Fund U.S. Marine Highways Program

Overview

The U.S. Marine Highway Program (USMHP) is a discretionary transportation grant program administered by the Maritime Administration. Funds for the USMHP are awarded on a competitive basis to projects that provide a coordinated and capable alternative to landside transportation or that promote marine highway transportation.

Through the development and promotion of marine highway transportation, the program aims to relieve landside congestion, reduce air emissions, and generate other public benefits by increasing the efficiency of the surface transportation system.

Facts

Each year, the President's Budget is released, and thus, Congressional hearings are held where the Secretary and Administrator testifies to the proposed budget and how the funding levels affect the success of various programs. The Secretary should make Congress aware of the impact lower funding levels will have on the success of the Marine Highways Program.

Issues

Growing demand for Marine Highway funding has outpaced the available resources resulting in a significant gap between requested and awarded marine highway project grant support. The FY 2010-2023 total awarded $103 million in MHP funds (64 grant applications) versus the total unfunded $234 million (including short-funded applications).

Call to Action

Adequately fund the Marine Highway Program so it aligns with the increased program scope, support an increased volume of grant applications and provide for the expansion of Marine Highway Program staff to allow for more efficient and timely handling of program grant awards.

Inland Rivers, Ports & Terminals