

Memo



Date September 29, 2011
To SJVRC Board Members
From Alex Khalfin
Department Government Affairs/Policy & Dev
Subject Amtrak Update
cc

Message

Following is an update on issues related to the *San Joaquin*, along with general information about Amtrak.

***San Joaquin* Performance**

In June, *San Joaquin* ridership was 100,947 (+13.9%); passenger revenue was \$3,302,170 (+14.1); endpoint OTP was 84.2%. In July, ridership was 103,933 (+5.6%); revenue was \$3,442,436 (+3.4%); endpoint OTP was 88.4%. August ridership was 98,477 (+18.7); revenue was 3,325,159 (+17.7); endpoint OTP was 85.2%.

FY12 Amtrak Appropriation

On September 8, the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development passed their FY12 appropriations bill. For Amtrak operations, the Subcommittee proposed \$227M, compared to the \$563M Amtrak received for operations in FY11. An additional \$899M is proposed for Amtrak capital, which is \$24M less than FY11's \$924M. Additionally, the subcommittee's appropriation bill includes a provision that, if passed, would prohibit Amtrak from using any federal operating dollars to support state-funded trains. If appropriated, this level of funding would essentially force Amtrak to cease operations.

In the Senate, appropriators are recommending \$544 million in Amtrak operating subsidies for FY 2012 (\$18 million less than FY 2011 funding) plus \$937 million toward capital spending and debt service (an increase of \$15 million from the FY 2011 appropriation).

FY11 High Speed Rail Funding

On September 20, the Senate Transportation Committee approved a bill that did not include any money for the high speed rail initiative. However, the following day, U.S. Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) and Senators Dick Durbin (D-Ill.), Frank Lautenberg (D-N.J.), and Mary Landrieu (D-La.) announced that the Senate Appropriations Committee has accepted their amendment which includes \$100 million in funding for High Speed and Intercity Passenger Rail. The full House Appropriations Committee has not yet scheduled a vote on the measure.

American Jobs Act

Earlier this month, President Obama unveiled the American Jobs Act which is designed to create jobs and rebuild the economy. This legislation includes \$4B for high speed rail capital grants, and \$2B for Amtrak capital.

Amtrak Governance

Amtrak board has one remaining vacancy.

News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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HOUSE REPUBLICAN BUDGET PLAN WILL ELIMINATE ALL STATE-SUPPORTED AMTRAK SERVICE

WASHINGTON – Despite record-breaking Amtrak ridership and strong support for intercity passenger rail by 15 states, the House Republican transportation budget plan will effectively eliminate all state-supported Amtrak service across the country for the fiscal year beginning October 1.

The FY 2012 Transportation-HUD House Appropriations Subcommittee budget proposal offered by the Majority prohibits the use of federal funds provided to Amtrak to fund any operating costs of state-supported trains. If enacted by the full Congress, it will eliminate nearly 150 weekday state-supported trains and negatively impact the more than nine million passengers who ride those trains each year and the communities they live in.

“The House Republican plan is shortsighted and is the wrong policy for America,” said Amtrak President and CEO Joseph Boardman. “It will result in the loss of jobs and reverses significant progress made to use passenger rail to reduce U.S. dependence on foreign oil.”

“The GOP plan penalizes states that have made investments in passenger rail, some of which have contributed toward costs for nearly 40 years,” said Amtrak board chairman Tom Carper. “It kills an engine of local and regional economic growth much needed today, harms the future economic vitality of the nation and is unnecessary.”

Under legislation passed by Congress in 2008, Amtrak is working cooperatively with its state partners to develop a common methodology to shift more of the operating and capital costs of state-supported trains to the states.

“The Republican proposal forces an unwelcome decision on states who clearly want to preserve and expand passenger rail service,” Carper stated.

The 15 states which provide state-supported Amtrak service are: California, Illinois, Maine, Michigan, Missouri, New York, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, Washington and Wisconsin.

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