR, IDOT, ISTHA, railroads as applicable, County, and local stakeholder organizations).
- xiii. Advise DWC on project-specific funding opportunities in the annual federal Appropriations process also referred to as Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) in the U.S. Senate and Community Project Funding (CPF) in the U.S. House of Representatives.
- xiv. Provide strategic counsel on mapping out funding requests with DWC Congressional delegation in Washington.
- xv. Provide turnkey staffing to DWC to apply for Congressional project funding requests in the annual Appropriations process.
- xvi. Assist DWC with outreach activities to build formal stakeholder support and coordinate relevant support letters on behalf of CDS and CPF opportunities in Congress.

3. **TERM.** This agreement is effective on February 1, 2026, and will continue through January 31, 2027.

4. **FEES.** In consideration of the Services, TG&A will receive a retainer of \$10,000 per month retainer plus expenses. Consulting fees shall be billed monthly and shall be paid within 30 days from receipt of invoice.

5. **CONFIDENTIALITY.** If either party provides information or materials indicated to be confidential, the receiving party will maintain the confidentiality of such matters and not disclose any such matters except in the proper performance of this agreement.

6. **TERMINATION.** Either party may terminate this agreement for any reason upon 30 days' written notice to the other party.

This agreement sets forth the entirety of the agreement between TG&A and DuPage Water Commission as to the services to be provided and compensation to be made during the term thereof.

If agreeable to the terms and conditions set out above, please sign below. A fully executed agreement will be transmitted to you for your records.

---

Hon. James F. Zay  
Chairman  
DuPage Water Commission

---

Jason Tai  
Principal  
Tai Ginsberg & Associates, LLC

---

Date

---

Date

PREPARED BY TAI GINSBERG &  
ASSOCIATES, LLC



JAN  
2026

# MONTHLY REPORT

LATEST LEGISLATIVE &  
REGULATORY UPDATES

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## JANUARY PRIORITIES

Congress started 2026 with high stakes for spending and homeland security. The House passed all 12 appropriations bills, which largely rejected President Trump's requested drastic budget cuts. But towards the end of January, progress stalled in the Senate, where a "minibus" package of spending bills, including Defense, Labor-HHS-Education, Transportation-HUD (THUD), and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) ran into some challenges.

Recent federal law enforcement shootings in Minneapolis led some Senators to withhold support for DHS funding until reforms to Immigration and Customs Enforcement and related agencies were implemented. Due to Senate Democrats' pressure, Senate Republicans, backed by the White House, agreed to split the DHS funding bill off from the "minibus."

On January 30, the Senate passed the now four-bill minibuss and a stopgap funding bill known as a continuing resolution (CR) to fund DHS at current levels through Feb. 13 via a 71-29 vote. However, given that the House was still in recess over the weekend, a partial government shutdown began on January 31. The House is set to vote on the Senate-passed measures on February 2.

Meanwhile, the Department of Transportation has been active this month, announcing new Commercial Driver's License (CDL) compliance audits, revised airspace restrictions at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport, and contracts to modernize the nation's radar infrastructure.

## LOOKING FORWARD

The second session of the 119th Congress is shaping up to be a busy one. Major legislative priorities this year include reauthorization of the farm bill, surface transportation programs, and the Water Resources Development Act, all of which are expected to drive bicameral negotiations. At the same time, Congress is working to finalize FY 2026 appropriations even as Members begin opening portals for FY 2027 appropriations and Congressionally Directed Spending stakeholder requests. The TG&A team is closely monitoring key deadlines and will continue to provide timely updates.

# APPROPRIATIONS UPDATE

## OVERVIEW

On January 19, House and Senate Appropriations Committee leaders unveiled **H.R. 7148**, *the Consolidated Appropriations Act 2026*. The package includes funding for Defense, Labor-HHS-Education, Transportation-HUD (THUD), and the Department of Homeland Security, as well as several authorizing-committee add-ons, such as health care “extenders” and trade preference renewals.

### SENATE UPDATES

Following recent events in Minnesota involving Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), several Senate Democrats indicated that they would withhold support for the Department of Homeland Security’s (DHS) funding within the a five-bill appropriations “minibus” package.

This broader FY26 minibus spending measure was approved by the House earlier this month and includes approximately \$64.4 billion in DHS funding, of which about \$10 billion is allocated for ICE.

The events in Minnesota led some Senators to withhold support for DHS funding until reforms to Immigration and Customs Enforcement and related agencies were implemented. Due this pressure, largely from Senate Democrats, Senate Republicans, backed by the White House, agreed to split the bill funding DHS off from the minibus.

On January 30, Senate passed the now four-bill minibus and a stopgap funding bill known as a continuing resolution (CR) to fund DHS at current levels through Feb. 13 via a 71-29 vote. However, with the House still in recess over the weekend, a partial government shutdown began on January 31. The House is set to vote on the Senate-passed measures on February 2.

### HOUSE UPDATES

On January 22, the House approved funding DHS by a vote of 220–207. The vote followed a request from Democratic House Members for a standalone consideration of DHS funding. Later that day, the House voted 341–88 to pass a broader, bipartisan “minibus” appropriations package funding Defense, Health and Human Services, Transportation-HUD, and Education through September 30, 2026.

Prior to final passage, the House rejected two amendments offered by Republican Members. By a vote of 291–136, the chamber defeated an amendment offered by Representative Ralph Norman (R-SC) to eliminate earmarks in the Labor-HHS-Education portion of the bill. The House also rejected an amendment from Representatives Thomas Massie (R-KY) and Scott Perry (R-PA) that would have repealed the Department of Transportation’s requirement for drunk-driving prevention technology in new vehicles, enacted in 2021. The final vote against that amendment was 268–164.

The House is set to consider on the Senate-passed measures on February 2.

# APPROPRIATIONS UPDATE

## TRANSPORTATION-HUD BILL OVERVIEW (H.R. 7148)

The final, bipartisan Transportation-HUD (THUD) Appropriations bill included in H.R. 7148 provides the majority of public transit and passenger rail funding authorized under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). When combined with IIJA advance appropriations, the measure provides **\$21.1 billion for public transit in FY 2026**, an increase of \$168 million over FY 2025 enacted levels.

The legislation also provides **\$15.9 billion for passenger and freight rail in FY 2026**, a \$298 million decrease from FY 2025 enacted levels. This total is **\$5.1 billion below** the funding level authorized in the IIJA.

### SELECTED THUD HIGHLIGHTS

- **Aviation:** Funds approximately 2,500 air traffic controllers and provides **\$140 million** for the Federal Aviation Administration to implement a **3.8 percent pay increase** for air traffic controllers and related supervisory staff.
- **CRISI Grants:** Provides **\$137 million** for Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvement (CRISI) grants, a **\$37 million increase from FY 2025**, including **\$20 million transferred from IIJA funding**. Of this total, **\$87 million** is designated for **Congressionally Directed Spending projects**, and eligibility is expanded to include **commuter rail projects** that implement or sustain positive train control systems
- **Federal-State Partnership Grants:** The IIJA provides **\$7.2 billion** for the Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail Program, with an additional **\$20 million** provided through the THUD Appropriations Act.
- **Programmatic Shifts:** Compared with prior years, the bill reduces funding for electric vehicle charging infrastructure and high-speed rail programs.



*Rep. Steve Womack,  
Chair of THUD Subcommittee  
House Appropriations, 7/14/25*



*Sen. Cindy Hyde-Smith  
Chair of THUD Subcommittee  
Senate Appropriations, 7/24/25*

[View an APTA breakdown here](#)

# APPROPRIATIONS UPDATE

## THUD APPROPRIATIONS: MODAL AGENCY HIGHLIGHTS

### Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)

- **\$62.7 billion** in obligation limitation from the Highway Trust Fund (HTF).
- From the General Fund: **\$1.5 billion** for earmarks, **\$350 million** for bridges in low-density/small-population states, **\$200 million** for federal/tribal projects, and **\$200 million** for truck parking.
- Total new General Fund appropriations in the THUD bill: **\$927 million**.

### Federal Transit Administration (FTA)

- **\$14.6 billion** in obligation limitation from the HTF.
- From the General Fund for Transit Infrastructure Grants (TIG): **\$148 million** for earmarks, **\$45 million** for ferries, **\$15 million** for public safety.
- Total new General Fund appropriations in the THUD bill: **\$23 million**.

### Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)

- **\$265 million** in additional General Fund appropriations for safety and operations.
- Amtrak funding from General Fund and IIJA Division J: **\$850 million** for the Northeast Corridor and **\$1.6 billion** for the National Network.

### Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)

- **\$13 billion** from the Airport and Airway Trust Fund (AATF) for operations.
- **\$669 million** from the General Fund.
- Airport Improvement Program (AIP): **\$4 billion** from AATF plus **\$577 million** from IIJA Division J and new General Fund appropriations.
- **\$4 billion** in new General Fund appropriations for Facilities and Equipment.

### Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA)

- **\$542 million** for Motor Carrier Safety Grants.
- **\$390 million** from HTF for operations and programs.

### National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)

- **\$850 million** from HTF for Highway Traffic Safety Grants.
- **\$210 million** from HTF for operations and research.
- **\$200 million** from General Fund, including IIJA Division J transfers.

### Office of the Secretary of Transportation (OST)

- **\$145 million** in new General Fund appropriations for BUILD grants.
- **\$514 million** for Essential Air Services subsidies.
- **\$205 million** rescinded from unobligated funds in the SMART Grants program.

# APPROPRIATIONS UPDATE

## UPDATES ON H.R. 6938 MINIBUS

On January 23, President Trump signed H.R. 6938, the Commerce, Justice, Science (CJS); Energy and Water Development (EWD); and Interior and Environment Appropriations Act, 2026, into law. The Senate approved the minibus package 82–15, and the House passed it 397–28. The legislation funds both CJS agencies and Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies.

Key highlights of the EWD portion:

- **Department of Energy (DOE):** Just over **\$49 billion**, with several clean energy and carbon management programs reduced or reprogrammed.
- **Army Corps of Engineers – Civil Works: \$10.4 billion** to support flood risk reduction, coastal resiliency, port navigability, and ecosystem restoration.
  - **Construction: \$3.2 billion** for priority new and ongoing projects, including critical dam safety initiatives.
  - **Mississippi River and Tributaries: \$531.6 million, \$275 million** above the FY26 President’s budget request.
  - **Operation and Maintenance: \$6 billion, \$460 million** above FY25 enacted, funding dredging, repairs, and operation of navigation structures.

*SEE THE FULL BILL  
TEXT OF H.R. 6938 [HERE](#)*



View the Senate EWD  
breakdown [here](#)



View the Senate CJS  
breakdown [here](#)



*Senate Appropriations Chair Collins;  
Politico, 1/27/25*

# NOTABLE JANUARY HEARINGS & MARKUPS

## JANUARY 21 - HOUSE TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Committee approved the following measures via voice vote:

- Amendment in the Nature of a Substitute (ANS) to H.R. 2247, *Pilot Certificate Accessibility Act* – This bill modernizes FAA requirements by allowing pilots and other FAA certificate holders to present digital certificates instead of physical ones. This legislation was introduced by Representative Tim Burchett (R-TN) with Tracey Mann (R-KS) as an original cosponsor.
- ANS to H.R. 2474, *Expanding Appalachia's Broadband Access Act* – This bill directs the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to study whether satellite broadband can be effectively incorporated into broadband projects supported by the Appalachian Regional Commission. This legislation was introduced by Representative Dave Taylor (R-OH).
- ANS to H.R. 6618, *Wildfire Aerial Response Safety Act* – This bill directs the FAA to conduct a study and report on how unmanned aircraft system (UAS) incursions impact wildfire suppression efforts. This bipartisan legislation was introduced by Representative Janelle Bynum (D-OR) with Elijah Crane (R-AZ), Joe Neguse (D-CO), and Juan Ciscomani (R-AZ) as original cosponsors.
- ANS to H.R. 6744, *Military Air Traffic Control Transition Act* – This bipartisan bill strengthens efforts to help experienced military air traffic controllers more easily transition into civilian roles at the FAA, addressing the ongoing air traffic controller shortage. This bipartisan legislation was introduced by Representative Laura Gillen (D-NY) with Tracey Mann (R-KS) as an original cosponsor.
- ANS to H.R. 7084, *Defending American Property Abroad Act of 2026* – This bill aims to protect U.S.-owned infrastructure assets in foreign countries by authorizing the president to deny port entry to vessels that have also called at ports or terminals that were expropriated or nationalized from U.S. persons by governments in Western Hemisphere countries with U.S. free trade agreements. This bipartisan legislation was introduced by Representative August Pfluger (R-TX) and Salud Carbajal (D-CA).

# NOTABLE JANUARY HEARINGS & MARKUPS

## JANUARY 28 - SENATE ENVIRONMENT & PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE HEARING: *EXAMINE THE FEDERAL ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW AND PERMITTING PROCESSES PART II*

Senate Environment and Public Works (EPW) Committee Ranking Member Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI) said that the Committee could revive stalled talks over easing federal permitting rules if the Trump administration stops its attacks on renewable energy projects. EPW Chair Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV) empathized with the Democrats' position and said that making it easier to build energy projects of all energy types would "relieve the economic pressure Americans are facing across the nation."

Solar Energy Industries Association President and CEO Abigail Ross Hopper said at the hearing that "the federal permitting process has lost credibility regarding solar projects." She emphasized that any reforms must reverse Interior Secretary Doug Burgum's order from last year requiring his personal review of each step of wind and solar projects built on federal lands. Dustin Meyer, Senior Vice President of Policy, Economics and Regulatory Affairs at the American Petroleum Institute, echoed that sentiment, stating that a permitting bill should prevent "arbitrary suspensions or revocations" of permits "driven by political or policy shifts rather than new facts or violations."



# SURFACE TRANSPORTATION REAUTHORIZATION

The Senate Commerce Rail Subcommittee and Senate Banking's Transportation Subcommittee have not made progress on drafting the surface transportation reauthorization bill. Senate Environment and Public Works (EPW) Committee Chair Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV), whose committee has jurisdiction over the highway title, has indicated no plans to change her goal of releasing a draft surface transportation reauthorization bill by early March and to hold a markup later that month.

House Transportation and Infrastructure (T&I) Committee Chair Sam Graves (R-MO) has said the House plans to mark up its companion legislation in the "very first part" of 2026. Congressional leaders are eyeing the bill as a key vehicle for permitting reform. Climate and energy proposals, including potential fees on electric and hybrid vehicles, will also be at the heart of the negotiations.

Senate EPW Ranking Member Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI) has voiced frustrations over the Trump Administration's handling of clean energy projects. He stated that he would stall updates to federal permitting, surface transportation reauthorization, and the Water Resources Development Act until the Trump administration lifts its restrictions on offshore wind. As the Ranking Democrat on the committee with primary jurisdiction over these bills, his concerns are likely to slow Senate negotiations.



*EPW Chair Capito;  
Senate EPW, 1/29/25*



*House T&I Chair Graves;  
T&I 1/21/25*



*EPW Ranking Member Whitehouse;  
Politico, 1/28/25*

# LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

## PERMITTING REFORM

After House action on permitting reform, Senate momentum slowed last month after the Trump Administration escalated its opposition to offshore wind by issuing a 90 day pause on five ongoing projects off the Atlantic Coast.

Senate Environment and Public Works (EPW) Committee Ranking Member Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI) and Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources (ENR) Ranking Member Martin Heinrich (D-NM) issued statements opposing the Administration's decision and declaring that no permitting deal could be reached if the "Administration refuses to follow the law." Both senators stated that the Administration must reverse its pause on the offshore wind projects and cease its attacks on fully permitted renewable energy projects before permitting talks to resume in the Senate.

At an EPW Hearing on permitting on January 28, EPW Ranking Member Whitehouse (D-RI) said that the Committee could revive stalled talks over easing federal permitting rules if the Trump administration stops its attacks on renewable energy projects. EPW Chair Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV) empathized with the Democrats' position and said that making it easier to build energy projects of all energy types would "relieve the economic pressure Americans are facing across the nation."

## WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT ACT

The House Transportation and Infrastructure (T&I) Committee is making progress on advancing the 2026 Water Resources Development (WRDA) Act. WRDA authorizes studies and projects within the United States Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) Civil Works mission areas, including navigation, flood damage reduction, hurricane and storm damage reduction, shoreline protection, and ecosystem restoration. The T&I Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment issued a request for Member submissions, including Corps projects and policy requests, by January 30. Following that deadline, the T&I Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment will review the requests for inclusion as it drafts the 2026 WRDA bill.

However, the Trump Administration's efforts to exert more control over which Corps projects receive priority has spurred backlash from Democrats, which could slow down progress on the bill. In November 2025, all nine Democrats on the Senate EPW Committee criticized the Administration's threat to pause \$11 billion in water infrastructure projects in blue states, warning it would undermine WRDA negotiations. Additionally, at a House T&I Committee hearing in December, Democrats expressed frustrations with a new Department of Defense policy that restricts the Corps's communication with Congress.



*CST Chair Cruz;  
Politico, 12/17/25*

## S 2503, ROTOR ACT

On January 19, Senate Commerce Chair Ted Cruz (R-TX) and Ranking Member Maria Cantwell (D-WA) sent a letter to Senate and Appropriations Committee leaders urging the inclusion of their bipartisan S. 2503, the Rotorcraft Operations Transparency and Oversight Reform (ROTOR) Act, in the FY26 Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development Appropriations (THUD) package.

The ROTOR Act was drafted in response to the January 29, 2025, collision between an American Airlines flight and an Army helicopter near Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport that resulted in 67 fatalities. The bill would limit the Army's ability to disable ADS-B Out on helicopters nationwide to prevent further collisions.



Read the letter [here](#)



*CST Ranking Member Cantwell;  
Yahoo, 10/16/25*

In late December, the Senate passed the ROTOR Act as a standalone bill via unanimous consent late. However, House T&I Chair Sam Graves (R-MO) continues to oppose the current version of the ROTOR Act, as he argues that the requirement for location-receiving technology on aircrafts would be overly burdensome for small-scale aviation.

In the recent letter, both Commerce Committee leaders share that the Department of Transportation, Pentagon, Federal Aviation Administration, National Transportation Safety Board, and the families of the 67 victims all support the legislation. The Senators also urged that the ROTOR Act be included in the final THUD bill to close critical safety loopholes and avoid delays that could occur if the ROTOR Act was instead attached to the FY26 legislation as a floor amendment.

# USDOT UPDATES

## RAIL

### FEDERAL-STATE PARTNERSHIP (FSP) NOFO

The Federal-State Partnership (FSP) for Intercity Passenger Rail Grant Program Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) is still open for applications through February 6. The NOFO includes more than \$5 billion in funding for projects that enhance safety on intercity passenger rail networks.

This includes improvements to grade crossings. FSP funds capital projects not located on the Northeast corridor that reduce the state of good repair backlog, improve performance, or expand or establish new intercity passenger rail service, including privately operated intercity passenger rail service.

 [Apply or learn more \*here\*](#)

*Applications are due February 6, 2026.*

## HIGHWAY

### COMMERCIAL VEHICLE SAFETY GRANT AWARDS

Transportation Secretary Duffy announced \$118 million in awards across three Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) grant programs designed to improve commercial vehicle safety.

- **\$71.6 million** in High Priority (HP) grants to support state and local enforcement efforts to reduce commercial motor vehicle (CMV) related crashes and deploy new technology to ensure CMV compliance with safety regulations.
- **\$43.8 million** in Commercial Driver's License Program Implementation grants to help states comply with federal CDL regulations and prevent fraud.
- **\$3.4 million** in Commercial Motor Vehicle Operator Safety Training grants to support servicemembers in accessing commercial driver training.

# USDOT UPDATES

## FMCSA NATIONWIDE COMMERCIAL DRIVER'S LICENSES (CDL) AUDIT

As part of USDOT's nationwide audit into state practices in issuing non-domiciled Commercial Driver's Licenses (CDLs), USDOT found that the North Carolina Department of Transportation had issued 54% of its CDLs in ways that did not comply with federal standards. Transportation Secretary Duffy has threatened to freeze \$50 million in USDOT funding for North Carolina and warned that continued noncompliance could lead to decertification of the state's CDL program.

After the State of California failed to cancel non-compliant CDLs by the January 5, 2026, deadline, Transportation Secretary Duffy directed the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) to withhold approximately \$160 million in federal funding (National Highway Performance Program and Surface Transportation Block Grant). FMCSA issued a Final Determination on January 7, 2026.

## AVIATION

### NEW RADAR SYSTEM

On January 5, USDOT Secretary Duffy and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Administrator Bedford announced that the FAA will begin replacing the nation's aging radar system. Through funding from the One Big Beautiful Bill, USDOT will replace the ground-based radars to improve safety. RTX and Indra were awarded the contracts and will work to replace up to 612 radars by 2028 with modern, commercially available surveillance radars.

Replacements will begin in the first quarter of 2026 and will continue on a rolling basis, prioritizing high-traffic areas. In addition to modernizing the network of surveillance radars, the FAA will consolidate the 14 different configurations in the National Airspace System (NAS), simplifying maintenance and logistics.

### NEW RESTRICTIONS FOR DCA AIRSPACE

On January 22, USDOT Secretary Duffy announced that the FAA is formalizing permanent restrictions for helicopters and powered-lift from operating in certain areas near Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport (DCA), unless these aircraft are conducting essential operations. These restrictions were put in place following the deadly American Airlines 5342 crash and are supported by the NTSB's preliminary recommendations.

The FAA [published](#) and implemented the new policy as an Interim Final Rule (IFR) to significantly reduce midair-collision risks.

 [Submit public comment here](#)

# UNION PACIFIC AND NORFOLK SOUTHERN MERGER

## OVERVIEW

On January 16, the Surface Transportation Board (STB) rejected the proposed Union Pacific (UP) and Norfolk Southern (NS) merger in its current form, stating that the application was incomplete. In its [15-page decision](#), the STB detailed problems with market-share data, failures to include the complete merger agreement between the two railroads, and issues with how the application addressed control of the Terminal Railroad Association of St. Louis. The board's decision will slow the merger process, as UP plans to file an expected merger application in March. Class I railroads, including Canadian National, BNSF, and CSX, released statements supporting the STB's initial decision. However, UP CEO Jim Vena remained optimistic amidst the setback and still expects the transaction to close in early 2027, assuming the board approves the \$85 billion deal.

In its press release, the STB noted that the decision "should not be read as an indication of how the Board might ultimately assess any future revised application." The recent CSX and Pan Am Railways merger provides a precedent where an initial rejection of an application was ultimately approved upon resubmission.

## CONGRESS

Members of Congress are still voicing their opinions on the merger. A day prior to the STB's decision, Representatives Chris Deluzio (D-PA), Patrick Ryan (D-NY), Angie Craig (D-MN), Pramila Jayapal (D-WA), co-chairs of the Monopoly Busters Caucus, and Representatives Donald Norcross (D-NJ), Mark Pocan (D-WI), and Debbie Dingell (D-MI), co-chairs of the Congressional Labor Caucus, sent a letter to STB Chair Fuchs urging UP and NS to explain in detail how the railroads' potential merger would impact labor.

In the letter, the Members urge the STB to require UP and NS answer a set of questions as part of the board's public-interest review of the merger proposal. The questions focus on the labor implications of a potential merger, including how it may affect longstanding challenges in the rail industry related to work competition, safety, and reliable service.

The lawmakers requested that the board provide those answers to Congress at least 60 days before any decision on the merger and "consider those responses and potential harms to workers as part of its decision."



[Read the letter here](#)



# CONTACT US

TAI GINSBERG & ASSOCIATES



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