



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RAILROAD PASSENGERS

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RETURN REQUESTED

Auto Overuse = Dirty Air

CLAYTOR FAVORS TRANSPORTATION TRUST FUND

"I'm very hopeful that the next Administration, whoever wins, will recognize that we have to have a nationwide rail passenger service in this country, and that we'll get over this nonsense of trying to put Amtrak out of business every year.

"What we really need is a transportation trust fund, financed probably by the gasoline tax. A penny on the gasoline tax would raise over a billion dollars a year. Applied to Amtrak, it would give us enough capital to meet all of our needs and allow reasonable expansion in areas where we ought to be adding service."

—Amtrak Pres. W. Graham Claytor Jr.,
interviewed in the December Railway Age

TRAVELERS' ADVISORY

Amtrak is shifting to 3 timetables (tt's) a year. National tt's are planned for May 15 & Sep. 18, 1988, and Jan. 15, 1989. May tt will show many longer running times, for bigger summer consists and loads. (At the request of a California NARP member, we're urging Amtrak to include Cape Cod trains in the national tt.) Tt's marked "through Apr. 9" will be good through May 14, with these exceptions:

- Phila.-Harrisburg: Jan. 25 tt has slower schedules to reflect E-60 locos. No tt is planned to reflect end of Amtrak service to Penn Center Jan. 29, when these trains converted to diesel after "Night Owl" accident caused an electric loco shortage. Anyone with an Amtrak ticket or ticket stub may, as always, ride SEPTA trains free between 30th St. Sta. and Penn Center.

- Michigan: Jan. 25 tt with some intermediate-station times changed as much as 15 minutes; May 1 tt to reflect VIA changes to Chicago-Toronto service;

- Northeast Corridor (NEC): Apr. 10 tt (due to promises Amtrak made to regional transit authorities before the decision to postpone the general tt change).

Amtrak's Detroit sta. Jan. 5 "moved" across Vernor Hwy. to modular facility (Oct.-Nov. '87 News)... NEC round-trip excursion tickets previously banned on trips originating 1 to 7 PM Fridays & Sundays were banned 11 AM to 8 PM Fri./Sun. effective Dec. 4.

Clean air is basic to good health, but 100 million Americans—2 out of every 5 citizens—live in areas with health-threatening air pollution levels. The American Lung Assn. estimates air pollution causes \$40 billion annually in health care and lost productivity costs to society.

December 31, 1987 marked the deadline, already twice extended, for all areas of the country to achieve clean air standards first set in the Clean Air Act of 1970. Dozens of cities, including virtually every major urban area, remain in "non-attainment."

Motor vehicle emissions are the leading culprit. Motor vehicles cause 75% of the nation's carbon monoxide (CO), 45% of the nitrogen oxides (NOx), and 33% of the hydrocarbon emissions. The latter two pollutants are key ingredients in the formation of ozone—the primary constituent of smog.

The key problem is our national transportation policy, long dominated by road construction that benefits the private automobile and encourages auto-dependent land use patterns. Clean, energy-efficient transportation alternatives have been neglected and underfunded.

The continuing resolution enacted in December extended the Clean Air Act attainment deadline 8 months (to August 1988), temporarily postponing sanctions for areas still in "non-attainment," and giving Congress time to consider legislation to renew our commitment to healthy air.

The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee voted 14-2 for a strong clean air bill (S. 1894), and Senate floor action could come as early as March.

NARP members should emphasize to legislators that we need vigorous means of offsetting growing vehicle miles of travel (VMT), through greatly increased funding of alternatives to the single-occupant auto and elimination of federal policies that encourage people to drive alone rather than commute by public transportation or in carpools and vanpools.

Background

Congress recognized the vital link between transportation and clean air early on.

The Clean Air Act of 1970 established national air quality standards for various pollutants and set motor vehicle emission standards. A simultaneously-enacted law required:

- transportation planners to coordinate with air quality

planners and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to assure that roadbuilding plans were "consistent" with efforts to clean up the air;

- each state to develop an Action Plan assuring that final decisions on transportation projects would be made "in the best overall public interest"; and

- local officials and state transportation planning agencies to establish a "continuing, cooperative, comprehensive" ("3C") planning process to be carried out by Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO's) in each urban area.

Many areas did not achieve clean air by the 1977 attainment deadline. Thus, the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1977 were enacted, setting new deadlines: Dec. 31, 1982, with provisions for an extension to Dec. 31, 1987 (granted to 29 states) for states deemed unable to meet the ozone or CO standard sooner.

The 1977 law had more teeth: states were to document "reasonable further progress" toward attainment and sanctions (the withholding of federal highway and sewer construction funds) were to be imposed for failure to meet the attainment deadline. Particular attention was paid to transportation, including:

- strengthened requirements for integrated transportation/air quality planning;

- mandatory adoption of Inspection and Maintenance programs (I & M) for motor vehicles in the 29 extension states;

- adoption of all "Reasonably Available Control Measures" in extension states (the law designated 18 transportation measures); and

- establishment, expansion or improvement of "public transportation measures to meet basic transportation needs".

December 31, 1987 has passed and air pollution remains pervasive. EPA lists 104 areas of the country in non-attainment for ozone and carbon monoxide (62 for ozone, 65 for CO, and 23 for both; 1984-1986 data).

Need for New Transportation Priorities

Emissions standards for motor vehicles and the 60 existing I & M Programs have reduced vehicle emissions, but as a nation we have lacked the will to implement many other effective measures—and underestimated how much needs to be done.

Much progress has been offset by tremendous growth in:

- Motor vehicle registrations, which rose 65.9 million from 1970 to 1985 (from 111.2 million vehicles to 177.1); and

- VMT, which rose 60% from 1970 to 1985, or 4% annually (*Highway Statistics*, Federal Highway Administration).

In Los Angeles, the South Coast Air Quality Management District—under fire for laxness from Congress, EPA, and the state—recently required businesses with 100 or more employees to file a plan with the district of employee incentives to increase average auto occupancy to 1.5 (vs. 1.1 today). Two years ago, the district turned down a similar plan calling it "an off-the-wall plan conjured up by environmentalists" (*Auburn Journal*, Oct. 26, 1987).

That illustrates a major problem: the reluctance of states and localities to take strong actions to discourage single-occupant autos. As the report accompanying S. 1894 notes (p. 27), such actions "may require a significant restructuring of transportation patterns and systems for a community, or other major adjustments. Often transportation agencies have not been cooperative. Business communities and major employers have been resistant."

But federal transportation policies and funding priorities have also hurt, since they encourage growth in auto and truck travel:

- Even before accounting for inflation, federal mass transit funding fell 30% from 1981 to 1988 (from \$4.6 billion to \$3.2 billion), eroding the promise of "new" money the transit penny was to provide (see Jan. '83 *NARP News*) while federal highway outlays jumped 47% (\$9.1 billion to \$13.4 billion).

- Federal tax law pays people to drive alone to work. For years, full deductibility was allowed for employer-provided parking (a fringe benefit worth \$200-\$400/month in New York City!) but no deductibility for employer-provided transit passes. A 1984 law made such transit passes tax-free up to \$15/month, but—if an employer gives more than that—tax deductibility is lost for the entire amount!; also, employer-provided carpool/vanpool programs became taxable under the 1984 law (Rep. Barbara Kennelly, D-CT, and Sen. Alfonse D'Amato, R-NY, have bills which would correct these inequities).

- Federal funding for Amtrak fell 35% since 1981 (\$896 million in 1981; \$581 million in 1988).

- The "mode-specific" trust fund system, dominated by highway and aviation, discourages development of a cleaner, more balanced, "intermodal" national transport system.

- Highway user taxes don't adequately tax heavy trucks

MODE-SPECIFIC TRUST FUNDS: 'PRIMITIVE'

"The principle that motor vehicle taxes should be used for highway purposes only seems at first sight to have all the advantages of user taxation. It appears to be a logical and equitable method of financing. However, a more rigorous professional examination of it discovers a major flaw in its definition of users.

"This application of user charges principle is based on the assumption that automobile users in a state or in the country represent a special category of travelers, separate from those who use vehicles on rails, water, or even on the same highways, but are larger (bus). Thus, a person in Cincinnati driving to a neighborhood supermarket pays gasoline taxes which can be used for construction of a freeway in Montana, but they cannot be used to improve bus transit serving his very neighborhood.

"This flaw comes from the primitive consideration of transportation sectors through their mechanical and operational forms, rather than functional definition of transportation. An urban transportation system can be a system only if it encompasses all urban transportation, regardless of the physical form it takes. Following the basic principles of taxation, charges should be collected where possible and appropriate, and used for the modes or facilities which are most effective and desirable for the city.

". . . Failure to treat urban transportation as a single function led not only to separate modal policies, but produced the policies which aggravated the imbalance between modes instead of stabilizing their relationship to achieve efficient multimodal systems."

—Vukan R. Vuchic, Prof. of Transportation Engineering, University of Pennsylvania, in "The Auto Versus Transit Controversy: Toward a Rational Synthesis for Urban Transportation Policy," Transportation Research-A,

TROLLEYS RETURN TO SAN JOSE



—Photo by Santa Clara County Transportation Agency

The nation's 12th light rail transit system opened in San Jose Dec. 11, with over 3000 people attending dedication ceremonies at Great America Station. Opened that day was Phase I of Santa Clara County Transit District's (SCCTD) \$420 million, 20-mile trolley system, a 6.5-mile segment between northern San Jose and north-suburban Santa Clara. Phase II, a 2.5-mile segment through downtown San Jose, is expected to open this June, with Phase III to southern suburbs opening in 1991. SCCTD's rail system has a 50-car fleet, built by Canada's Urban Transportation Development Corp. (See also Aug. '84, Oct. '87 News.)

for the road costs they impose. The substantial subsidy to heavy trucks encourages freight shipment by truck rather than by rail, contributing to urban congestion and air pollution.

S. 1894: Path to Clean Air

S. 1894—a comprehensive bill to revise and revitalize the Clean Air Act—embraces the approach needed to give all U.S. citizens clean air to breathe as soon as possible.

S. 1894 establishes new clean-up deadlines and requirements for the dozens of non-attainment areas. Areas with continuing smog and CO problems have 3, 5, 10, or 15 years to attain the national clean air standards, with increasingly stringent additional cleanup requirements, depending on the severity of the area's pollution problem. S. 1894's strong transportation measures:

- Tighten motor vehicle emission standards for cars, trucks and buses; improve EPA tests and require on-board canisters by 1991 to capture fuel vapors;

- For "5 year areas", require: enhanced I & M programs for motor vehicles, Stage II Vapor Recovery controls for service stations, and use of alternative fuels for centrally-fueled fleets of 50 or more vehicles;

- For areas requiring over 5 years, specifically require [in new section 172(e) (2) (F)] a legally enforceable commitment by the state transportation agency and all local public

AMTRAK WINS 7 GSA TRAVEL CONTRACTS

The U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) has awarded its government travel contracts to Amtrak for 7 city-pairs. Effective Feb. 1, federal employees traveling on government business must use Amtrak when traveling: New York-Albany, NY-Hartford, NY-Philadelphia, NY-Washington, Newark-Phila., Newark-Washington, and Phila.-Washington.

These awards promise increased ridership for Amtrak, and significant savings for the U.S. government. Last year, GSA only awarded Amtrak a single city-pair: Newark-Philadelphia (Mar. '87 News).

transit and transportation agencies to implement transportation control measures. S. 1894 requires programs to "limit or restrict vehicle use in downtown areas or other areas of emission concentration, particularly during periods of peak use, including road user charges, tolls, parking surcharges or other pricing mechanisms, vehicle restricted zones, vehicle restricted periods, registration conditions or other devices. . . .

"In many areas, improved public transit will be an essential part of transportation control measures . . . Programs for improved public transit include capital expenditures, operating improvements and marketing plans. This will require increased funding, or a reordering of priorities from federal, state, and local resources." (Report accompanying S. 1894, pp. 27-28); and,

- For "15 year areas" (areas more than 125% above the standard—i.e., southern California), require stringent measures to reduce reliance on single-occupant, gasoline powered vehicles.

By contrast, a new EPA plan would simply shift responsibility for clean air implementation to the states—although failure of a state approach in the 1950's precipitated federal enactment of the Clean Air Act of 1970!

EPA's "new" plan has received harsh criticism from officials in areas with the most pollution and from the National Clean Air Coalition (NCAC). Steven Howards, Executive Director of Denver Metropolitan Air Quality Council remarked, "This lets everyone off the hook. It tells cities if you wait long enough the federal government will back off."

NCAC said EPA's plan is "passive, flawed and lacks an aggressive federal component."

What You Can Do

NARP members should urge their senators to support S. 1894, emphasizing the importance of shifting federal transportation policy away from its current auto dominance. Urge your representative to join the 191 co-sponsors of the "Vento-Green" letter (by Reps. Bruce F. Vento, D-MN, and Bill Green, R-NY) calling for comprehensive action on a stronger Clean Air Act. ■

2020 PROCESS UPDATE

At the Jan. 12 meeting of the Transportation Research Board's Committee on Intercity Rail Passenger Systems, NARP Transp. Associate Harriet Parcels moderated a panel discussion about the tenuous relationship between the "2020 process" (June '87 NARP News) and intercity rail passenger service. Committee members are supportive of such service, and the panel was useful in informing them about the process and the fact that Amtrak seems to be the forgotten child in the process—even though, as Highway Users Federation President Lester Lamm has noted on more than one occasion, rail-related interests did the best job of providing testimony to the early 2020 forums.

Here are more dates of forums where state DOT officials and others will hear testimony on the nation's future transportation needs. To testify, contact your state DOT: *February*: 25—Des Moines, IA; 29—Eau Claire, WI; *March*: 1—Boston, MA; 7—Ashland, WI; 14—Madison, WI; 17—Salt Lake City, UT; 24—Baton Rouge, LA, and Lansing, MI; 25—Washington, DC; 31?—Richmond, VA; *April*: 6—Little Rock, AR, and Atlanta, GA; 19—Frankfort, KY. ■

Presidential Hopefuls on Amtrak, Transit

Simon Addresses NARP Board

Virtually all of the presidential candidates look better to us on our favorite issues than does Pres. Reagan; Pat Robertson apparently is the only one who has specifically attacked Amtrak.

Sen. Paul Simon (D-IL) accepted an invitation from the Illinois Association of Railroad Passengers and NARP to address the NARP Board at its October meeting in Chicago.

Simon told the Board, "I thank you for what you're doing. I happen to be a believer not only in [rail] passenger service, but in freight service. In my old [U.S. House] district down in deep southern Illinois, I've been fighting to maintain the railroad lines down there.



"I've been a consistent supporter of Amtrak. . . . And I also believe that the world's Number 1 economic power, which we still are, should not have declining railroad service—and yet that's where we are. And that simply isn't in the long-run best interest of our economy; potentially even in the defense area it doesn't make sense. We simply have to make a greater priority out of passenger service. . . . We ought to make sure that we maintain good railroad beds. We ought to make sure that we maintain good passenger service—and improve it.

"If Japan can do it, if other countries can do it, we can do it in the United States of America. It is simply a question of whether we ought to make it more of a priority, and I think we clearly ought to be doing that.

". . . I was able to get a sign out here for Amtrak on [Interstate 90/94]. But beyond the sign on the Interstate highway, I think we face some very fundamental questions about where we're going in the area of transportation. And it seems to me a diversified kind of opportunity for transportation is in the national interest. For example, I have a friend who. . . just cannot fly in planes. . . the fear is so great. Do we say to her, 'You have only one option, and that is the automobile.'? I think we ought to maintain other options in this country for people for transportation. That's my basic message. That's where I've been all of my legislative years, and that's where I will be at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue!"

Jesse Jackson has urged transit funding be increased.

Bruce Babbitt's energy "issue brief" says, in part: "The Germans, French, and Japanese use about half the energy per capita that Americans do—yet we're falling behind those nations in economic competitiveness. . . . Huge improvements in energy efficiency can be achieved in the transportation sector, which accounts for two-thirds of our liquid fuel consumption. . . . Public transit systems are the most energy efficient mode of transportation. We should increase the funds available through the Urban Mass Transit Act by devoting more of the gasoline tax revenues to the fund. . . . Railroads are a very effective use of energy and land. The Northeast Corridor has proven that high-speed reliable rail service is an economical and efficient way to move people. We need to promote the development of high-speed rail systems along the lines of the French TGV and Japanese bullet trains."

From Babbitt's article in the November 1987 Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees Journal: "I

believe that we should. . . promote a more balanced transportation system, with greater emphasis on intercity, commuter, and freight rail systems." He noted Amtrak's recent record passenger-mileage levels, observed that "the success of light rail in San Diego and Portland should encourage other cities to develop similar systems," and said "rail systems are an extremely effective way to transport freight. . . . Upgrading track lines would allow freight trains to speed up, and encourage greater use of rail transport by industry."

In April, 1980, NARP gave its "George Falcon Golden Spike Award" to Babbitt in recognition of his "successful work [as governor] in securing emergency commuter rail service [Phoenix-Tempe-Mesa] when key [highway] bridges were knocked out by floods." (See NARP News, Feb. and Mar., 1980.) Babbitt met briefly with NARP Exec. Dir. Ross Capon at a Nov. 1987 dinner in Washington and expressed interest in establishing Arizona commuter trains on a permanent basis.

How they voted. On all 5 key 1985-86 Amtrak-related House votes, Richard Gephardt supported NARP's position; Jack Kemp voted with us only once. On Apr. 23, 1987, Gephardt voted against—and Kemp did not vote on—Rep. Richard Armey's (R-TX) unsuccessful effort to restore funds for the anti-Amtrak "Dole Commission" (Mar., '87 NARP News). Albert Gore Jr., Gary Hart, and Simon supported—and Robert Dole opposed—Amtrak on all 3 key 1985 Senate roll calls. (All 5 men voted for the Amtrak authorization in 1979.)

Robert Dole's anti-Amtrak votes don't necessarily mean George Bush would be better for balanced transport, since Dole in 1985 was Senate Republican leader from a state with little Amtrak service while a Republican president was attaching high priority to killing Amtrak.

(See also our June and Dec., 1987, reports on candidates' views and actions.)

CANDIDATES' AMTRAK VOTES IN CONGRESS

U.S. SENATE	A	B	C
Dole (R-KS)			
Gore (D-TN)	●	●	●
Hart (D-CO)	●	●	●
Simon (D-IL)	●	●	●

U.S. HOUSE	D	E	F	G	H
Gephardt (D-MO)	●	●	●	●	●
Kemp (R-NY)			●		

● indicates pro-Amtrak vote
 a blank indicates anti-Amtrak vote

A 5/9/85 Specter Amendment (Oct. '85 News)
B 10/23/85 Armstrong Amendment (Oct. '85 News)
C 10/23/85 Kassebaum Amendment (Oct. '85 News)
D 9/11/85 Richardson Amendment (Aug. '85 News)
E 9/19/85 Amtrak Reauthztn. (Aug. '85 News)
F 7/30/86 Armey 1st Amendment (Aug. '86 News)
G 7/30/86 Brown Amendment (Aug. '86 News)
H 7/30/86 Armey 2nd Amendment (Aug. '86 News)