



## 2006 Annual Report

### 1. Mission and Membership

The States for Passenger Rail Coalition (SPRC) is a coalition of 28 state departments of transportation to advocate for federal funding and support for intercity passenger rail initiatives.

In 2006, the Coalition members were Arizona, California, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, Wisconsin, California Capitol Corridor, and Southern Rapid Rail Transit Commission.

Michigan joined the coalition during the year.

### 2. Key Activities and Achievements in 2006: Inform

**Goal: Give all members prompt, timely and accurate information regarding intercity passenger developments and federal funding.**

SPRC held three well attended membership meetings during the year: January in Washington, DC in conjunction with the Transportation Research Board Annual Meeting; March in Washington, DC in conjunction with SCORT meeting; and September in San Antonio again in conjunction with SCORT.

Three coalition wide conference calls were held during the year. The calls help both to bring the membership up to date on developments but also to assign roles to individual states in the efforts to achieve our mutually agreed upon goals.

The Executive Committee in conjunction with additional members held bi-weekly conference calls to carefully manage activities.

SPRC retained David Ewing to represent the group in Washington. David distributed material electronically and by other means to the collective membership and in response to individual requests. Over 55 updates were transmitted.

Arizona  
California  
Connecticut  
Delaware  
Florida  
Georgia  
Illinois  
Indiana  
Iowa  
Louisiana  
Maine  
Michigan  
Minnesota  
Mississippi  
Missouri  
New Jersey  
New York  
North Carolina  
Ohio  
Oklahoma  
Pennsylvania  
South Carolina  
Tennessee  
Vermont  
Virginia  
Washington  
Wisconsin  
California  
Capitol  
Corridor  
Southern Rapid  
Rail Transit  
Commission



John Boffa, the Coalition’s media consultant, assisted in the drafting of three Op-Ed pieces. They appeared in: Hartford Courant, the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel and the Richmond Times-Dispatch.

The San Francisco Chronicle article stimulated additional letters from other groups.

As part of an out reach-educational campaign, Chairman Busalacchi addressed the National Press Club in Washington. The presentation (following closely on the heels of his Congressional testimony) led to quotes in several publications.

In addition, Secretary Busalacchi gave several long interviews to the rail press including a piece by Wes Vernon that was widely circulated.

### 3. Key Activities in 2006: Messages & Venues

**Goal: Raise our collective voice in support of a strong federal partnership to create a dedicated source of funding for capitol investment in intercity passenger rail equipment, infrastructure, and facilities.**

In addition to the outreach activity list above, SPRC met with the three Chief Operating Officers of Amtrak: David Gunn, David Hughes, and Alexander K. Kummant, to try to better understand his view of Amtrak-state relations. Numerous meetings were held with Amtrak staff.

Efforts were made to carefully co-ordinate with AAR and APTA. Secretary Busalacchi met with both Bill Millar and Ed Hamburger on several occasions. Karen Rae presented a perspective on S4PRC at the APTA Annual meeting in San Jose, California.

Ken Uznanski continued his on-going efforts to coordinate S4PRC efforts with SCORT. SCORT has taken the leadership in critical conversations with Amtrak regarding pricing of services.

Meetings and conversations with key congressional staff occurred on an on-going basis. More specifically:

Majority and minority staff of the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee.

- Arizona
- California
- Connecticut
- Delaware
- Florida
- Georgia
- Illinois
- Indiana
- Iowa
- Louisiana
- Maine
- Michigan
- Minnesota
- Mississippi
- Missouri
- New Jersey
- New York
- North Carolina
- Ohio
- Oklahoma
- Pennsylvania
- South Carolina
- Tennessee
- Vermont
- Virginia
- Washington
- Wisconsin
- California Capital Corridor
- Southern Rapid Rail Transit Commission



Majority and Minority staff of the Rail Subcommittee of the House  
Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

Congressman Obey  
 Congressman Petri  
 Congresswoman Brown  
 Congressman Weller  
 Congressman Oberstar  
 Congressman Blumenauer  
 Congressman McNulty  
 Congressman LaTourette  
 Congresswoman Baldwin  
 Senator Kohl  
 Senator Lautenberg  
 Senator Lott  
 Senator Carper  
 Senator Clinton

Arizona  
 California  
 Connecticut  
 Delaware  
 Florida  
 Georgia  
 Illinois  
 Indiana  
 Iowa  
 Louisiana  
 Maine  
 Michigan  
 Minnesota  
 Mississippi  
 Missouri  
 New Jersey  
 New York  
 North Carolina  
 Ohio  
 Oklahoma  
 Pennsylvania  
 South Carolina  
 Tennessee  
 Vermont  
 Virginia  
 Washington  
 Wisconsin  
 California  
 Capital  
 Corridor  
 Southern Rapid  
 Rail Transit  
 Commission

Further, Chairman Busalacchi met personally at length with Representatives Petri, Obey and Oberstar on several occasions to specifically discuss intercity passenger rail issues. **Congressional Testimony:**

Chairman Busalacchi Testifies before the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee on April 26. The hearing focused on capacity issues. Chairman Busalacchi stressed that growth in freight and passenger rail were not mutually exclusive. However, on-time performance (OTP) for passenger service had declined sharply on many routes. Choke points needed to be addressed as OTP was critical to retaining existing riders and capturing market share during a period of wildly fluctuating gasoline prices.

**5. Congressional Correspondence:**

- 1-18-06 Letter to Senate Finance Committee regarding obtaining federal capital for long-term investment in intercity passenger rail infrastructure and equipment
- 1-18-06 Letter to House Ways and Means Committee on establishing dedicated, multi-year financial source of capital funding

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|---------|---|--|
| 2-28-06 | Letter to House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee on developing federal-state funding partnership   | Arizona  |
| 2-28-06 | Letter to USDOT Secretary on developing federal-state funding partnership   | California<br>Connecticut  |
| 2-28-06 | Letter to Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation on S.1516-The Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2005                                  | Delaware<br>Florida<br>Georgia   |
| 2-28-06 | Letter to Amtrak Chairman Laney on issues of mutual concern   | Illinois<br>Indiana  |
| 4-7-06  | Letter to all members of Transportation and Infrastructure Committee urging action on legislation   | Iowa<br>Louisiana  |
| 7-12-06 | Letter to Senator DeWine RE Capital Grants for Rail Line Relocation Projects Program  | Maine<br>Michigan  |
| 8-30-06 | Letter to Senator John McCain regarding Rail Security Amendment   | Minnesota<br>Mississippi   |
| 8-30-06 | Letter to Senator Tom Harkin on benefits of alternative fuels as part of a balanced multimodal transportation system  | Missouri<br>New Jersey   |
| 10-9-06 | Letter of support to Senators Lott and Lautenberg for efforts to develop comprehensive package for enhancement of intercity passenger rail service in the United States | New York<br>North Carolina<br>Ohio<br>Oklahoma<br>Pennsylvania<br>South Carolina |

**6. The National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study Commission:**

The National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study Commission was created under Section 1909 of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act—A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). This Commission was created because members of the Congress declared, “that it is in the national interest to preserve and enhance the surface transportation system to meet the needs of the United States for the 21st century.” S4PRC supported including this provision in the legislation

Chairman Busalacchi (appointed by Speaker Pelosi) is one of the members working to examine not only the condition and future needs of the nation's surface transportation system, but also short and long-term alternatives to replace or supplement the fuel tax as the principal revenue source to support the Highway

- Tennessee  
Vermont  
Virginia  
Washington  
Wisconsin  
California  
Capital  
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Trust Fund over the next 30 years. David Ewing testified on behalf of the before the Commission in July ; DC Agrawal (New Jersey Transit) and Jim Boice (Connecticut DOT) included States for Passenger Rail Coalition in their testimony and questions and answers in the New York City field hearing as did New York State DOT Commissioner Tom Madison. David King, former North Carolina DOT official and chairman of the States for Passenger Rail Coalition, testified. His testimony stressed the need for a dedicated source of funding for intercity passenger rail. He stressed the danger of imposing FTA need starts criteria on intercity passenger rail projects.

### **7. The Road Ahead:**

While Congress and the President failed to enact legislation creating a dedicated source of federal funding for intercity passenger rail, support for rail proved strong in Congress. Our relationships with key members and staff of both major political parties grew. Foreign relations, limited dollars and the prospect of a watershed election distracted the process.

The 110<sup>th</sup> Congress convenes on January 4, 2007. Our initial discussions indicate that the new Democratic majority in the House will focus keeping campaign promises. Later in the session, the issue of energy security may come up, staff initially indicated that we should consider stressing the energy saving/conservation/security aspects of intercity passenger rail.

Energy has long been an integral part of our message. Chairman Busalacchi stressed energy conservation in his presentation to the National Press Club. S4PRC wrote to the Senate in support of provisions that would encourage the use of bio-diesel in locomotives. Further, we have written support of battery and fuel cell technology as well.

The change in the political landscape brings us to the Ways & Means Committee. We will increase our outreach to the Chairman-Representative Rangel—and all of the members of the Committee. We will attempt to place our need for a dedicated source of federal funding in the overall rail need for enhanced investment in capacity and AAR's effort for an investment tax credit.

We will continue our efforts to advance the case for intercity passenger rail through the report of the National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue

Arizona  
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 Delaware  
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 Illinois  
 Indiana  
 Iowa  
 Louisiana  
 Maine  
 Michigan  
 Minnesota  
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 Missouri  
 New Jersey  
 New York  
 North Carolina  
 Ohio  
 Oklahoma  
 Pennsylvania  
 South Carolina  
 Tennessee  
 Vermont  
 Virginia  
 Washington  
 Wisconsin  
 California  
 Capital  
 Corridor  
 Southern Rapid  
 Rail Transit  
 Commission



Study Commission. The report is due in 2007 and will form the basis for the reauthorization of SAFETEA-Lu.

2007 promises to be an important year for S4PRC as we move toward the goal of dedicated source of funding for intercity passenger rail.

*Arizona*  
*California*  
*Connecticut*  
*Delaware*  
*Florida*  
*Georgia*  
*Illinois*  
*Indiana*  
*Iowa*  
*Louisiana*  
*Maine*  
*Michigan*  
*Minnesota*  
*Mississippi*  
*Missouri*  
*New Jersey*  
*New York*  
*North Carolina*  
*Ohio*  
*Oklahoma*  
*Pennsylvania*  
*South Carolina*  
*Tennessee*  
*Vermont*  
*Virginia*  
*Washington*  
*Wisconsin*  
*California*  
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*Commission*