

- Demonstrated that it will use the funding for the highest priority projects identified in the state freight plan.

The second is a \$5 billion National Freight Infrastructure Program, a discretionary program that would distribute funding on a competitive basis to any governmental transportation authority. Project selection would be based on: the extent to which they reduce the cost of freight transportation, improve the safety of freight transportation, relieve bottlenecks in the freight transportation system, improve the state of good repair of the freight transportation system, and reduce the adverse environmental and community impacts of freight transportation. In addition to the \$5 billion authorized for this program, any unused funding from the Multimodal Freight Incentive Program would be added to the program.

## **VII. Planning and Performance Management**

The GROW AMERICA Act includes several provisions aimed at ensuring that planning addresses the needs of a metropolitan statistical area (MSA). First, the proposal would prevent new MPOs from being designated within MSAs already served by an existing MPO. Second, where multiple MPOs exist within one MSA, they would be required to develop a single Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), long range transportation plan and performance targets for the region. Third, governors would have to justify maintaining multiple MPOs within an MSA every 10 years. The GROW AMERICA Act would also give public ports a formal position on Metropolitan Transportation Planning and Statewide Transportation Planning processes, in order to ensure that first and last mile linkages between ports and the landside transportation system as well as community impacts of port infrastructure are fully considered in transportation planning.

The High Performing MPOs proposal allows the Secretary to designate MPOs representing areas with a population of over 200,000 as high performing based on whether it (1) has an equitable and performance-based approach to decision-making and (2) practices coordinated planning with other MPOs within its MSA. Once designated, those MPOs would receive a 50 percent increase in the STP and TAP funds suballocated to them. Additionally, funding for high-performing MPOs would be made available from the Metropolitan Mobility Program, a set-aside under a new competitive grant program. The Metropolitan Mobility program would distribute \$1-3 million awards each year on the basis of population for high performing MPOs and could be used to fund any project eligible for funding under Title 23 or Chapter 53 of Title 49, or as the 20% local match requirement to other federal transportation funds.

Under the GROW AMERICA Act, the Secretary would receive the authority to establish two new performance measures: one that would measure how well the transportation system connects people to economic opportunities and a multimodal freight performance measure. The proposal also creates a pilot program to help up to ten MPOs analyze the degree the population is connected to opportunities through the transportation network and then develop performance measures and targets to improve access to opportunity for all residents. It also tightens the performance management system established under MAP-21 by requiring the TIP project selection process to use clear rankings of proposed projects according to their ability to help achieve performance targets. The proposal would also reduce the performance period allowed for MPOs and States to meet their performance measures for the National Highway Performance Program (NHPP) and Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) targets from two reporting periods to just one.