

## 2009 Annual Report

### 1. Mission and Membership

The States for Passenger Rail Coalition (S4PRC) is a coalition of 29 state departments of transportation and 3 passenger rail authorities and commissions to advocate for federal funding and support for intercity passenger rail initiatives.

In 2009, the Coalition members were Alabama, Arizona, Amtrak California, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nevada, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, Wisconsin, Capitol Corridor, Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority, and Southern High Speed Rail Commission.

### 2. Key Activities and Achievements in 2009: Input

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

S4PRC held three well-attended membership meetings during the year:

January Membership Meeting in Washington, DC  
March Membership Meeting in Washington, DC  
September Membership Meeting in Oklahoma City, OK

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.

S4PRC 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. Eighty-four updates were transmitted. David Ewing represented S4PRC at several meetings and conferences including:

- o April 9 in Chicago, IL for the MWRRI Steering Committee meeting
- o October 15 in Columbus, OH speaker at the Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Commission meeting

### **3. Key Activities in 2009: 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. More specifically, S4PRC retained the services of John Boffa of Boffa and Associates to provide technical assistance in getting the word out. Examples of the efforts include:**

March 17, 2009 – Press Release “Coalition Sees Unprecedented Benefit in Stimulus Funds for Passenger Rail Projects”

April 16, 2009 – Press Release “Coalition Chair Briefed on New Funding at Special White House Guidance Session”

May 4, 2009 – Press Release “Rail Coalition Marks Celebration of National Train Day”

July 17, 2009 – “A new emphasis is needed on passenger rail” by Frank Busalacchi

November 9, 2009 – Press Release “Rail Coalition Takes Issue with Report on Passenger Rail Subsidy Costs”

At the request of House Rail Subcommittee staff, S4PRC developed a survey of state intercity passenger projects proposed for “Stimulus II” funding.

In addition to the outreach activity list above, S4PRC met with Operating Officer of Amtrak Joseph Boardman. Numerous meetings were held with Amtrak staff.

Efforts were made to carefully coordinate with AAR and APTA. S4PRC entered into an MOU with APTA and AASHTO to co-ordinate participation and planning of meetings.

### **4. Congressional Testimonies:**

January 22, 2009 – Wisconsin Governor Jim Doyle testified before the U.S. House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure on passenger rail provisions in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

October 14, 2009 – Secretary Frank J. Busalacchi, Wisconsin DOT testified before the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee’s Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines and Hazardous Materials on high speed rail in the United States – opportunities and challenges. Secretary Busalacchi’s testimony was quoted in an article “High-Speed Rail Effort Proceeds With Caution” by Josh Voorhees on October 22, 2009 in [Greenwire](#).

### **5. Congressional Correspondence:**

April 24, 2009 – Letter to Representatives John Olver, Chairman and Tom Latham, Ranking Member of the House Appropriations Committee’s Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing

and Urban Development, and Related Agencies sharing the views of S4PRC member states on rail transportation investment in FFY 2010.

June 3, 2009 – Letter to Senator Patty Murray, Chair and Senator Christopher “Kit” Bond, Ranking Member of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies from Secretary Frank J. Busalacchi sharing the views of member states on rail transportation investment in FFY 2010.

June 8, 2009 – Letter to Administrator Joseph Szabo, Federal Railroad Administration from Secretary Frank J. Busalacchi to provide input on issues that should be addressed in the interim guidance required by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) and to provide specific recommendations on the criteria to be used in evaluating grant applications.

July 8, 2009 – Letter to Senators Barbara Boxer, Chair and James Inhofe, Ranking Member of the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works from Secretary Frank J. Busalacchi regarding deliberations on climate change legislation.

July 16, 2009 – Letter to Congressmen Olver, Chairman and Latham, Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies from Secretary Frank J. Busalacchi thanking them and the subcommittee on their timely action on 2010 appropriations for programs included in the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Other Agencies bill.

August 11, 2009 – Letter to Karen Rae, Deputy Administrator, Federal Railroad Administration from William D. Bronte, Chief, Division of Rail for the California Department of Transportation and Vice Chair, States for Passenger Rail Coalition seeking further guidance from FRA on the eligibility of preliminary engineering and environmental documentation for Track 2 funding.

September 10, 2009 – Letter to Representative Corrine Brown, Chairwoman of the Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines, and Hazardous Materials, U.S. House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee from Secretary Frank J. Busalacchi offering suggestions for the rail section of the Surface Transportation Authorization Act of 2009.

September 25, 2009 – Letter to Representative John Olver, Chairman of the House Committee on Appropriations’ Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies from OneRail Coalition urging the maximum amounts be made for railroad investment in the United States as Congress considers appropriations for FY 2010.

September 25, 2009 – Letter to Representative David Obey, Chairman of the House Committee on Appropriations from OneRail Coalition urging the maximum amounts be made for railroad investment in the United States as Congress considers appropriations for FY 2010.

October 22, 2009 – Letter to Senator Daniel Inouye, Chair of the Committee on Appropriations, Senator Patty Murray, Chair of the Committee on Appropriations’ Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies, Representative David Obey, Chair of the Committee on Appropriations, and Representative John Olver, Chair of the

Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies from Secretary Frank J. Busalacchi to share views on the FY 2010 appropriations bill.

November 3, 2009 – Letter to Senators Thomas Carper and Frank Lautenberg on the climate change bill being considered by the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee.

6. The States for Passenger Rail Coalition (S4PRC) proposed that PRIIA, section 301, be amended to create a “State Planning and Research Program.” The chapter, *The Intercity Passenger Rail Service Corridor Capital Assistance program*, authorized under Public Law No. 110-432, Division B, enacted Oct. 16, 2008, Amtrak/High-Speed Rail.

Intercity Passenger Rail Service Corridor Capital Assistance (Section 301)—is the broadest of PRIIA's three new funding programs, States (including the District of Columbia), groups of States, interstate compacts, and public Intercity Passenger Rail agencies established by one or more State(s) may apply for grants for capital improvements to benefit all types of Intercity Passenger Rail service. Amtrak may participate through a cooperative agreement with a State(s). To be eligible for funding under this program, proposed projects must meet a number of requirements (e.g. inclusion in a State Rail Plan).

More specifically the proposed amendment would provide:

- a. Two percent of the authorized annual funds for section 301 be directed toward a State Rail Planning and Research program.
- b. These funds should be distributed equally among the states.
- c. The House Transportation & Infrastructure draft STAA 2009 currently under discussion proposes that the currently authorized level be greatly expanded.<sup>1</sup>
- d. The total amount of funding that an individual state could receive might be capped at \$1 million per year.
- e. States should be given a wide flexibility in the use of the funds.
- f. For example, a portion of the funds could be pooled to meet common needs and concerns.

Further,

- g. Federal Railroad Administrator would be authorized \$1.5 million annually for a parallel discretionary grant program focusing on three areas: (1) coordination with non-motorized transportation; (2) landscape architecture; and (3) social justice-planning directed at incorporating the needs of traditionally underserved communities in planning for intercity passenger development and operation.

Champion: Representative Corrine Brown (D-Fla)

Supporters:

1. States for Passenger Rail Coalition
2. American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials
3. Council of State Governments (national)
4. Council of State Governments-Eastern Regional Conference
5. Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Commission
6. The Railway Supply Institute

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<sup>i</sup> Current authorization: 24406. Authorization of appropriations

There are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary of Transportation for capital grants under this chapter the following amounts:

- ` (1) For fiscal year 2009, \$100,000,000.
- ` (2) For fiscal year 2010, \$300,000,000.
- ` (3) For fiscal year 2011, \$400,000,000.
- ` (4) For fiscal year 2012, \$500,000,000.
- ` (5) For fiscal year 2013, \$600,000,000.!