



from the
**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF RAILROAD PASSENGERS**

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John R. Martin, Pres.; Eugene Skoropowski, V. Pres.; Robert Glover, Sec.; Joseph Horning, Jr., Treas.; Ross Capon, Exec. Dir.; Scott Leonard, Asst. Dir.; Jane Colgrove, Membership Dir.; Harriet Parcels, Transp. Assoc.

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(This has news through June 5. No. 4 was mailed April 23.)

RETURN REQUESTED

New Priorities Campaign Unveiled!

NARP HONORS SEN. SIMON



Sen. Paul Simon (D-IL) was honored at the NARP annual Washington reception, April 19. Above, NARP Pres. John R. Martin (left) presents NARP's George Falcon Golden Spike Award to Simon. In the background (from left) are Ronald P. Boardman Jr., Ken L. Bird, Pierre Loomis and Howard J. Baitcher (all NARP board members from Illinois, except Bird, who just left the board and is president of Illinois ARP).

The award recognizes Simon as "a strong advocate for balanced transportation for many years and one of the first leaders to endorse use of some federal gasoline tax funds for Amtrak. Sen. Simon recently played a leading role in helping to preserve Chicago-St. Louis Amtrak and freight operations and is a strong supporter of federal aid to local rail freight service. He has worked to bring the nation's rail needs to the attention of Secretary Skinner. As rail's environmental and energy efficiency advantages become more important, more citizens will realize how fortunate we are to have leaders with Sen. Simon's knowledge and foresight."

Simon told the well-attended reception, "I am grateful to you—and there also ought to be 250 million Americans who are grateful to you for the work NARP does in promoting balanced transportation in this country."

The NARP annual reception was held at the Columbus Club in Washington Union Station. Those attending included Federal Railroad Administrator Gil Carmichael, his predecessor, John H. Riley, and Urban Mass Transportation Administrator Brian W. Clymer.

27 Organizations Endorse "New Transportation Vision"

In Our Future: A Transit Pass or a Gas Mask?

"Americans don't have a love affair with their cars; what they love is mobility. U.S. transportation policy neglects clean, energy-efficient alternatives to driving alone and jeopardizes not only our mobility but the health of our environment, economy of our cities, and U.S. energy security."

—NARP Transportation Associate Harriet Parcels, at "New Transportation Priorities" news conference

At a news conference in front of the U.S. Capitol, accompanied by Reps. Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) and Claudine Schneider (R-RI), an alternative national transportation policy was unveiled by representatives from some of the 27 environmental, labor and transit advocacy groups who have endorsed it to date.



NARP's Harriet Parcels dons gas mask after remarking: "If we make the right investments, more Americans will be pulling out a transit pass, not a gas mask." Rep. Schneider looks on.

The "new transportation vision" calls on the federal government to:

- give priority to investment in clean, energy-efficient intercity passenger rail, mass transit, bicycling, and ridesharing;
- eliminate biases in federal tax law that favor less energy-efficient forms of transportation; and
- require better integration of land-use and transportation planning.

(This "vision" is outlined in a special flier available free in quantities up to 5

(continued on page 4)

Clean Air Bills Go to Conference

The House passed its Clean Air bill 401-21 on May 23. The Senate and House bills (S. 1630 and H.R. 3030) are very different; each has important strengths and weaknesses.

The House-Senate conference is expected to be long and difficult—starting in mid-June and perhaps continuing even after Congress's Aug. 6-Sep. 4 recess.

Please urge your legislators to press for inclusion in the conference report of the Senate's "funding flexibility" provisions (our April lead story) and, in general, for both bills' strongest pro-environment aspects. Emphasize that, because traffic growth is undermining the benefits of cleaner cars, incentives to reduce driving are just as important as efforts to get still cleaner cars. (If you want to keep your letter simple, you might limit your comments to the first bullet below.)

Write promptly. Our issues are fairly low-profile and could be resolved early and unfavorably unless we show our interest.

- We strongly support the Senate provision allowing a governor to transfer funds from highway projects to clean transportation projects in "non-attainment" areas (areas violating federal air quality standards); this is not in the House bill.
- Only S. 1630 requires major employers in severe non-attainment areas to increase transit use and ridesharing by

VICTORIES IN CALIFORNIA!

California voters approved both rail referenda on their June 5 ballot (July '89 News). 56% of those voting approved "Prop 108," the \$1 billion legislative rail bond issue. 53% approved Prop 116 with \$1.99 billion. 52% approved Prop 111, the constitutional amendment/gasoline tax increase, 1/3 of whose revenues could go to mass transit if communities choose. More details soon.

employees; employees per vehicle must rise 25% above the affected area's baseline. (This is modeled on effective California programs which are saving money for both employees and employers.)

● For many reasons, we prefer the Senate language requiring that transportation plans and projects conform to state air quality implementation plans (SIPs) and requirements. One key reason: under H.R. 3030, EPA must get concurrence from the Secretary of Transportation before issuing regulations that would determine how transportation plans are reviewed for their air-quality impact. Given DOT's past record on clean air issues, we fear DOT would use the power H.R. 3030 gives it to undermine effective implementation of the reforms enacted by the legislation.

● We prefer the House language requiring the federal government to impose an effective air quality implementation plan when a state fails to do the job.

Both H.R. 3030 and S. 1630 may increase big-city transit bus costs by imposing tight particulate emission standards on new and rebuilt buses. To meet the standards, S. 1630 mandates alternatively fueled vehicles while H.R. 3030 allows "clean diesel" technology which transit operators favor because of presumed lower costs but which environmentalists oppose; they believe switching to clean alternative fuels such as natural gas or alcohol will achieve cleaner buses in the long term. S. 1630 also has tighter deadlines—the phase-in begins in 1992 vs. 1994 in H.R. 3030. ■

NEW REPORT SUPPORTS WEIGHT-DISTANCE TAX
NARP, in conjunction with Friends of the Earth, National Taxpayers Union, and the Sierra Club, has published *Big Trucks Getting a Free Ride: Enact a National Weight-Distance Tax And Say "No" to Bigger Trucks!* This 8-page report, researched and written by NARP's Harriet Parcels is available \$4 postpaid to NARP members (\$5 to others); \$3.20 for 20-99 copies; \$2.40 for 100+.

TRAVELERS' ADVISORY

USA's first intercity passenger trains *inside* an airport! 3 daily Atlantic City-Philadelphia round-trips were extended from 30th St. to Philadelphia International Airport June 1. Amtrak and Midway Airlines will jointly market the trains (see April Advisory). Checked baggage handled at airport and Atlantic City for Midway-Amtrak interline passengers only. Send NARP an s.a.s.e. for copy of flier showing airport times.

Daytime New York-Charlotte "Carolinian" resumed operation May 12 (see April Advisory), so Amtrak again serves Durham, Burlington, and Kannapolis; gives other points a better choice of departure times; and links Raleigh-Greensboro-Charlotte. Reservations required, dinette car available. Connections possible to/from "Carolinian" points southwest of Rocky Mount and "Palmetto" points south of Rocky Mount, i.e., Greensboro-Charleston, etc. Send NARP an s.a.s.e. for Amtrak's "Carolinian" timetable.

"Capitol" and "Broadway" reroutes (Dec. News) unlikely this summer. Amtrak and Conrail are still negotiating; track and station work had not commenced as of June 1.

Amtrak consolidated 2 of its 3 Chicago city ticket offices May 15. The new office is in Illinois Center at Michigan Ave. & Wacker Dr., replacing the old Michigan Ave. and Palmer House offices. The Loop Transportation Center ticket office on La Salle St. remains open.

Greyhound/Amtrak Thruway bus service was restored May 1 for Omaha-Kansas City, Omaha-Des Moines, Grand Forks-Winnipeg, St. Paul-Duluth, New Orleans-Baton Rouge. The Chicago-Madison bus was restored May 24.

On June 1, Santa Barbara trains began stopping at Burbank Airport.

Orange County (CA) Transportation Commission commuter service San Juan Capistrano-Los Angeles began April 30, operated by Amtrak. Send NARP an s.a.s.e. for "San Diegan" timetable with commuter train. The single weekday round trip also serves Santa Ana, Anaheim, Fullerton and—as of June 1—Irvine. (Some Amtrak trains also serve Irvine, whose new terminal was dedicated May 16.) Connecting City of Los Angeles shuttle bus service downtown available for 25 cents. Commuter-train tickets honored on Amtrak trains with payment of small surcharge.

Connecticut DOT commuter rail, "Shore Line East," began May 29. Weekday mornings 5 trips Old Saybrook-Westbrook-Clinton-Madison-Guilford-Branford-New Haven, reverse evenings. Operated by Amtrak.

SEPTA extended its R5 commuter line 12 miles from Downingtown to Coatesville and Parkesburg, PA April 2. Those communities already have Harrisburg-line Amtrak service.

Amtrak, Transit, and the ADA

The House passed its Americans with Disabilities (ADA) bill 403-20 on May 22; the Senate passed its version 76-8 last Sep. 7. The House-Senate conference is not expected to take long, given strong White House support for ADA and the high degree of consistency between the 2 versions.

Both would increase Amtrak and transit costs by "making the sixth of the population thought to suffer from physical or mental disabilities full-fledged beneficiaries of the basic Civil Rights Act of 1964," (*Washington Post* May 24 editorial).

Conferees are expected to accept H.R. 2273's Amtrak and transit provisions. The Amtrak provisions reflect Energy & Commerce Chairman John D. Dingell's (D-MI) work to craft provisions acceptable to the handicapped community but which limit cost increases of and thus threats to Amtrak service.

Rolling Stock

Under the "Dingell provisions," new bilevel lounges' lower levels must be wheelchair-accessible and accessible sit-down food service must be available in them, but new bilevel diners need not be accessible. New bathroom-less single-level diners need not have accessible bathrooms. Within 10 years, half (rather than all) coaches on single-level trains must be accessible, but each accessible coach must have 2 accessible seats plus 2 spaces for those in wheelchairs. (Within 5 years, single-level trains must have half as many accessible seats as there are coaches; i.e., one coach with 2 accessible seats and 2 wheelchair spaces out of every 4 coaches.)

As for transit, both bills require that, starting with orders placed 30 days after enactment, all new transit vehicles must be wheelchair-accessible—even small buses in rural fixed-route service.

No retrofits of existing vehicles would be mandated except as needed on commuter rail lines to comply with the requirement that one car per train be accessible within 5 years. (To accommodate light rail systems with older cars, H.R. 2273 would exempt "single-car trains" from this requirement.)

The House defeated 290-110 an amendment William O. Lipinski (D-IL) introduced at the behest of Metra, which runs Illinois's commuter railroads, that would have modified the requirement that all new commuter rail cars be accessible. Making a Metra double-deck car accessible costs 12 seats. Thus, Metra—which must replace 400 of its 686 bilevel cars in the next 10 years—would need to buy 12 new cars to replace 11 existing ones if Metra's current policy of providing restrooms in each car continues.

Stations

Under both bills, key transit stations (to be defined by federal regulations) must be accessible within 3 years, but—where unreasonable costs would result—the Secretary of Transportation could grant significant extensions.

All Amtrak stations must be accessible within 20 years. Also, starting 30 days after enactment, new transit and Amtrak stations and portions of older stations to be rehabilitated must be accessible. These provisions, if unchanged, might force closure of some lightly-used stations.

Paratransit

Besides aiming at full accessibility of regular transit, the bill also requires door-to-door paratransit service for those who cannot use even a fully "accessible" system. To avoid requir-

THE OTHER SIDE OF ACCESSIBILITY

ADA's pro-transit critics worry that, without federal funding of ADA-related costs, ADA will reduce service (or limit its expansion) for the neediest current riders: people who are transit-dependent due to disabilities but who are able to use existing "non-accessible" trains and buses.

Such people have already suffered where completed facilities remained closed due to ADA-type fights. Trains ran non-stop through Washington Metro's Gallery Place station for 9 months after it was completed.

MBTA's South Attleboro commuter rail station, completed in Jan. 1989, remains closed due to a fight over whether state law requires construction of a 30' or a 90' full-station-length high-level platform (costs: \$100,000 or \$1.2 million). In Feb. 1990, a Massachusetts Superior Court judge ruled in favor of MBTA and 30'; after further negotiations with the state's Architectural Access Board, however, MBTA agreed to build a 45' platform and hopes to open the station by the end of July.

ing costly long-distance paratransit, the House bill exempts commuter rail and express bus services from this "parallel service" requirement. And both bills give DOT the authority to waive the parallel service requirement wherever it would "impose an undue financial burden."

It is unclear whether, after Metra trains become fully accessible, Metra would continue the door-to-door paratransit service Metra now provides voluntarily at an annual cost of \$2.5 million for trips roughly parallel to Metra lines.

The Feds Should Pay

Secretary Skinner says that locally-funded transportation projects are likely to be more cost-effective because the same people who choose projects must figure out how to fund them. By the same token, it is too bad that Congress and the White House, ignoring early protestations from Chairman Dingell and Rep. Thomas A. Luken (D-OH), do not agree that, since ADA will be a federal law, the federal government should pay ADA's transit and Amtrak costs, and not by taking money from other transit and Amtrak projects. ■

The 5-Year Plan Every State Should Write!

Caltrans (California DOT) has released its annual Rail Passenger Development Five-Year Plan (1990-95). Among the recommendations for service improvements in this edition of the plan were:

- "San Joaquin" feeder bus extension to Lancaster and Palmdale (began April 1)
- Second Santa Barbara "San Diegan" later in 1990
- 9th and 10th "San Diegan" by 1995
- 4th "San Joaquin" (with through service to Sacramento)
- Baggage service on "San Joaquins"
- Future feeder bus service Stockton-Lake Tahoe
- Second looks at Los Angeles-Bakersfield train service and overnight service between the Bay Area and San Diego.

For a copy of the Plan, write: Department of Rail Planning, Division of Mass Transportation, California Department of Transportation, P.O. Box 942874, Sacramento, CA 94274-0001. ■

NEW PRIORITIES (continued from page 1)

per person. Send NARP an s.a.s.e.; 45 cents postage if you are requesting more than 2 fliers. Please let us know if you are interested in purchasing fliers in quantity.)

At the May 23 news conference, Rep. Pelosi announced introduction of "the parking-transit equalization act," which she said "would require employers who provide parking subsidies to their employees to provide the same level of subsidy to those who choose not to drive. This requirement would apply in areas which do not comply with clean air act standards."



Rep. Pelosi addresses news conference.

Rep. Schneider said, "Congestion, gridlock, pollution, health-threatening contaminants, and spiraling repair costs are all symptoms of a transport infrastructure system gone haywire. It is time to articulate a broad new transportation policy that will improve safety and protect the environment. Investment in mass transit, intercity passenger rail, ride-sharing, bicycle and pedestrian facilities must be

given a new priority." She is author of H.R. 1078, "The Global Warming Prevention Act of 1989."

Other speakers included Brent Blackwelder, Vice President—Policy, Friends of the Earth; Art Luby of the Transport Workers Union; Andy Clarke of the Bicycle Federation of America; Sara Nichols, Staff Attorney, Clean Air

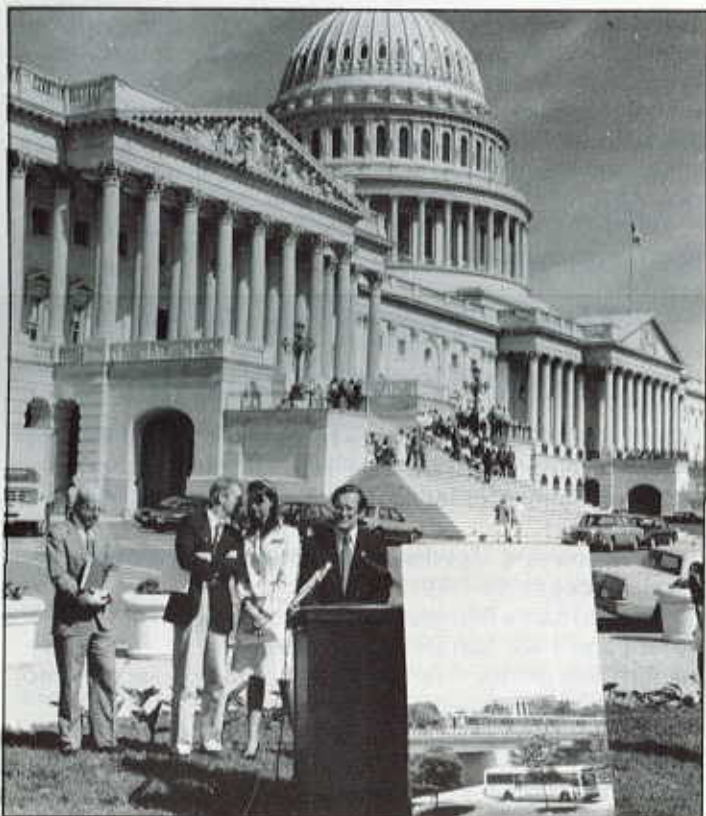


NARP's Harriet Parcells answers individual reporters' questions after the conference.

Coalition (Philadelphia); and NARP's Ross Capon.

The first question from a reporter was: "How much will this cost?" In responding, Parcells, Blackwelder, and Capon emphasized the heavy costs of the nation's current priorities.

NARP Member Michael Gessel, a longtime Capitol Hill staffer who attended the conference, said that seeing NARP take the initiative in putting together the Campaign and its kick-off news conference made him feel "proud to be a NARP member." ■



Brent Blackwelder of Friends of the Earth addresses conference, standing next to photo of a Washington Metrorail train and Metrobus, with U.S. Capitol in background.

ORGANIZATIONS SUPPORTING THE CAMPAIGN FOR NEW TRANSPORTATION PRIORITIES

- Amalgamated Transit Union
- Bicycle Federation of America
- California Transit League
- Center for Auto Safety
- Chicagoland Bicycle Federation
- Citizens Advisory Committee to the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (New York City)
- Citizens for Balanced Transportation (Denver)
- Citizens for Better Transit (Portland, OR)
- Clean Air Council (Philadelphia)
- Community & Environmental Transportation Coalition (Seattle)
- Community Transportation Association of America
- Environmental Action
- Friends of the Earth
- Institute for Transportation & Development Policy
- League of American Wheelmen
- National Association of Railroad Passengers
- National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA
- Natural Resources Defense Council
- Pedestrian Federation of America
- Peninsula Rail 2000 (Palo Alto, CA)
- Peoples Transit Organization (Monticello, FL)
- Rails-to-Trails Conservancy
- Scenic America
- Sierra Club
- Transportation Alternatives (New York City)
- Transport Workers Union
- Union of Concerned Scientists