



from the
**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF RAILROAD PASSENGERS**

Vol. 24, No. 4  April, 1990

John R. Martin, Pres.; Eugene Skoropowski, V. Pres.; Robert Glover, Sec.; Joseph Horning, Jr., Treas.; Ross Capon, Exec. Dir.; Scott Leonard, Asst. Dir.; Jane Colgrove, Membership Dir.; Harriet Parcels, Transp. Assoc.

News from the National Association of Railroad Passengers (ISSN 0739-3490), is published monthly except November by NARP, 236 Massachusetts Ave., NE, Suite 603, Washington, DC 20002. 202/546-1550. Membership dues are \$20/year (\$10 under 21 or over 65) of which \$5 is for a subscription to NARP News. Second-class postage paid at Washington, DC.

Postmaster: send address changes to National Association of Railroad Passengers, 236 Massachusetts Ave., NE, Suite 603, Washington, DC 20002.

(This has news through Apr. 17. No. 3 was mailed April 10.)

RETURN REQUESTED

Senate Clean Air Victory!

AASHTO's Concrete Dreams, Support for Amtrak

The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), in its Oct. 1989 "Final Edition" of *New Transportation Concepts for a New Century*, offered nothing new in terms of priorities. The report, "prepared under the guidance of the AASHTO Task Force on a Consensus Transportation Program," envisions 10 times more highway spending than transit spending on new facilities during 1988-2020. The goal: 178,000 new highway lane-miles in urban areas, 100,000 of them on new rights-of-way.

Annual Expenditures*

	Highways	Transit
Maintenance	\$80 bill.	\$15 bill.
New Construction	\$20 bill.	\$2 bill.
Federal Share (FY '95)	\$26 bill.	\$5 bill.
Total State/Local/Federal	\$100 bill.	\$17 bill.
Current Spending (Estimated 1987 highway, 1988 transit)	\$66 bill.	\$14.5 bill.
Change 1987-8 to 1995	+\$34 bill. (+52%)	+\$2.5 bill. (+17%)

*These are 1987 constant dollars (i.e., not adjusted for inflation so the actual figures AASHTO hopes to see will be larger and grow as the years progress).

Please tell your governor if this environmentally-destructive approach to transportation planning outrages you. Send copies of your letters to the head of your state DOT as well as state legislators and your U.S. legislators.

Demands for highway funding go even higher than the above figures, which exclude "increased funds for highway safety" without which, says AASHTO, "fatality rates cannot be reduced." (U.S. DOT says failure to reduce those rates would mean "total highway deaths could reach more than 60,000 a year early in the next century" vs. "more than 47,000" in 1988.) The above figures also do not include the major new freeways discussed below.

(Continued on page 3)

Highway Funds Could Go to Transit!

The revised clean air bill which the U.S. Senate approved Apr. 3 includes a key provision aimed at reducing growth of vehicle-miles traveled (VMTs) on our highways: it would empower governors, with the approval of the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), to use any federal-aid highway funds, with a 90% match, for projects—including rail transit!—that help a nonattainment area meet ozone or carbon monoxide standards.

(A "nonattainment area" is one that fails federal clean air quality standards. There are over 100 such areas nationwide encompassing well over half of the nation's population.)

The grand clean air compromise reached between Senate leaders and the White House in early March included the same provision but limited its application to areas where the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) imposed highway funding sanctions.

Thanks to an amendment offered by Jeff Bingaman (D-NM) and accepted by Senate floor managers of the bill, it was strengthened so the flexibility to use highway funds for clean transportation would apply to any nonattainment area whether under sanctions or not.

EPA has rarely invoked the sanctions currently in the law. In any event, the sanctions have holes wide enough to drive a 6-lane highway through because highway projects for safety and for reducing congestion are still allowable (and what highway project has not been justified on one or both of those counts?). For example, Pittsburgh managed to get a good part of its freeway program underway while highway sanctions were in effect.

Although the Senate language presumably would reduce EPA's ability to avoid imposing sanctions, and improve the effectiveness of sanctions, the Bingaman amendment insures that state governments serious about balanced transportation won't be blocked by a slow-to-the-trigger EPA.

Plenty of work remains for us, however. The House must pass its bill, which is expected to have a different approach to sanctions that does not include the ability to use highway

(Continued on page 4)

CHICAGO-FLORIDA TRAIN CAMPAIGN

The Atlanta Chamber of Commerce is spearheading a coalition of chambers of commerce from Chicago to Miami to develop support for restoration of Midwest-Florida Amtrak service. In late December, the Chamber wrote to more than 950 other chambers in states through which such a service might pass.

A coalition of congressional delegations, state legislatures, governors, and businesspersons has been developing over the past three months and is gaining political and popular support.

The Atlanta Journal & Constitution (Sunday, Apr. 1) and *The Lexington (KY) Herald-Leader* (Mar. 20) did big news stories on the effort. The *Herald-Leader* followed with a positive editorial Mar. 24.

NARP members from the relevant states are urged to work through their local chambers of commerce in support of this effort. The Atlanta Chamber discourages emphasis on particular route choices, notes that any route would bring tremendous benefits to the entire region, and expects Amtrak to pick the strongest route.

The Atlanta Chamber, which has assigned a staff person to this project, is planning a 2-day conference on it for this summer. More information: NARP Dir. Alan Yorker (the Atlanta Chamber's Amtrak subcommittee chairman), 2116 Heritage Heights, Decatur, GA 30033 or Jeff Rader, Atlanta Chamber of Commerce, 404/586-8467.

More Superliners May be on the Way!

Amtrak expects to order at least 75 new double-deck Superliner cars for long-distance trains this year, while work continues on refining specifications for the single-level Viewliner cars.

The higher-capacity Superliners are more cost-effective and the impact of the forthcoming Americans with Disabilities Act seems clearer for Superliners. Also, Amtrak hopes all new cars will have full-retention toilet systems, which may affect Viewliner design. The 2 prototype sleepers now operating have toilets in each economy room, but it is unclear whether this would be true for production-line cars with full-retention toilets: keeping toilets in the rooms might make the rooms unpleasant whenever the system failed but adding public toilets would consume space and reduce the car's earning capacity. Most importantly, a manufacturer is interested in building Superliners—Bombardier, which acquired manufacturing rights and much of the tooling for the cars from Pullman.

A significant amount of an initial Superliner order would go to increasing capacity on Western trains and replacing elderly Heritage cars on the Auto Train. Later Superliner orders could supply cars for the Washington-Chicago "Capitol Ltd." and the Chicago-New Orleans "City of New Orleans."

It's expected that some of the displaced single-level cars would be used to convert "Cardinal" from thrice-weekly to daily.

Since cars normally appear about 2 years after the order is placed and no Viewliner order is contemplated this year, it appears that Amtrak's New York-Florida and New York-Chicago services will continue to rely on the old Heritage equipment for at least 3 more years. ■

NARP Testifies on Highway/ Transit Reauthorization

NARP's Harriet Parcels testified before the Subcomm. on Surface Transportation of the House Committee on Public Works and Transportation on Mar. 20. This was one of a series of preliminary hearings on reauthorization of the federal highway and transit programs, which under present law will expire (along with the federal gasoline tax) on Sep. 30, 1991.

Other Mar. 20 witnesses included Sara Nichols of Delaware Valley Citizens Council for Clean Air, John Holtzclaw of the Sierra Club of California, and a panel from the American Public Transit Association. Parcels said "a shift in federal investment priorities, with increased funding of transit, intercity passenger rail, and other auto and air alternatives will benefit the economy, the environment, safety, and our cities. It is a winning strategy!"

She also urged "a greater commitment to better link transportation and land use planning" and the strengthening of metropolitan planning organizations' federally-mandated "continuous, cooperative and comprehensive" (3C) planning process.

She cited evidence that "where Americans are provided with efficient, reliable alternatives to driving or flying," they will use those alternatives; urged changing the pro-auto-commuting bias in federal tax policy; cited an Australian study of 32 cities worldwide showing U.S. cities with the highest per capita gasoline consumption; recommended an increase in the federal gasoline tax with revenues earmarked for energy-efficient transportation; and urged enactment of a national weight-distance tax on heavy trucks. ■

GUNS TO RAILS?

"Recent research by the Council on Economic Priorities estimates that for every \$1 bill. spent on military procurement, roughly 28,000 jobs are created. The same expenditure on public transit would create 32,000 jobs"

"Workers at a McDonnell-Douglas Aerospace plant in Southern California, have proposed retooling their operations to build mass-transit vehicles and energy equipment"

"According to a study conducted by John Ullman for the National Commission for Economic Conversion and Development, electrifying 60,000 miles of our railways would require an outlay of \$46.2 bill. in 1980 dollars. The study points out that the electrification of the U.S. rail system would 'produce a four-fold energy savings over diesel trucks in moving freight.'"

"The President and Congress should seriously entertain a massive public-works project, comparable in scale to the U.S. Defense Highway Act of the 1950s, to clean up the environment and create a new public transportation grid that is congenial to a green lifestyle in the coming century. Converting the peace dividend into a green dividend will be a major step toward this goal."

—Jeremy Rifkin, President, Greenhouse Crisis Foundation,
in *The Washington Post*, April 15

AASHTO Not Alone

Some congressmen also want more highways. In a hearing held March 13 by the House Public Works and Transportation Subcommittee on Surface Transportation, chaired by Rep. Norman Y. Mineta (D-CA), the case was made for several interstate projects by interested congressmen:

- Indianapolis-Evansville, IN, 130 miles, \$800 mill., (possible subsequent Evansville-Memphis extension).
- Kansas City-Shreveport, 517 miles, \$1.7 bill.
- Kansas City-Memphis-Atlanta-Jacksonville.

These projects were justified by pointing out that AASHTO calls for federal funding of "highways of national significance", which would include today's interstate system, plus other routes feeding into them. However, much money will be needed to maintain the interstate system at its present size. As one representative from an industrial state who testified March 13 pointed out, "Other testimony today called for new construction. We need repairs."

Other freeway proposals with strong support but not mentioned at this particular hearing include the "Avenue of the Saints" (St. Paul-St. Louis) and Kansas City-Chicago. A multi-state commission of highway engineers recommended a "Saints" routing of St. Louis-Hannibal-Mt. Pleasant, Waterloo-Mason City and use of existing Interstates for the

other segments.

AASHTO also presented their views at this hearing. NARP's Harriet Parcells appeared before the same subcommittee on March 20 (separate article).

AASHTO on Amtrak

The AASHTO report also says: "AASHTO believes that the continuation and further development of Amtrak is an appropriate federal responsibility and in the national interest." In addition, AASHTO wants the federal government "to participate in a public-private partnership to develop high-speed rail in those selected corridors in which it will demonstrably relieve highway and airport congestion, and improve inner city (sic) travel efficiency. Any comprehensive national transportation program must address rail passenger service needs."

It's nice to have support for our pro-Amtrak lobbying efforts on Capitol Hill but we think states also should help fund *improvements to and expansion of Amtrak*. We need a federal matching-funds program to support such state efforts. States should support this!

Single copies of New Transportation Concepts are free from: AASHTO, 444 N. Capitol St. NW, Suite 225, Washington, DC 20001. Multiple copies \$2 each. Ditto the 34-page Executive Summary except that multiple copies are \$1 each.

WASHINGTON 

Mark Alan Stamaty



NARP, AMTRAK TAXATION STATEMENTS

NARP and Amtrak submitted statements to the House Ways and Means Committee in connection with its hearings on "long-term strategies and the environment" (Mar. 6, 7, and 14).

In NARP's statement, Harriet Parcells urged:

- an increase in the federal gasoline tax, "with revenues directed to . . . energy-efficient transportation modes: mass transit, intercity passenger trains and buses and certain rail freight purposes, carpooling/vanpooling and bicycle facilities; and for purchase/preservation of abandoned rail rights-of-way for future transit or recreational use";

- elimination of the bias in federal tax code "that favors driving alone over using more environmentally-sound mass transit or carpooling/vanpooling," and

- eliminating the subsidy enjoyed by heavy trucks.

In Amtrak's statement, Pres. W. Graham Claytor Jr. made the environmental case for earmarking a penny of the federal gasoline tax for Amtrak capital investment, and first stated Amtrak's "commitment" to fully cover operating costs from commercial revenues by the turn of the century.

"EMERGENT COMMUTER RAIL" CONFERENCE . . .

in San Francisco July 18-21, including talks by NARP Vice-President Eugene K. Skoropowski, SP Vice-Chairman Robert F. Starzel, Santa Fe Senior VP Thomas J. Fitzgerald, Consultant Carl R. Englund Jr. (*NARP News*, Dec. '83 & Jan. '84), many others. Registration: \$295 (\$275 per additional person same org.) by May 31 for NARP members, \$365 thereafter. Info: Symposium for Emergent Commuter Rail Services, PO Box 333, Mill Neck, NY 11765-0333, or call Delores Dola 202/296-6700.

TRAVELERS' ADVISORY

Effective Apr. 1, smoking on unreserved trains is restricted to designated coaches at the end of trains with 4 coaches or more. No smoking on trains with fewer coaches or on club cars. On Metroliners, smoke only in designated area of club car and in smoking coach.

Smoking is banned from long-distance coaches but allowed in sleeper rooms and in designated parts of lounge cars (lower level of Superliner lounges). Amtrak may put barriers between smoking and non-smoking areas in single-level lounge cars.

Smoking is prohibited in small stations and limited in large stations.

Other Apr. 1 changes we've not mentioned before: "Silver Star" stops at Dade City, FL. "Cardinal" carries passengers local to Northeast Corridor (reservations required). Norfolk Thruway bus now stops at Holiday Inn-Waterside, 700 Monticello Ave. "Cape Codders" will run June 29-Sept. 3.

"Carolinian" may be revived as early as May 12, if problems with Norfolk Southern can be resolved. North Carolina again would pay part of the costs; this would be a daytime Charlotte-Greensboro-Durham-Raleigh-New York service that would combine with "Palmetto" Rocky Mount-New York.

Amtrak hopes to extend Atlantic City-Philadelphia trains to Phila. International Airport by June 1. Midway Airlines and Amtrak will jointly market the trains. Air-

"City of New Orleans" Under Siege

Survival of "The City of New Orleans" depends on resolution of Memphis track issues and improvement in the terrible on-time performance Illinois Central has been providing. IC is ripping out so much track—13-mile sections of single track will alternate with double-track sections only 2 miles long—that Amtrak officials doubt IC will be able to handle freight trains efficiently, much less resume reliable Amtrak operations.

HIGHWAY FUNDS (continued from page 1)

trust fund money for transit. Then, Senate-House conferees must work out their differences; and President Bush must sign the result.

If the Senate language we report above survives, there will be tough fights in states where governors have little sympathy for public transportation. But at least governors will be able to do less finger-pointing to Washington. A state choice to invest more in transit and less in highways would no longer automatically mean sacrificing the relevant federal funds.

We say "automatically" because it remains unclear how DOT would use its considerable power under the Senate version. Some hint of that would come from the regulations DOT drafts and adopts; we may have a tough fight against draft regulations that virtually rule out rail transit. Given the clear intent of Congress, we are hopeful of winning that fight.

Please ask your U.S. legislators to work to get the House-Senate clean air conference to retain the Bingaman amendment on the use of federal-aid highway funds for transportation-related clean air purposes. ■

line computer reservation systems will display the "Amtrak service as if it were a Midway connecting flight," said Rick Larsen, Midway's director of market planning. Midway will be able to sell passengers a single ticket for the entire trip, just as if they were making an airline-to-airline connection" (*The Philadelphia Inquirer*, Apr. 16).

Reroutes of "Capitol" and "Broadway" (Dec. News) could come as early as July 15; departure times from originating terminals might change slightly and running-times would lengthen.

The violence-plagued Greyhound strike resulted in suspension of Grand Forks-Winnipeg, Chicago-Madison, Kalamazoo-Grand Rapids, and Des Moines-Omaha Thruway services.

Providence, RI's Bonanza/Greyhound intercity bus terminal moved in Jan. from downtown to a location 2 mi. north: 1 Bonanza Way, off Cemetery & N. Main St., near I-95. Local bus routes 98 & 99 offer frequent service from Kennedy Plaza (near Amtrak/MBTA) to new bus terminal.

Maryland commuter service increased on Apr. 2 from 6 to 7 round trips on Brunswick line, 5 to 7 on Baltimore/Camden and 15 to 18 on Baltimore/Amtrak lines. Brunswick has its first reverse-peak service, dp. Washington 8:45 am, dp. Brunswick 3:05 pm. MARC expects to add more Camden and Brunswick trains in the future.