The 113th Congress was tough for the transportation construction industry however, working with various coalitions and using industry connections on Capitol Hill, NAPA achieved a number of noteworthy legislative and regulatory victories.

- **June**: NAPA was very successful in helping achieve several long-standing priorities for waterways infrastructure. These included passage of the Water Resources Reform & Development Act (WRRDA) and a nine cent per gallon increase in the barge fuel fee that funds infrastructure upgrades via the Inland Waterways Trust Fund (IWTF). Together, the barge fuel increase and the increased revenues from the changes in WRRDA will yield $185 million per year in additional funding for waterways infrastructure improvements. Within WRRDA, NAPA was effective in preventing a life-cycle cost analysis mandate from being included in the final version of the legislation.

- **August**: While NAPA fought hard to urge Congress to deal with the long-term funding limitations for the federal surface transportation programs, this remains a work in progress. The House and Senate had a showdown over the MAP-21 Reauthorization bill and funding the Highway Trust Fund (HTF), only to pass an extension that would patch the HTF in the short-term and extend authorization for highway programs through May 2015. The HTF, having been rescued from insolvency several times by general fund infusions over the past six-plus years, will once again be unable to fund new federal-aid projects if Congress does not act by the end of May. The problem is not going away until Congress addresses the chronic deficiencies in the Trust Fund’s revenue. And once again, NAPA warded off language that would have mandated life-cycle cost analysis.

- **December**: Congress passed the massive $1.1 trillion appropriations package for fiscal year 2015 which will fund most federal agencies (including US DOT) through September 30, 2015. NAPA worked to enact legislation that reinstates dozens of tax provisions that expired at the end of 2013, including 50 percent bonus depreciation and increased Sec. 179 expensing levels ($500,000 with a $2 million phase-out cap). These retroactive changes only apply to 2014 and all the normal rules are in effect (including the requirement that customers take possession of the new equipment this year to qualify for bonus depreciation).

Just as important as these legislative successes were effective efforts by NAPA and others on regulatory issues. While EPA has yet to withdraw its proposed WOTUS rule, it is expected to undergo significant revision in 2015. Another regulatory achievement was NAPA’s participation in OSHA’s silica rulemaking process to amend proposed requirements for workers to wear respirators during asphalt milling operations. Lastly, NAPA worked to minimize the regulatory burden arising from the FMCSA’s Hours-of-Service requirement.

NAPA’s core legislative mission for 2015 will be advocating for the critical transportation investment the nation needs. That means Congress must enact long-term federal transportation legislation, free of legislative pavement mandates that increase costs, stifle innovation, and slow project delivery, and solve the Highway Trust Fund challenge immediately.

As NAPA works toward these 2015 goals, continued NAPA member involved is needed. Contact your legislator through organizing a plant tour, scheduling a district meeting, and by attending the TCC Washington Fly-In April 14-15. Hearing how legislation affects local businesses impacts decisions made in Washington.