

STATES *for* PASSENGER RAIL COALITION

www.s4prc.org

CHAIR - SECRETARY TERRY MULCAHY - WISCONSIN DOT
VICE CHAIR - DEPUTY SECRETARY DAVID KING - NORTH CAROLINA DOT
SECRETARY/TREASURER - RAIL MANAGER KEN UZNANSKI - WASHINGTON DOT

2001 Annual Report

1. Mission and membership

The States for Passenger Rail Coalition (SPRC) is a coalition of state departments of transportation to advocate for federal funding and to support intercity passenger rail initiatives.

- In 2001, coalition members were Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Iowa, Louisiana, Maryland, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, and Wisconsin. In early 2002, the coalition welcomed Maine as its 22nd member.
- At its January 15, 2002, meeting, SPRC elected the following officers:
 - Chair – David King, Deputy Secretary, North Carolina DOT
 - Vice-chair – Ken Uznanski, Manager, Washington State DOT Rail Office
 - Secretary/treasurer – Randy Wade, Pass. Rail Implementation Mgr., Wisconsin DOT
- Secretary Terry Mulcahy of Wisconsin, the founding chair of SPRC, retired after 46 years of public service in January of 2002.

2. Key activities and achievements in 2001

- SPRC helped facilitate member participation in a survey conducted by General Accounting Office of high-speed rail funding needs across the nation. Several Senators requested the GAO report.
- SPRC partnered with the High Speed Ground Transportation Association to produce a short informational video on national plans and issues for high-speed rail.
- The SPRC established an Internet site at www.s4prc.org to provide information to members and key stakeholders about coalition activities and products.
- Throughout the year, SPRC sent letters to key members of Congress in support of the High Speed Rail Investment Act of 2001. The bill would provide a 10-year, \$12 billion bond program for passenger rail.
- In September (prior to the 11th), SPRC placed an education ad in the Roll Call newspaper serving Capitol Hill, outlining the need for federal funding of high-speed rail.

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- As Congress considered an economic stimulus package, SPRC members identified \$5.4 billion in short-term rail projects for inclusion in a stimulus package. The project list was widely circulated among Congressional members and other stakeholders.
- Then-vice chair David King testified at hearings before the House Transportation & Infrastructure Subcommittee on Railroads on July 25 (current status and future prospects of Amtrak) and October 2 (Rail Infrastructure & Development Act for the 21st Century).
- King and SPRC were also featured in a *Governing* magazine story on the post-September 11 crisis in transportation in the December 2001 edition.

3. Future activities / legislative agenda

- At its January, 2002, meeting, the coalition discussed federal passenger rail policy development with Deputy Secretary of Transportation Michael Jackson and Federal Railroad Administrator Allan Rutter.
- SPRC will continue to advocate for a long-term, dedicated federal funding program for passenger rail that focus on these key elements:
 - Federal / state cost share of 80/20;
 - A strong state role in project selection, development and management;
 - Flexibility for the state match provision;
 - Federal leadership for grant and other administrative functions;
 - Use of incremental technology to achieve speeds of 79, 90, 110 or 125 MPH;
 - Recognition of relationships with freight and commuter rail partners;
 - Emphasis on safety for operators, passengers and at grade crossings;
 - Regional corridors connecting major city pairs; and
 - Intermodal partnerships with airlines and intercity bus lines.
- The coalition will seek a voice in the ongoing discussion of the role of Amtrak and federal policy regarding passenger rail. States already play a key role in funding passenger service and investing in rail infrastructure.
- The coalition communicates primarily through conference calls, e-mail updates and the web site. The coalition typically meets 3-4 times during the year in conjunction with other meetings of transportation or rail stakeholder groups.