



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RAILROAD PASSENGERS

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RPI's High-Speed Rail Conference

Ohio: First Steps Towards 403B!

Under Gov. Richard F. Celeste (D), Ohio DOT has, for the first time ever, written to Amtrak seeking information about a possible expansion of rail passenger service to be jointly funded by Amtrak and the state.

A Sep. 19 letter from Ohio DOT Director Warren J. Smith to Allan F. Edelston, Amtrak's Director—State & Local Services, states in part: "The choice of a Pittsburgh to Cleveland service as the first route to obtain Amtrak's 403(b) service is strongly advocated by [State] Senator Robert Boggs and the Ohio Association of Rail Passengers (OARP) because it would be an extension of existing service. Other Ohio studies have shown especially high ridership potential on the Cleveland-Columbus-Cincinnati corridor.

"However, at this time we request that Amtrak make the necessary patronage/operating expense studies to determine the feasibility of an extension of the [daylight NY-Pittsburgh] Pennsylvanian from Pittsburgh to Cleveland."

OARP has been working hard on getting 403(b) service ever since the Jan. 21 release of OARP's blueprint for statewide improved service (Mar. News). Three OARP officials were included in an Aug. 10 workshop in Columbus along with representatives of Ohio and Pennsylvania DOTs, Amtrak, Chessie, Conrail, and the Ohio Railroad Association, and Sen. Boggs.

But, as noted in OARP's Sep. newsletter, OARP "has been advised by Ohio DOT officials that if the Tax Repeal Amendment passes on Nov. 8th, it appears THERE WILL BE NO MONEY FOR PASSENGER RAIL DEVELOPMENT AT ALL!" ■

BECOME A NARP BOARD MEMBER!

Any NARP member who wishes to be listed in NARP News as a candidate for election to the 1984-85 NARP Board of Directors should notify our office by Nov. 21. Directors will be elected at meetings held in each of our 12 regions (or, in some cases, by mail ballot in advance). Most meetings will be in February or March, and all will be listed here in advance.

TRAVELERS' ADVISORY

Eff. Oct. 30, Amtrak plans to eliminate ticket agents at Cut Bank, MT; Effingham, IL; Elyria, OH; Hamlet, NC; Kissimmee, FL; "Tri-State" (for Ashland, KY); and Winslow, AZ. Agent hours will be reduced to five days/week with checked baggage and package express service eliminated at Dodge City, KS; Hastings, NE; and Southern Pines, NC. Ottumwa, IA, where Amtrak has never offered checked baggage service, will also drop to five days/week agent service. Deland, FL, will have an agent on duty seven days/

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"It is no exaggeration to say that we have the capability to [bring] a new multi-billion-dollar high-speed rail passenger industry to life in this country. It is no exaggeration to say that the overwhelming preponderance of the effort must be made by private enterprise with private venture capital, although I surely do not mean to spurn any research and development assistance that Congress may provide. And, it is no exaggeration to say as well that it will be a difficult undertaking. Yet I know that the most powerful instrumentality in our nation's economy—and, indeed, in the entire world—is the drive of the American entrepreneur WHO IS DETERMINED TO SUCCEED."

—RPI Chairman William S. Hansen, opening the conference

"To prevent tyranny, we've invented a god called inefficiency. Checks and balances are fine when you have no competition. Now we face a resurgent Europe, a revitalized Japan, and a hungry USSR. We need to rebuild the bedrock of our transportation system." The U.S. has done the least work on this so far, because of "interest groups pitted against each other," but there's going to be "more than enough" demand for all services. . . .

"Great nations don't stay great." They suffer from lack of vision and courage, and the fear of making mistakes. It's "not good to be first, because you might be wrong. So we construct mathematical models and say, 'if you've got it on a video screen and can connect it to a computer, then it must be true.' And we do cost-benefit analysis. . . .

"But costs of new systems always exceed the residue of the old system." In their infancy, we could not show a favorable cost-benefit analysis of the telephone, airplane, automobile, truck.

"Projections and estimates are always based on what was, but loadings for a coherent system will be beyond your imagination. If you wait for the economic benefit arguments on high-speed rail, you'll never begin. Railroads have been the basis of the power of nations. If we fail to rise above jealousy and localism, we'll go the way of the Romans, or Brazil—which has been 'the country of the future' for the last 50 years."

—Gerald A. Faverman, Ph.D., addressing the RPI conference

On Sep. 22, the Railway Progress Institute, "THE national association of the suppliers of everything that is required to establish and operate railroads and rail rapid transit systems," presented "the first national conference to be held in the United States on . . . high-speed rail."

[Earlier this year, RPI began work on establishing a high-speed rail data bank as a new service to its member companies and to reporters and editors covering the field. RPI said in Sep. that this data bank "will be the only national source for full information

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week; baggage/express will be handled on northbound trains only. Texarkana, AR, and Longview and Temple, TX, will have reduced hours but baggage/express will be maintained since the agent will be on duty at all train times. Waterbury, VT, will be open seven days/week for the "winter" timetable; Montpelier Jct., VT, for "summer," with the changeovers coinciding with the start and finish of daylight savings time.

The above information supercedes contrary indications in Amtrak's Oct. 30 timetable. Also, timetable notwithstanding, limited weekday station hours (ticket sales only) are available at Thompson, Helper, and Provo, UT; Galesburg, IL—S. Seminary St. (ticket sales only) and Lima, OH, and Sanford, FL (all services) are open at all train times, except for train 81 at Sanford.

This month, NARP will do a major mailing of membership info to prospective new members. Since there's no cost-effective way to remove current members' names from the lists we're using, please forgive us if you receive invitation(s) to join—please pass them on to a friend; do NOT use them to renew.

in orderly and comprehensive form," and will include detailed information "about high-speed rail proposals and projects as well as sponsoring organizations and contractors in the United States. . . . Detailed responses to inquiries will be available beginning Jan. 3, 1984."

Speakers at the Sep. 22 conference included two U.S. Senators, one House member, and Secretary Dole's Special Assistant for Rail Matters—expected soon to be Federal Railroad Administrator—John Riley. As enumerated by RPI Chairman William S. Hansen, who is president of S. Stucki Company, Pittsburgh, the 204 registered attendees included "representatives of domestic and foreign manufacturers of locomotives, cars, and components; designers and installers of signaling and control systems, and people from contracting and consulting firms."

Sen. David Durenberger (R-MN), obviously impressed by the

turnout, noted in his luncheon address that RPI couldn't have gotten 20 people together for such a conference four or five years ago. And his former assistant, John Riley, recalled a Capitol Hill breakfast he had organized after the first "feelers" came in from Japan 3½ years ago; only one congressman and three staffers showed up, even though the meal was free!

"The most exciting thing at lunch was recognizing how far this idea has come," said Riley. "Credibility—a lot of it has been achieved; there's a lot more to be achieved. . . . I don't believe that the ultimate outcome is in doubt. . . . I believe you are on the right track; we're all on the right track. . . . I am convinced that one of these [high-speed rail projects] is going to break ground during my tenure. I think our children will see them as commonplace. . . . In the long run, airlines may be backers and perhaps the owners of high-speed rail projects. They need short-haul feeders" and are losing money on much of their own short-haul business.

"We will do everything we can to help you" including serving as an information clearinghouse and "helping legitimate American ventures make the overseas contacts they need. . . . Next year we hope to host delegations from Japan and France. . . . We all have a big stake in the success of the first project; that will either open the door for all of us or close that door for a long time. . . ."

A common view among most speakers was the nonavailability and even the undesirability of public funding. Durenberger noted that the U.S. is currently \$3 trillion deficient in infrastructure maintenance (largely highways and urban rail transit)—not counting water treatment where the deficiency may be another \$3 trillion. He said government can't maintain its big transportation infrastructure because "you can't see maintenance" and politicians like ribbon cuttings—"good photo ops"—associated with the openings of new buildings and freeways but not with maintenance work.

Consequently, he admonished the rail group, "Don't let us into the [rail] infrastructure game."

For many observers, however, the question remains: will any high-speed rail infrastructure be built if federal transportation funds remain unavailable for such projects while continuing to be used primarily to bribe state and local governments to build still more freeways instead of the rail transit that most feel is essential to feed successful high-speed rail lines? Every new urban freeway and the auto-dependent development it spawns reduces the market potential for all passenger trains.

There were some cracks in the conference's "anti-public spending" theme. The opening speaker, Gerald Faverman, president of Public Sector Consultants, Inc., in East Lansing, saw relatively little significance in the public/private funding distinction. He told this writer he expects public funds to be involved to some degree in all projects, with the public share varying inversely to the relative economic viability of the specific project.

In response to questions, both Sen. Roger Jepsen (R-IA), chairman of the Joint Economic Committee (JEC), and Rep. Dan Glickman (D-KS), chairman of the Science & Technology Subcommittee on Transportation, Aviation & Materials, indicated some flexibility. We suspect Sen. Durenberger would have also if scheduling had permitted him to take questions.

Under its previous chairman, former Rep. Henry Reuss (D-WI), the JEC issued a report endorsing development of high-speed rail. Jepsen cited some of the findings, including the "up to 150,000 new jobs" that high-speed rail could create directly and indirectly. (The Nov. '81 report, *Case studies in private-public cooperation to revitalize America: Passenger Rail*, is available from Joint Economic Committee, Attn.: Publications, G-01 Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, DC 20510.)

In response to this writer's question about federal funding, Jepsen said he saw the possibility of federal "seed money." He said there is a national responsibility to move the projects along; "I'm not ruling [federal funding] out; I just don't want to say, 'relax, folks, the federal government will take care of it.'"

In response to an eloquent statement by John Hirten, a Washington consultant, about the need for intermodal equity in federal transportation funding, Jepsen said, "I don't disagree

with anything you said."

He also said, "We'll do whatever it takes," but emphasized that "you have to have a consensus" in Congress before action occurs, and it's "hard to get Congress to focus on long-range planning, even in the three-to-five-year range when members are concerned about the next election." Getting a consensus will "take a little education beforehand. . . . Tell your story, tell it often. I'll help."

Glickman noted the huge demands on the federal budget for highway maintenance, and the \$10 billion to be spent over the next ten years updating the airway control system. One thing the federal government can do about high-speed rail is significantly increase research and development: "We have national laboratories you wouldn't believe, some of them doing work not that important."

As for more substantial federal funding of high-speed rail, he noted, "unfortunately, there's no funding base. In aviation and highways, the theory is that the user pays . . . even though it's kind of a Mickey Mouse system of funding." [Ed.: NARP heartily concurs with the reference to the mouse—the earmarking of road and air users' funds for building more road and air facilities encourages the permanent, overwhelming dominance of those modes.]

Finally, Glickman noted that "you're going to have a revolu-

MOBILE STAYS ON TRACK!

In mid-Oct., Louisiana Gov. David C. Trean (R) approved his state's share of funds for May-Sep. '84 operation of Mobile-New Orleans Amtrak service. Mississippi Gov. William F. Winter (D) has also declared his support for state funding and is working with the relevant committee of the state legislature. Alabama Gov. George Wallace had already acted favorably, and service supporters were optimistic that all three states' funding would be assured by Oct. 28.

Besides Mobile and North Carolina (see separate box), two other new 403(b) (joint state/Amtrak funding) services are considered possible in FY '84: Chicago-Grand Rapids, MI, and Washington, DC-Newport News, VA. Amtrak has already provided information to the Commonwealth of Virginia, where the issue is operation of a second train to complement present "Colonial" service. Since the second train would be primarily tourism-oriented (AM Williamsburg/Newport News arrival, PM departure), it is possible that—if Virginia acts—the service would be daily spring-through-fall and weekend-only during the winter.

tion if you try to exercise federal eminent domain" across Kansas, which suggested that assembling rights-of-way would be even more difficult in more densely populated states.

High-Speed Projects Roundup

Here is a new update on high-speed rail projects, based largely on presentations at the conference. (Our last update was in Oct. '82.)

California: John Lagomarcino, Vice-President of American High Speed Rail Corporation, said of his firm's LA-San Diego bullet train project: "This is a \$3.1 billion project." It is to cost about \$2 billion to build, with interest and inflation totalling about \$1 billion over the construction period. AHSRC does not anticipate using the tax-exempt state revenue bonds until after the project is constructed and partially in operation.

AHSRC hopes to begin construction in late '84 or early '85, partial service in '87, and full operation in '89. It will share station facilities with Amtrak at Los Angeles, San Diego, and Santa Ana. Groundbreaking took place earlier this year for the Santa Ana multimodal transportation center. AHSRC's announced Anaheim station presumably will be along Interstate 5, whose right-of-way AHSRC expects to be using through that city. Four stations remain to be announced: south Los Angeles County, south Orange County (probably Irvine), north San Diego County and north San Diego City.

Work has already begun on a full environmental review in compliance with state and federal laws. The lead reviewing agencies will be Caltrans and the Federal Highway Administra-

tion. AHSRC also will be applying for a needed permit from the California Public Utilities Commission.

Lagomarcino indicated that the master contractor will be revealed in a few weeks. Last November, AHSRC announced that the Irvine-based Fluor Corp. will "oversee" the entire project (be its "project manager").

Florida: Carl Huff, staff director to the Florida High Speed Rail Committee, thinks his state will be first in getting service into operation. He cited the state's flat terrain, good publicly-owned, wide (highway) rights-of-way, and positive attitude. He says high-speed rail is perceived in Florida as an "elite form of transportation," and said that 26% of the population is elderly people, a large portion of whom want to see trains make a comeback. Huff said visitors to the state will see the rail system as a tourist attraction and environmentalists see it as a growth management tool—Florida will have the third largest population in the U.S. by 2000.

Huff further noted that Florida is an ideal vendors' showcase, since the state is visited by 40 million domestic and foreign tourists each year—potential riders.

He said the committee has consistently opposed government involvement, actually turning down offers of state appropriations and only recently agreeing to investigate a possible FRA grant.

Huff said the franchise applicant will do the Tampa-Miami feasibility study and will post a performance bond. The request-for-(conceptual)-proposal will be in *The Wall Street Journal* "very soon." The product will be due Dec. 30 and is to include design, financing, construction, and operational information along with a statement of policy and legislative needs.

The next step will be a request-for-proposal on the franchise itself, for which mid-May '84 has been set as a tentative deadline. They hope to award the multi-year franchise by July '84. Construction "could begin" by late '85, and revenue service in '88.

Indiana: Mr. Kellogg (see Michigan) reported that new state legislation would assist high-speed rail by allowing its construction along highway rights-of-way. He noted the Midwest High-Speed Rail Compact will meet Nov. 16-18 in Indiana.

Michigan: James C. Kellogg, former head of Michigan's Dept. of Highways and Transportation who is now executive director of the Midwest High-Speed Rail Compact, said Michigan high-speed rail is in a "pre-organizational phase." The State Transportation Commission has just adopted a preferred organizational arrangement—public/private with private taking the lead in developing the system and doing preliminary work.

Kellogg indicated that studies to date suggest the optimum Detroit-Chicago service would be 12 daily round-trips at speeds up to 150 mph. He noted there are 14 million people or about 50,000 per mile along the route.

Nevada: Mike Daly, Director, Office of Economic Development, City of Las Vegas, and LA-Las Vegas maglev project director, specified that his projected system will be "super-speed," not just high-speed.

Daly recounted that Las Vegas got the first U.S. DOT grant for corridor service. This came about after they saw a federal "emerging corridors" report ranking their corridor fourth in

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the nation and raised \$150,000 locally.

The "fine report" by Bechtel and Budd was made public last Jan. It recommended a 70-minute running-time, said the project would cost \$1.865 billion, handle 3½ million people in 1991, and produce a 20% return on investment (after covering operating costs and interest) while charging \$65 ('82 dollars) for a round-trip.

They have just received a \$1.25 million FRA grant and are forming a bi-state advisory group. The next three work projects: ridership verification study; environmental assessment; economic impact analysis.

New Mexico: Gov. Toney Anaya (D) says of an Albuquerque-Santa Fe bullet train: "I'm committed to the bullet train unless it is proved to me to be economically unfeasible. I'd like to see the construction of a bullet train begin during my administration. And, at the least, I want to address the acquiring of the right-of-way for the train for the future—so that 30 years from now the state would have (the land) to build the train." (*The Albuquerque Tribune*, Sep. 24).

New Mexico Transportation Secretary Judith Espinosa emphasizes that the state will study a wide range of technical options of varying speeds, including magnetic and diesel systems. *The Tribune* reported that she "scoffed" at the suggestion "that money for a bullet train might better be spent widening Interstate 25. 'I only see that as an alternative if you assume the only way to get around is by car,' she said. 'Look at how long the current round of improvements on I-25 have taken. Putting more asphalt on the ground solves nothing. . . . I just don't think the private automobile is the wave of the future.' . . ."

Ronald C. Sheck, Director—Planning and Development Division of New Mexico DOT, told NARP that contracts for Phase I of a feasibility study are expected to be put out for bid in November. Phase I will include an overview of travel demands throughout the entire Los Alamos-Santa-Fe-Albuquerque-Las Cruces corridor, and a detailed look at rail alternatives for the Santa Fe-Albuquerque segment ranging from rail diesel cars on existing tracks to advanced high-speed technologies.

New York/Vermont: On Tuesday, July 12, the governors of New York and Vermont, and the mayor of Montreal, attended a ceremony at Rensselaer station to sign a memorandum of understanding for a feasibility study for TGV (French technology) service between Montreal-Vermont-Albany-New York City. Funding for the study is to come from the U.S. and Canadian governments—no state money.

NY-Albany speed: 165 mph. Albany-Burlington-Montreal: 185 mph. No other intermediate stops. Total trip time 3:15 (including 1:10 NY-Albany). Estimated capital cost: "\$1.5 billion, and private investors will be sought." (*NY Times*, July 17).

AMTRAK SEES SUCCESS IN NORTH CAROLINA

Amtrak, in a refreshing switch from countless pessimistic projections, has told North Carolina that a Richmond-Raleigh-Durham-Greensboro-Charlotte section of the daylight NY-Savannah "Palmetto" would be a successful 403(b) train.

Amtrak's Aug. 8 report estimated the "incremental" passenger-miles/trainmile at 174.5, and total passenger-miles for the first year at 43,186,000. Cost to the state would be between \$702,000 and \$952,000.

New station stops would be Durham and Burlington. Greensboro, High Point, Salisbury, and Charlotte would gain direct access to Richmond, plus daylight service to/from Northeast Corridor points (complementing service via Charlottesville provided by the "Crescent," which serves the named NC points between 12:30 and 3:00 AM).

Pennsylvania: State Rep. Rick Geist (R-Altoona), chairman of both the Midwest High-Speed Rail Compact and the Pennsylvania High Speed Intercity Rail Passenger Commission, reported that negotiations with Conrail and Amtrak regarding the establishment of high-speed rail between Philadelphia and Pittsburgh are "going well."

On Aug. 23, Geist had announced the beginning of work on a \$2.3 million study of high speed rail travel in Pennsylvania as a

MORE AMTRAK-ACCESSIBLE DEVELOPMENT!

On Sep. 22, Prince George's County Executive Parris N. Glendening and officials of Washington's Metro system unveiled "a proposal to build a \$113 million hotel, office, and retail complex" at the New Carrollton, MD, Metro/Amtrak station. Amtrak operations were set to commence at the station Oct. 30 (Sep. News).

result of a contract signed by the state's High Speed Rail Commission and a consulting team lead by Parsons Brinckerhoff Quade & Douglas, Inc., of Philadelphia, and Gannett Fleming Transportation Engineers, Inc., of Harrisburg.

The 18-month study will determine benefits and funding methods for a proposed 351-mile Philadelphia-Pittsburgh line with a 2:15 running time.

It's expected that the line would use existing Amtrak stations at Philadelphia (30th St.) and Harrisburg, and some existing Amtrak/Conrail rights-of-way and also serve Altoona and Johnstown; hence the negotiations to which Geist referred.

Texas: The Texas Railroad Transportation Company, based in Austin, has issued a fact sheet describing itself as "a private corporation organized by Texas businessmen to develop high-speed

EX-FRA CHIEF PROMOTING FAST TRAINS

Robert W. Blanchette, whose resignation as Federal Railroad Administrator was effective May 1, is now in private law practice and serving as chief executive officer of the TGV Company, which promotes the French high-speed rail passenger system in the U.S.

Blanchette has also been named chairman of the High Speed Rail Association (HSRA), which was formed to promote "the new mode and new industry of high speed rail passenger service; i.e. passenger trains traveling at speeds in excess of 125 mph and up to 200 or more mph."

Paul H. Reistrup, vice-president of the engineering firm of R.L. Banks and Associates, Washington, DC, and former Amtrak president, is treasurer and membership chairman of HSRA. HSRA's secretary is Robert J. Casey, executive director of the Pennsylvania High Speed Intercity Rail Passenger Commission. Casey previously held the same title with the Ohio Rail Transportation Authority (whose functions are now vested with Ohio DOT), and with NARP. Post-NARP and pre-ORTA, he worked for Amtrak's Public Affairs Department.

Back at FRA, President Reagan has nominated John H. Riley, who formerly worked for Sen. David Durenberger (R-MN), to succeed Blanchette. Confirmation hearings are expected the first week of November.

rail passenger service in the triangle formed by the cities of Houston, Dallas-Fort Worth, and San Antonio. TRTC was organized in July '82 and has been in full operation since Jan. '83."

TRTC's president is Hal B. H. Cooper, Jr., a professor of civil engineering on leave from the University of Texas at Austin, and the chairman is Paul de Rosiere "a successful Houston businessman."

TRTC estimates Dallas-Houston capital costs at \$1.5 billion; for the entire triangle, about \$4 billion. TRTC hopes to begin Dallas-Houston service in 1988. They have contracted to purchase the bankrupt Rock Island Railroad's half-interest in a Houston-Dallas right-of-way and will shortly begin negotiations with Burlington-Northern, which owns the other half-interest, "over a mutually equitable means of sharing the property."

Parsons Brinckerhoff Quade & Douglas, Inc., has virtually completed a preliminary Dallas-Houston ridership study for TRTC, and International Engineering Company, Inc., (a Morrison Knudsen Company) "has contracted to study the economic and engineering feasibility of a high-speed rail line in the RI/BN right-of-way. Also participating will be Interfield Engineering Co., URS Engineering Co. and Arthur Andersen and Co." TRTC expects the study will be completed in Feb. or Mar. '84.

As for choice of technology, a TRTC spokesman said that they "lean towards TGV, but we're not ruling out anything at this stage."