

**MONDAY MORNING GROUP OF WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY
ANNUAL ADVOCACY TRIP – WASHINGTON, DC
APRIL 20-23, 2026**

**RIVERSIDE COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
SURFACE TRANSPORTATION REAUTHORIZATION**

ISSUE: Every five years, Congress authorizes surface transportation legislation to fund programs vital to agencies nationwide, including the Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC). The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) funds these programs through September 2026. Congress is expected to release successor legislation in Spring 2026. RCTC and other southern California agencies urge Congress to restore the distribution of federal formula funds from the state to county transportation commissions, ensuring project delivery certainty, efficient fund use, and the ability to prioritize local needs.

ACTION: The Monday Morning Group urges Congress to:

- Restore direct distribution of Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) formula funds to county transportation commissions in large metropolitan regions.
- Include statutory language in the surface transportation reauthorization legislation (or floor amendments) ensuring that counties, not metropolitan planning organizations (MPO), receive these funds while preserving MPO responsibilities.
- Encourage Members of Congress to support the proposal by signing letters and advocating for its inclusion in the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works base text.

These steps will give local agencies like RCTC certainty to plan and deliver transportation projects efficiently, directly benefiting residents, businesses, and regional mobility.

BACKGROUND: For over 30 years, STBG and CMAQ funds were distributed from MPOs to county transportation commissions. In Southern California, Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) managed distribution based on population and air quality, allowing counties to fund projects that met local priorities.

This process ended in 2021 when the Federal Highway Administration issued corrective action, forcing agencies like RCTC to compete regionally for limited funds. MPOs now retain a portion for planning and administrative functions, reducing funds available for construction and congestion improvements. Annual competition slows delivery, limits multi-year planning, and reduces efficiency. For example, routine congestion-relief and roadway rehabilitation projects now face year-to-year uncertainty that complicates scheduling and contract commitments. Restoring direct distribution to county transportation commissions, while preserving MPO planning roles, will create a more locally responsive and efficient system.

In 2025, RCTC submitted statutory language for regions exceeding 10 million residents, applicable to SCAG. In February 2026, RCTC and other southern California commissions sent joint letters supporting this proposal to House T&I and Senate EPW leadership, with copies to regional Members of Congress and Senators Alex Padilla and Adam Schiff. Representatives Ken Calvert (Corona) and Lou Correa (Santa Ana) circulated a sign-on letter supporting the language.

Riverside County, California's fourth-most populous county and 10th nationally, is projected to reach three million residents by 2050, up from 2.5 million in 2022. Planning must accommodate over 167,000 new housing units by 2030. These trends underscore the need for predictable formula funding to agencies like RCTC, which are equipped to deliver timely, cost-effective transportation improvements aligned with local growth.