



**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF RAILROAD PASSENGERS**

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RETURN REQUESTED

Toughest Budget Fight?

Burnley sees 'Budget Summit' Strengthening Reagan's Hand

"Rep. Bill Lehman (D-FL) said he believed that Congress would be able to protect mass transit but he expressed less hope for Amtrak. 'The problem is we

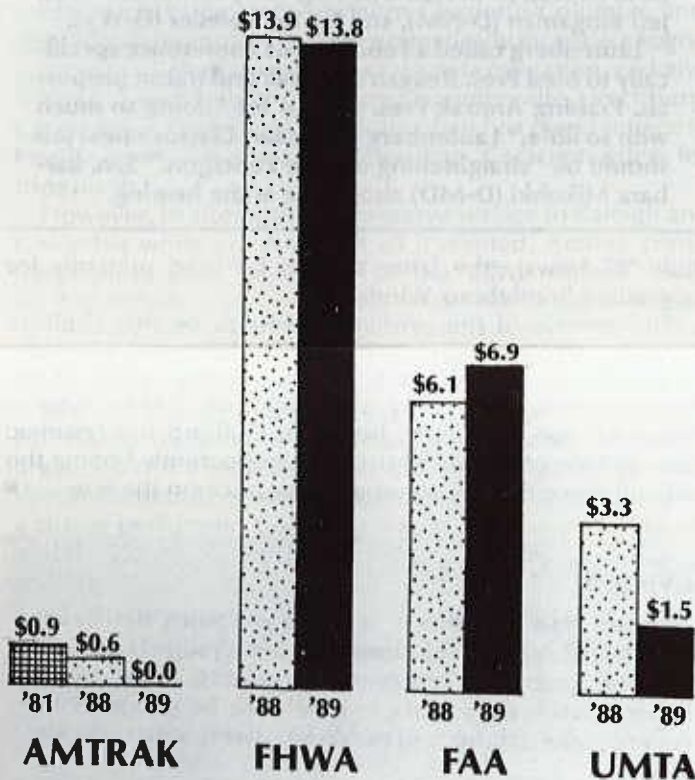
have a smaller pie. It's not only us against them, it's us against us, us against housing, us against health, us against education.'"

—The Miami Herald, Feb. 19 news story on the budget

"This year is likely to be the toughest of all."

—Rep. James Howard (D-NJ), addressing the American Public Transit Assn., Mar. 14, 1988.

The Worst Proposal Yet!



Dollar Amounts Are Budget Authority in Billions
FHWA is Federal Highway Administration
FAA is Federal Aviation Administration
UMTA is Urban Mass Transportation Administration

Data from U.S. Department of Transportation, "FY 1989 Budget in Brief," February 1988.
—Barry Williams/NARP Graphics

President Reagan's Proposed FY 1989 Transportation Budget

Administration	NEW BUDGET AUTHORITY (Millions)		
	FY '89	FY '88	Change
U.S. Coast Guard	\$ 2,976	\$ 2,534	+ 17.4%
Federal Aviation	6,937	6,147	+ 12.9%
Federal Highway	13,800	13,898	- 0.7%
[U.S.D.O.T. TOTAL]	26,088	27,079	- 3.7%
Nat. Highway Traffic Safety	221	313	- 29.4%
Urban Mass Transportation	1,522	3,285	- 53.7%
Federal Railroad	57	671	- 91.5%
Amtrak + Northeast Corridor	0	609	-100.0%

President Reagan's budget proposal for Fiscal Year 1989, which begins next Oct. 1, seems inconsistent with public comments of his top rail and environmental administrators, yet may receive fewer modifications than previous Reagan budgets.

Unveiled at a Feb. 18 DOT news conference, the budget would eliminate Amtrak funding, cut transit to a level 67% below the \$4.6 billion actually appropriated for 1981, increase aviation funding by about \$750 million, and leave highway spending virtually unchanged from this year (but 50% above the 1981 level of \$9.2 billion).

This would reinforce the pattern, evident during this administration, of shifting resources away from the most energy-efficient, environmentally-benign forms of transport-

(continued on page 3)

'Montrealer' Restoration Seen

If all goes well, Amtrak's overnight "Montrealer," which linked Washington and Montreal via New York, Hartford, and Vermont, should resume next year; there's even an outside chance for service late this year. Due to serious track deterioration on Guilford's Boston & Maine Railroad, the "Montrealer" has been suspended since Apr. 6, 1987. At present, Vermont's only "Amtrak service" is a Burlington, VT-Springfield, MA, feeder bus.

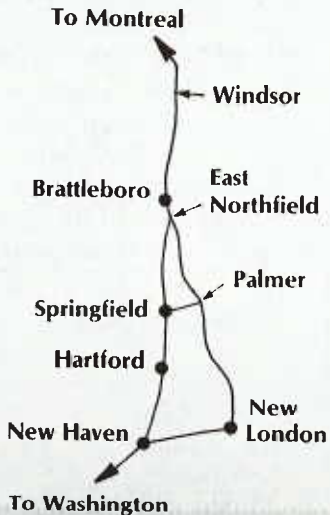
Although Amtrak is pursuing its legal case against Guilford, this is expected to take many years, so other methods must be used to reinstate the "Montrealer" in a timely manner.

Amtrak has the power of eminent domain to condemn private property it needs, but does not wish to own another rail line over which only one daily round-trip operates. Consequently, Amtrak hopes to reach an understanding with Central Vermont Railway under which Amtrak would condemn B&M's 49-mile Brattleboro-Windsor line (which CV freight trains also use) and CV would acquire it from Amtrak immediately afterwards.

After reaching such an understanding, Amtrak would offer to buy the line; Guilford presumably would refuse; Amtrak then would use its condemnation authority; and the Interstate Commerce Commission would have 200 days to determine "just compensation"—that is, how much Amtrak must pay Guilford (and CV pay Amtrak) for the line.

If that is the only B&M segment that changes hands, the "Montrealer" would have to use CV all the way, via New London, CT—adding 49 miles to the run and missing populous Hartford and Springfield. (A Brattleboro-Palmer-Springfield routing would require one of two prohibitively costly options: A Palmer-Springfield back-up move, or construction of a new connecting track/viaduct at Palmer, MA.)

Apparently seeking to insure that the "Montrealer" is restored on its original route, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts has shown interest in acquiring B&M's 50-mile Springfield-East Northfield segment, which would be upgraded with a combination of state funds and whatever is left over from the \$5 million Congress appropriated last year



CLEAN AIR = TRANSIT (OR STAYING AT HOME?)

"The smog problem may well need to be dealt with by reducing the number of cars on the street, by telling people they can't drive nearly to the extent they have in the past."

—EPA Chief Lee M. Thomas, in Mar. 7 address to National Association of Counties

"Mass transit is not a solution to those [clean air and foreign oil dependency] problems."

—UMTA Administrator Alfred DelliBovi at Feb. 19 DOT budget briefing, in response to NARP question

LAUTENBERG'S SENATE RES. 383

As he did last year, Sen. Frank R. Lautenberg (D-NJ) has responded to the White House's "kill Amtrak" proposal by introducing a "sense of the Senate" resolution calling for a continued federal financial commitment to Amtrak. Senate Res. 383 says, in part, "Amtrak should be supported by the Federal Government at a level that will enable it to continue to operate a national railway system and to continue the progress that has been made to improve its financial performances and service levels."

Cosponsors of S. Res. 383 as of March 11 are: Claiborne Pell (D-RI), Daniel Moynihan (D-NY), Lowell Weicker (R-CT), Joseph Biden (D-DE), Arlen Specter (R-PA), Robert Byrd (D-WV), Barbara Mikulski (D-MD), Bill Bradley (D-NJ), Quentin Burdick (D-ND), Wyche Fowler (D-GA), Christopher Dodd (D-CT), Tom Harkin (D-IA), Paul Simon (D-IL), Paul Sarbanes (D-MD), Jim Exon (D-NE), Howard Metzenbaum (D-OH), William Roth (R-DE), John Heinz (R-PA), Terry Sanford (D-NC), Jeff Bingaman (D-NM), and Jay Rockefeller (D-WV).

Lautenberg called a Feb. 24 news conference specifically to blast Pres. Reagan's Amtrak and transit proposals. Praising Amtrak Pres. Claytor for "doing so much with so little," Lautenberg suggested Claytor's next job should be "straightening out the Pentagon." Sen. Barbara Mikulski (D-MD) also spoke at the hearing.

(July '87 News)—the latter sum to be used primarily for upgrading Brattleboro-Windsor.

The genesis of the problem seems to be that Guilford considers the B&M Connecticut River line as just a branch; Guilford also owns Delaware & Hudson Railway and has been routing north-south through freight on D&H's Albany-Montreal line. Suddenly, however, Guilford has resumed daily service on the B&M river line—apparently hoping this will influence the ICC to set a higher price on the line. ■

TRAVELERS' ADVISORY

LATE FLASH!! Sec. Burnley asked Congress Mar. 18 to increase FY '88 Coast Guard funding \$60 mill., cutting Amtrak \$12.4 mill., transit \$17.3 mill.; appropriations subcommittees will decide.

Granby, CO, opened an attractive new Victorian-style Amtrak station Dec. 5. Project's \$200,000 cost was funded by city, county, and state.

Amtrak has cut speed from 79 to 60 mph (or less) on 90 miles of CM&W's Joliet-St. Louis line, due to rough track, costing :25.

Amtrak is replacing all curved Lexan window panes

with real glass (this affects 15 Heritage domes, 6 Hi-Level lounges, 25 Superliner lounges). Lexan is subject to discoloration/scratching, and must be replaced often. High-impact glass is now available which can be molded into curved panels; should cut window replacements by 50% a year.

Amfleet I toilets are to be upgraded (from recirculating to retention/dump a la Amfleet II). Funding is approved for first 30 cars. Total cost for all 483 Amfleet I cars: \$17 million. Project will improve toilet reliability, cut maintenance expense \$3.6 million a year.

CSX Seeks 'Silver Star,' 'Cardinal' Reroutes

If CSX Railroad had its way, the New York-Florida "Silver Star" would abandon Raleigh and Columbia and simply use the "Silver Meteor" route through the Carolinas; and the "Cardinal"—which links New York and Chicago via Washington, West Virginia, and Cincinnati—would lose its direct line between Charlottesville and Clifton Forge, a move that could add 2 hours to an already-slow schedule.

Under its contract with CSX, Amtrak apparently has the right to remain on the lines through 1996 but seems reluctant to rely too heavily on use of this right to force contracting railroads to keep open lines they consider uneconomic.

'Silver Star'

Having already forced "Silver Star" off the direct Richmond-Raleigh line (NARP News, Sep. '86), CSX now wants to downgrade or abandon the entire 341-mile Raleigh-Savannah mainline. In a Dec. 31 letter to Amtrak Pres. W. Graham Claytor Jr., NARP Pres. John R. Martin said, "We urge you to exercise your right to remain in Raleigh and in any event not to exit Raleigh as soon as April. Any decision that has such a serious impact on Raleigh (and apparently on Columbia, SC) should be part of a longer-range outlook of service expansion/restructuring in the Southeast.

"If CSX effectively forces Amtrak off the Raleigh-Columbia route in 1996, hopefully that will have been preceded by restoration of 'Carolinian' (New York-Charlotte via Rocky Mount and Raleigh). Also at that time, the market should easily justify operation of 3 New York-Florida trains, one of which might logically be on a combination of the routes of the 'Crescent' (Charlotte-north), 'Silver Star' (Columbia-south), and the Norfolk Southern Charlotte-Columbia line. [The Charlotte routing] would dramatically increase geographical coverage of the New York-Florida operation, and give 'Crescent' points [ed.: including Charlottesville, Lynchburg, Greensboro, High Point, Charlotte] their first direct service to Florida and more attractive times than 'Crescent' offers for trips north."

However, in attempting to preserve service to Raleigh and Columbia while granting CSX all it wanted, Amtrak considered putting the "Silver Star" on the "Silver Meteor" route via Fayetteville and Charleston, while removing from that route the speedy, daytime New York-Savannah "Palmetto" and converting it into a wandering New York-Raleigh-Greensboro-Charlotte-Columbia daytime train.

In a Feb. 4 letter to Claytor, Martin said such a train would be "hardly meaningful" as service to Columbia. "As NARP argued when you considered changing 'Montrealer' to a daytime schedule, a very slow daytime service is unlikely to be a strong performer. Columbia would lose service to Florida and the Columbia-north running-times would be very unattractive.

"If Raleigh must be left without a train, I urge that nothing be done in haste lest Amtrak play into CSX's hands and encourage CSX—and other railroads—to move still more aggressively on further trackage. . . . I assume Amtrak has an idea of where it wants to be in five years. If Amtrak does not have a master plan, Amtrak should not grant concessions to CSX until one is developed. I cannot conceive of a plan that denies service to both Raleigh and Columbia or that offers those cities token service. The Raleigh/Durham and Columbia areas are entirely too big and growing much too quickly for Amtrak not to serve them.

"If you decide Amtrak 'must' get off part of [CSX], I hope

"The move to cut Columbia off was not Amtrak's but CSX's—and the scenario was pretty sneaky. . . . Without notifying Columbia officials, CSX quietly asked Amtrak to switch routes." —Jan. 27 Columbia Record editorial

you will take a tough stand and get concessions in return, such as preservation of Columbia-Savannah [ed.: to permit running "Silver Star" via Charlotte] in return for consenting to leave Raleigh-Columbia."

Also Feb. 4, NARP Members Allan Paul of Raleigh, vice-chairman of the Carolina Association for Passenger Trains (CAPT), and Joseph Roof, a Columbia attorney, spent the day visiting congressional offices with NARP's Ross Capon and Barry Williams, including personal meetings with Sens. Strom Thurmond (R-SC) and Terry Sanford (D-NC), and Reps. John Spratt (D-SC) and Floyd Spence (R-SC), emphasizing the decline in rail freight service that CSX's plans portend, and the need for equitable treatment of freight railroads vs. truckers.

Fortunately, public officials have responded to CSX's plans by becoming better informed about railroads, their importance, and threats to their survival. For example, Gov. James Martin (R-NC) opened the Feb. 15 "Transportation 2020 Forum" in Raleigh by announcing that he had created a rail passenger task force to recommend legislation enabling the state to maintain control over its existing rail network, many of whose lines would revert to abutting property owners if abandoned, and to make recommendations on intrastate passenger service.

Gov. Martin said 1,662 miles of North Carolina track have been abandoned since 1920 and 3,448 miles remain. (Incidentally, Southern Railway's lease of the state-owned Charlotte-Greensboro-Raleigh-Morehead City line expires in 1994 and will soon be renegotiated.)

On Feb. 22, NARP's Barry Williams and Allan Paul participated in a Hamlet, NC, meeting with Rep. Bill Hefner (D-NC) and four mayors whose cities would be adversely affected by CSX's plans.

Given the intense publicity now focussed on CSX and its plans, NARP remains hopeful that any changes made will reflect the public interest much more closely than would CSX's initial request.

'Cardinal'

CSX's desire to abandon Charlottesville-Staunton-Clifton Forge may pose a bigger problem because there may be no opportunity for compromise: running via Lynchburg would add two hours to an already too-slow route. Nevertheless, the Amtrak test train ran (apparently at CSX expense) in early March; *The Washington Post* and others published a photo of the train passing through Lynchburg.

In a Mar. 11 letter to Claytor, NARP's Martin "put NARP officially on record in opposition to rerouting the 'Cardinal.'" ■

TOUGHEST BUDGET? (continued from page 1)

tation. DOT officials proudly note the increasing share of their budget covered by user payments. However, DOT ignores the high cost the nation is paying—and the higher cost our grandchildren will pay—for investing most user payments in the mode that collected them, insuring continued overinvestment in highways and aviation, neglect of the rails, worsening air and road congestion, continued violation of clean air standards, and growing pressure for more costly, noisy runways and airports.

The 4th consecutive Reagan budget lacking Amtrak funding came shortly after Federal Railroad Administrator John H. Riley gave the President's Commission on Privatization enthu-

siastic testimony about cost reductions Amtrak's new Superliners permitted on western long-distance trains, the need for new cars on the eastern trains to achieve similar cost reductions, and the fact that Amtrak is "throwing away money" for lack of enough cars.

Similarly, proposed transit cuts are inconsistent with assertions by Environmental Protection Administrator Lee M. Thomas, most recently in a Mar. 7 address to a Washington meeting of the National Association of Counties, that restrictions on driving may be necessary to meet clean air standards in large cities (see "Clean Air" box, p.2). Implementation of such restrictions, difficult in any case, would be virtually impossible without major continuing mass transit improvements.

Indeed, when—in a Mar. 9 House Public Works & Transportation subcommittee hearing—Rep. Glenn Anderson (D-CA) sharply asked the Urban Mass Transportation Administration's (UMTA) John Spencer if the proposed \$1.6 billion reflected "needs, or budget constraints," Spencer admitted it merely reflected "the amount of money available from the transit penny."

(He was referring to the gasoline-tax penny earmarked for transit in the 1982 law that raised the federal gasoline tax from 4 to 9 cents a gallon. The administration "sold" the proposal by promising that the penny would be used to increase transit funding, not to justify reducing it. As Rep. Bud Shuster [R-PA] put it at the Mar. 9 hearing, it was not Congress's intent to "rely solely on the transit penny to fund UMTA.")

Fake "Tough Choices"

Transportation Secretary James H. Burnley IV says the budget summit agreement reached late last year between the White House and Capitol Hill means this Reagan budget (which he said complies with that agreement) would be taken more seriously than previous ones. He predicts the appropriations committees will confront "tough choices" similar to Reagan's and resolve them in much the same way. He suggests that restoring money for Amtrak and transit would mean cutting funding proposed for the other major DOT programs: highways, aviation, and the Coast Guard (which is responsible for trying to minimize the flow of drugs into the country).

At his Feb. 18 news conference, he portrayed Amtrak as serving "middle class and upper middle class" people and said he could not justify funding Amtrak while asking the Federal Aviation Administration not to operate "as safely as it can" and asking the Coast Guard to "tie up cutters." He also said it wasn't fair to collect taxes all over the country and "dump them into [transit projects in] 8 to 10 cities." In other words, a vote to restore Amtrak and transit money is a vote against air safety and for drug smugglers.

Burnley is deftly gliding around key justifications for Amtrak and transit.

- Metroliners benefit a far broader segment of the population than the predominantly upper-income people who ride them. Fast corridor trains alleviate airport congestion and airplane safety problems by attracting many passengers who might otherwise fly. If these trains did not exist, existing airports would inflict more noise and air pollution on their neighbors (many with low incomes), and pressures would increase to build new airports inflicting the same problems on people who don't currently have them.

- Impressive Los Angeles-San Diego ridership growth (Oct.-Nov. News) demonstrates that fast corridor trains can offer similar benefits in many corridors outside the Northeast. Illinois DOT calculates, for example, that half of O'Hare Airport's flights serve cities within 400 miles of Chicago and 13%

of O'Hare flights serve points on just 3 Amtrak routes, those linking Chicago with St. Louis, Milwaukee, and Detroit.

- A high proportion of long-distance Amtrak passengers are lower-income people.

- Urban rail transit has a reasonable claim to some national tax money because the systems contribute to nationwide energy security by lowering per capita gasoline use within metropolitan areas, reduce air pollution that ultimately affects rural areas as well, and help balance the negative effects of urban commuter freeways built with 90% federal funds.

- Rail transit could exist in more cities if the administration had devoted as much effort to promoting cost-effective light rail projects as to cutting transit spending. Moreover, a rail transit program confined to a small number of cities would still be justified because a small number of cities (20) has the worst ozone problems (i.e., so severe that they may never comply with clean air standards).

Real "Tough Choices"

In short, NARP thinks the Reagan DOT budget reflects not "tough choices"—but "caving in" to the most powerful interest groups.

Unfortunately, reluctance to buck powerful interest groups is not confined to the White House or one political party. We know—and many legislators may privately agree—the nation would suffer more from an Amtrak shutdown than from a 4.9% cut in the president's highway spending proposal. (4.9% × \$13.8 billion = \$681 million, Amtrak's current appropriation.)

Nevertheless, if real tough choices are needed to save Amtrak and transit, they are in real trouble. Highway and aviation interests will be working hard to prove that cuts below the Reagan-proposed levels would be unacceptable. Of course, how much these other modes need depends partly on what assumptions one makes about increased utilization of mass transit and railroads to move people and goods.

Closely related is the question of whether users of roads and airways will ever be asked to pay a greater portion of their infrastructure costs, including congestion costs. Peak-hour pricing of runways might reduce airport congestion substantially, but aviation interests oppose this, preferring to "solve" congestion problems with massive construction of more runways and airports.

President Reagan's annual economic report to Congress recommended such pricing (but wanted to plow the increased fees back into airport construction), and the Massachusetts Port Authority is hoping to implement peak-hour pricing at Boston's Logan Airport. The MassPort proposal has already drawn intense fire from New Hampshire Gov. John Sununu (R), and Rep. Sherwood L. Boehlert (R-NY) has introduced legislation which would enable U.S. DOT to delay and possibly kill such plans.

Similar pricing of urban highways is just as logical, but even more controversial and less likely to be implemented. There is, however, growing interest on Capitol Hill in removing the tax disadvantage of transit use vs. parking.

Across the nation, of course, worthwhile transit projects that could reduce the need for new highways are held up due to lack of transit funds, while highway projects subjected to far less intense scrutiny move forward, helping to generate the "need" figures highway lobbyists use to plead their case on Capitol Hill.

Legislators need to receive as many letters as possible making the case for Amtrak and transit funding. ■