

Chair, Secretary Frank J. Busalacchi, Wisconsin DOT
Vice-Chair, Bill Bronte, California DOT
Secretary-Treasurer, Don Hannon, New York DOT



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April 21, 2010

The Honorable John W. Olver
United States House of Representatives
Chair, House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development,
and Related Agencies
1111 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Latham
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on Transportation-HUD
2217 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Olver and Ranking Member Latham:

It is my pleasure to share with you the views of the States for Passenger Rail Coalition (S4PRC) regarding the FFY 2011 appropriation of funding for rail related programs and activities. The investments to date launched the development of a national intercity passenger rail network that balances speed, frequency and reliability. The current year appropriation will advance this process. Again, the states focus is on safety, economic development, energy security and conservation, and environmental quality.

More specifically:

Requests for grants from the High-Speed Intercity Passenger Rail program are remarkably strong. The United States Department of Transportation (US DOT) solicitation for submissions for the \$8 billion in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) released decades old pent-up demand. In reviewing the applications, the US DOT acknowledged the high quality of a significant majority of the proposals. In preparation for distribution of the FFY 2010 funds, states are aggressively strengthening partnerships, honing metrics, and confirming broad-based support for their projects.

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Once again this year the Administration has proposed \$1 billion for this effort. We urge you to aggressively build upon the \$2.5 billion provided in last year's appropriation.

Safety continues to be central to our efforts. The Administration requests \$50 million for the deployment of positive train control. The S4PRC recommends that \$100 million be provided for this vital program. The deadline for deployment of the technology is looming, every consideration should be given to all of the policy and financial issues surrounding this program. Further, continued funding of the Swift High-Speed Rail Grade Crossing Elimination Program is vital; please consider the \$55 million level.

The Rail Line Relocation program provides needed financial assistance to states, local communities and freight railroads to make prudent investments in safety and economic development. A \$45 million investment in this program would produce a reasonable return on investment.

The S4PRC supports Amtrak's request for \$2.2 billion. Amtrak faces a broad array of daunting challenges to include meeting ADA requirements, operating over an ever aging infrastructure and assisting the states in development of a national intercity passenger rail system based on the extraordinary level of investment and interest. The organization's stewardship and prudence merit the highest level of investment.

Congressional leadership in FFY 2010 led to an investment of \$2 million for the next generation intercity passenger rail equipment effort. This collaborative effort is off to a solid start. In the near term, the products of the effort will lead to acquisition of a modern fleet of passenger rail equipment and motive power, the longer term benefit is even more critical. The development of new specifications, stronger procurement processes and utilization of the latest safety measures will create the industrial basis for the economic development of the railroad supply industry. Working in collaboration with the authorizing committee, we urge an investment of \$1 million for FFY 2011.

Last year's committee report contained language dealing with both the relevance of social justice and with the various costs associated with intercity passenger rail; we recommend that the committee consider similar language in this year's report.

As state officials, we are painfully aware of the very harsh realities you and the committee face in preparing this year's legislation. The absence of highway and transit

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authorizing legislation only compounds the various issues. Intercity passenger rail can strengthen not only other modes of transportation, but also provide a vital link to prudent land use and housing policy. Again, we appreciate your support. We look forward to collaborating with you in this critical effort.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which reads "William D. Bronte". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light blue rectangular background.

WILLIAM D. BRONTE
Vice Chair, States for Passenger Rail Coalition and
Chief, Division of Rail
California Department of Transportation