

2023 Federal Policy Agenda

Mid-America Regional Council

December 2022 Draft





Transportation



Encourage Congress to support:

- Safe and efficient transportation and all modes of transportation.
- Sustainable and innovative solutions to fully fund the Highway Trust Fund.
- Reauthorization of the Federal Aviation Administration.
- Reduction of freight and passenger train bottlenecks throughout the nation and support for the national rail passenger network and operation of the Southwest Chief Amtrak route, the Missouri River Runner and the proposed Heartland Flyer.
- Resources for planning, design, policy and infrastructure frameworks to address the expected and expanding use of connected and autonomous vehicles.



Climate Adaptation



- Provide continued and new federal support for climate mitigation, adaptation and resilience initiatives tied to energy, transportation, infrastructure, agriculture and food systems, watershed management, innovation and finance, urban heat mitigation, green infrastructure and affordable housing.
- Support comprehensive federal policies and investments to mitigate or respond to climate change and encourage coordination across federal agencies and departments.



Economic Development



MARC has received support from the Economic Development Administration since 2006 as an Economic Development District.

- Support reauthorization of the Economic Development Administration (EDA) as an important federal agency helping communities and regions advance economic progress and address challenges limiting economic progress.



Public Health



- Congress appropriated substantial dollars to help state and local public health agencies respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. These resources were essential, given years of funding cutbacks for the nation's public health infrastructure.
- Consider ongoing funds to support foundational capabilities for
 - Disease surveillance, epidemiology, and lab capacity.
 - Capacity to respond to all hazards' preparedness and response.
 - Equity to end health disparities and promote optimal health.



Early Education, including Head Start



- Support universal pre-K
- Increased funding for Head Start and Early Head Start to serve more eligible children with comprehensive services
- Full funding for the Child Care and Development Grant Program to help low-income working households to remain in the labor force.



Older Adults



- The need for home delivered meals, in-home services, and other supports are critical to address the needs of this large and growing population group
- As the nation's number and needs of older adults continue to increase, additional funding is needed to serve this population through the Older Americans Act.



Affordable Housing

- Federal support is needed to expand the supply of affordable housing for persons and families and to encourage cross-jurisdictional collaboration and innovation for housing programs.





Workforce Development



- Reauthorization of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act from 2014. Encourage modernization of provisions.
- Invest in community college-business partnerships as part of Higher Education Act reauthorization. Modernize and expand apprenticeship programs and ensure sufficient funding for workforce systems to assist businesses in development and implementation of such programs.
- Expand Pell grant eligibility to cover high quality short-term credential programs. Increase funding for Career and Technical Education (CTE) and Adult Basic Education.



Environmental Issues



- Water Quality, Stormwater Management and Green Infrastructure: Support for water and wastewater system resources and effective water resource management.
- Missouri River Management and Watershed Planning: authorization for flood control and watershed planning/projects in the Kansas City area (Water Resources and Development Act).
- Energy Conservation: Support for energy conservation and renewable energy sources are important to enhance our region's quality of life and lower costs for residents and businesses.
- Rate Payer Assistance for Water, Sewer and Stormwater Charges: legislation that assists low-income households in covering their costs for water, sewer, and stormwater fees.



Other Federal Issues

- Homeland Security: Support continued designation as the Kansas City region as an Urban Area Security Initiative.
- Reauthorization and modernization of the Federal Flood Insurance Program.
- Federal health care programs should utilize the capacity of local EMS agencies to provide cost-effective emergency response, preventive care, and non-emergency services.
- 911 Telecommunicators - support H.R. 1629, the 911 SAVES Act, to reclassify public safety telecommunicators from clerical to a protective service occupation within the standard occupation classification system.



Questions/Discussion

1. Are there important issues for your jurisdiction or the region that are missing?
2. Do you see any of these issues as priorities for the MARC Board of Directors for 2023?
3. Given the opportunities from recent federal grant programs authorized by Congress, including the Infrastructure Investments and Jobs Act, are there specific recommendations to members of our Congressional delegation on the types of projects or how the funding might be awarded?