



Obama: \$53 Billion for Trains Over Six Years

\$8 billion in FY 2012, including High Speed program and Amtrak

In an inspiring departure from the pre-2009 tradition of giving passenger trains "just-enough-to-not-die," Pres. Obama's 2012 budget seeks \$8 billion, split between "network development" and "system preservation and renewal."

This is about the spending level recommended by the bipartisan National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study Commission in Jan. 2008 report.

Network development funds would go on a competitive basis to states, interstate compacts or Amtrak to improve existing routes and develop new routes of 700 miles or less.

Corridors can be "express high-speed rail (HSR)" (top speed over 125 mph), "regional HSR" (top speed 110-125 mph), or "emerging HSR" (top speed 110 or less).

The overall transportation budget has an "Up-Front" \$50 billion economic boost...to rebuild and modernize America's roads, rails, transit, and runways for the long term."

As reflected in the table on page two, this includes \$25 billion for highways and \$1 billion for transit "new starts." For intercity passenger trains, the \$50 billion includes \$3 billion for "high-speed corridor development and capacity building and transition assistance"; \$2.5 billion for ADA compliance, corridor equipment replacement, and state of good repair backlog reduction.

"Transition" means movement towards

House Cuts Amtrak

High speed rail funding and Amtrak overhauls would end; Plan to nearly wipe out Amtrak capital is defeated

On Feb. 19, the U.S. House passed a bill to fund the federal government through Sept. 30 with only \$1.413 billion for Amtrak.

An amendment by Pete Sessions (R-TX) to cut Amtrak's capital grant by \$466

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the statutory goal of states funding routes shorter than 750 miles.

New revenues must be found! Existing revenues can support a highway and transit total of just \$40 billion. ■

DOT, BNSF, State Agree on Cascades Work

More, Faster, Seattle-Portland Trains

The State of Washington, Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), Amtrak and BNSF Railway agreed on spending \$590 million in Recovery Act funds to get:

- two more daily Seattle-Portland roundtrips;
- a 10-minute reduction in travel time;
- on-time performance to rise from 62% to 88% for all Amtrak trains on the line.

Gov. Christine Gregoire (D) said, "This is another great development for our state in that this rail work will generate thousands of highly skilled construction and operating jobs and result in important improvements in rail passenger service."

Washington State DOT (WSDOT) estimates that this investment will result in "more than 6,000 direct and indirect jobs in the Pacific Northwest."

BNSF CEO Matt Rose called the deal "an important milestone in our longstanding relationship with WSDOT to fund improvements for additional and improved passenger service in the Cascades corridor."

U.S. Secretary of Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood hailed the agreement as key to "building safe, reliable and energy-efficient passenger rail corridors [that] help small businesses thrive and move people and goods more quickly than ever before."

"Thanks to the hard work, dedication and flexibility of all parties involved in the negotiations, this agreement will im-

mediately put Washingtonians to work in good paying jobs, significantly improve rail service for commuters and travelers, and preserve the world-class freight rail system America has today."

White House and DOT budget summaries at <http://1.usa.gov/whdot12> and <http://1.usa.gov/dot2012>; detail at <http://1.usa.gov/bdgt2012> (click DOT and click Appendix, then DOT).



- WSDOT on Flickr
A Cascades Talgo train, led by an Amtrak EMD locomotive, glides through Puyallup, WA, with Mount Rainier in the background.

mediately put Washingtonians to work in good paying jobs, significantly improve rail service for commuters and travelers, and preserve the world-class freight rail system America has today."

The funded work includes:

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Jeans-Gail Named NARP Vice President Kenton Named Director

NARP is pleased to announce the promotions of Sean Jeans-Gail to Vice President of the Association and Malcolm Kenton to Director of Outreach and Engagement.

Jeans-Gail, a native of Portland, Oregon, joined the NARP staff in June 2008, after working in the office of Rep. Barney Frank (D-MA). As Communications Di-



Sean Jeans-Gail

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2011 Funding Battle *from page 1*

million was defeated 176-250 on Feb. 17, with 60 Republicans voting against Sessions. (For roll call, see members-only resources at www.narprail.org)

Amtrak says the House-passed level would require furloughing up to 1,600 employees, including 400 mechanical department workers, and ending the heavy overhauls that keep Amtrak's cars and locomotives in a state of good repair. This would lead to a decline in service quality and on-time performance.

Beyond the mechanical department, layoffs of up to 1,200 employees would delay or kill plans for:

- Wi-fi on *Northeast Regionals* and other trains;
- E-ticketing and the next generation reservation and ticketing system;
- double-tracking the Carlsbad, CA, segment of the *Pacific Surfliner* route.

The House bill has no funds for High-Speed and Intercity Passenger Rail capital grants for states or for the Federal Transit Administration's "New Starts" program.

A budget plan advanced by Senate

FISCAL 2011 AND 2012 TRANSPORTATION SPENDING DETAIL

<i>Figures are Appropriations in millions of dollars</i>	2010 Enacted	2011 Amtrak Request	2011 House CR ¹	2011 Hse CR vs. 2010	2012 Amtrak Request	2012 Obama Request
Operations	563	592	563	0	616	659 ²
General Capital incl. Fleet	594	1,471	586	-8	1,150	2,278
ADA Compliance	144	281			175	1,184
Debt Service	264	305	264	0	271	280
Capital & Debt Service Total	1,002	2,057	850	-152	1,556	3,742 ³
AMTRAK SUBTOTAL	1,565	2,649	1,413	-152	2,212	4,401
High-Speed & Intercity Rail	2,500		0	-2,500		3,645 ⁴
PASSENGER RAIL TOTAL	4,066		1,413	-2,653		8,046
Federal Highway ⁵	41,376		42,789			70,414
Federal Transit	12,143		10,731	-1,412		22,351
Federal Aviation	15,992		15,992			15,307

1) Continuing resolution the House passed Feb. 19 for the rest of the fiscal 2011.

2) Includes \$200 million for "capacity building & transition assistance to states"—to move towards statutory goal of states funding corridors under 750 miles

3) Composed of \$1.52 bil public asset backlog retirement; \$445m national network service; \$150m state of good repair & recapitalization; \$155m U.S. rail equipment development.

4) includes \$240m for station development, \$90m for U.S. rail equipment development and \$178m for capacity building & transition assistance.

5) Obligation limitations

Democrats would keep Amtrak at the 2010 level (see table), avoiding furloughs. The Senate rejected both this and the House-passed plans on March 9.

A two-week continuing resolution (CR) through March 18 was enacted, but pro-rail pressure for a decent full-year number remains critical. ■

JOIN US IN WASHINGTON

NARP will take our message to Capitol Hill May 3. Our Council of Representatives meets in Alexandria, VA, May 2 and 4.

More, including registration form(s), at www.bit.ly/narphill11

TAKE ACTION

Ask your legislators to **work for the highest possible Amtrak and high-speed rail funding levels for fiscal 2011 and 2012**. The House-passed Amtrak number for 2011 (lead story) would harm Amtrak and its on-time performance, with increased delays also slowing freight trains.

Amtrak is 30% more energy-efficient than cars, 20% more than domestic airlines—especially important as world oil prices rise.

U.S. Capitol switchboard (reaches all offices): 202-224-3121
Online: www.senate.gov and www.house.gov

Amtrak Hosts Forum on *Cardinal Stations*

Amtrak hosted its seventh "civic conversation" on train station revitalization March 3 in Huntington, WV. It provided resources and ideas for local organizations interested in fixing up the stations along the Chicago-Cincinnati-Huntington-Washington(-New York) *Cardinal* route.

Michael Angelo of Amtrak's Real Estate Division reviewed Amtrak's station platform and design requirements. He described how communities or station owners could pay for improvements, including U.S. Dept. of Transportation grants and tax credits to private owners.

Angelo reminded the audience, "We're not dealing with real estate, we're dealing with rail-estate." He said it is imperative

that if a community is thinking about changing or adjusting station ownership, they must call him at (215) 349-1327.

Presentations on successful examples of station improvements were given by Bill Burckhalter (a full-time employee of the City of Kirkwood, MO, who coordinates the volunteers who help passengers at the city's unstaffed station), Osceola, IA Mayor Fred Diehl and Carey Maynard-Moody, President of the Lawrence, KS nonprofit Depot Redux.

Amtrak V.P.—Gov't Affairs Joe McHugh discussed Amtrak's current federal fund-



- Jason Walter, Side Track Studios

Amtrak's eastbound *Cardinal* descends through the Blue Ridge Mountains at Moss Run, VA, in fall 2010.

ing situation and the Route Performance Improvement Plan for the *Cardinal*, which calls for daily service. ■

More: www.greatamericanstations.com. Read frequent Trains contributor Bob Withers' excellent report for the Huntington Herald-Dispatch at www.bit.ly/hunwv

Capon Defends Train Investment on CNBC

Staff Promotions

from page 1



NARP President Ross Capon and Cato Institute Senior Fellow Dan Mitchell debated the need for passenger trains on CNBC's "Squawk on the Street" Feb. 18.

Capon said, in part, "We're going to have 100 million more people in the next 40 years. We don't have the capacity to move everybody if we rely strictly on highways and airplanes...We're importing 60% of our oil. Bahrain is blowing up and [our] Fifth Fleet is stationed in Bahrain for the protection of water transport

of oil. Even little, undercapitalized Amtrak is 20% more energy efficient than the airlines and 30% more efficient than the automobile...We need to consider the costs of not building [high speed rail systems], not just the cost of building them..."

Mitchell favors public spending on highways but not on rail. He justified this by saying gasoline taxes cover road costs. Moderator Mark Haines correctly rejected that, telling Mitchell, "Don't present it [your argument] as a holier-than-thou, roads are O.K., trains aren't." But Mitchell insisted, "It is a holier-than-thou position because I want to get rid of the Department of Transportation. I don't want gas taxes going to Washington. I'd rather them stay in the states..." ■

Watch at www.bit.ly/caponcnbc

rector, his major responsibilities have included directing the online outreach to members, authoring the Association's weekly 'hotline', as well as drafting news releases and white papers, and overseeing the content of NARP's website.



Malcolm Kenton

"We are thrilled to have such an excellent worker on our staff and happy that he accepted the new position," said Association President Ross Capon.

Kenton, who comes from Greensboro, North Carolina, joined the staff in May 2009 as Transportation Assistant. He does the layout for this newsletter and much of the writing, and writes frequently for NARP's blog (www.narprail.org/blog). He also is working to involve more young people in passenger train advocacy and establish productive partnerships between NARP and other organizations.

"Malcolm stepped into big shoes at a very young age and has had an impressive learning curve. We are fortunate to benefit from his enthusiasm and knowledge," said Capon. ■

NARP Welcomes Mary McCall to Staff

Mary Beth McCall joined NARP as Coordinator of Resource Development Feb. 10. A Greenville, SC native, she earned her B.A. cum laude in Political Communications from Clemson University (Clemson SC) in late 2009. She has worked in

Republican political campaigns.

She succeeds Tiffanie Childs, who gave NARP 14 years of dedicated service. We are grateful for that, and wish her well at her new position in the federal government.

Work Begins on Rail Extension in Northwest New Jersey

New Jersey Transit (NJT) has begun grading the right-of-way to restore service on the Easternmost part of the "Lackawanna Cutoff." This line once linked Hoboken, NJ (opposite New York City) with Scranton, PA, Binghamton, NY and points west.

In 1984, Conrail abandoned and removed rails from 28 miles—from Slate-

ford Jct., PA (near the Delaware Water Gap) to Port Morris, NJ. The States of New Jersey and Pennsylvania now own the mostly overgrown right-of-way.

Heading west, the restored 7.3-mile segment to a new station at Andover will diverge from New Jersey Transit's Hackettstown line at Port Morris Jct. just west of Lake Hopatcong station.

Officially, this is the first step to restoring service to Scranton, though next steps are unclear. Passenger (tourist) and freight trains are running on the 60 miles between Scranton and Slateford Jct. The operator is Delaware Lackawa-



- Owls Flight Photography on Flickr.com

The Paulinskill Viaduct in Knowlton Township, NJ, near the Delaware Water Gap, west of the segment NJT is restoring. If service were extended to Scranton, this bridge would be used. When completed in 1910, it was the world's largest reinforced concrete structure.

nna Railroad, under contract to Pennsylvania Northeast Regional Railroad Authority, which owns the line. ■

NJT's description of the entire project to Scranton is at www.njtransit.com; enter Lackawanna Cutoff in the search field.

CORRECTION & UPDATE

Former Hawaii Gov. Linda Lingle is a Republican. (The Feb. *NARP News* print edition got this wrong.)

The official groundbreaking for Honolulu's 20-mile, 21-station rail transit line was Feb. 21. The 400 on hand included both of Hawaii's U.S. Senators, and protesters concerned with the project's environmental impacts.



Robert J. Stewart, Chairman; John Delora, Albert L. Papp, Jr., Arthur Poole, David Randall, Vice Chairs; Stephen J. Salatti, Secretary; Kenneth T. Clifford, Treasurer

Ross B. Capon, President & CEO; Sean Jeans-Gail, Vice President; Malcolm M. Kenton, Director of Outreach & Engagement; Mary Beth McCall, Coordinator of Resource Development; Lawrence E. Scott, Special Assistant to the Chairman.

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(This has news through March 10. Vol. 45, No. 2 was mailed February 23.)



our mission: a modern, customer-focused national passenger train network that provides a travel choice americans want.

Florida Gov. Scott Rejects \$2.4 Billion in Federal High Speed Rail Funds

Florida Gov. Rick Scott (R) has rejected \$2.4 billion in federal funds for the Tampa-Orlando high speed rail project.

The Feb. 16 rejection came although eight private sector consortia agreed to build the project for the available public funding—covering the remaining \$300

million in capital costs—take all risk, bear any cost over-run on construction, and sustain operating losses. The feds even agreed that if the project were abandoned post-construction, that Florida would not have to repay the federal grant.

In a Tallahassee news conference,

Scott insisted that accepting the funds would put Florida taxpayers at risk. He was silent on the risks of Florida remaining dependent on cars and planes. He quoted Acela-only Amtrak Northeast Corridor ridership to make Florida projections seem absurd: Acela had 3.2 million riders last year vs. an NEC total of 9.9 million.

“Mr. Scott’s decision left Democratic as well as Republican lawmakers saying ...they had been taken by surprise, particularly given that Florida’s unemployment rate is about 12%. The rail line had been expected to create thousands of new jobs” (*NY Times*, Feb. 16).

House Transportation Committee Chair John Mica (R-FL) “told reporters...that he had tried but failed to talk Mr. Scott out of turning down the project.” Mica also suggested doing a 21-mile, Orlando Airport-Disney World starter line instead of the whole run to Tampa.

U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood extended Florida’s acceptance deadline to March 4. Republican and Democratic state senators filed a lawsuit seeking to force Scott to accept the money. However, the Florida Supreme Court unanimously rejected this effort Mar. 4.

Now, the only hope for Florida high speed rail lies with the mayors of Tampa, Lakeland and Orlando who are working on an “interlocal” compact that could take over the project from the state and vie for the \$2.4 billion with projects elsewhere.

Observers now wonder if the governor also will kill SunRail—Central Florida commuter rail—next. He has put a hold on its contracts. ■

Key Agreements Let *Cascades* Work Begin

from page 1

• The Point Defiance bypass—a new line south from Tacoma, which will shorten the Seattle-Portland run by six miles and let passenger trains avoid the route’s only single-track segment.

• A bypass track to allow higher speeds in the Vancouver (WA) yard area.

• South of Kelso, sidings and an 18-mile third main track will reduce delays involving grain trains.

• Installation of Positive Train Control.

• Eliminating some highway/rail grade crossings.

• Improved advanced-warning signal

systems at other grade crossings.

There actually are two agreements. One, between FRA and WSDOT, commits FRA to allocate the \$590 million to these projects and protects these funds from threats to rescind them (see House Cuts, p. 1).

An Amtrak/BNSF/WSDOT agreement “outlines how rail investments will be made based on service outcomes and passenger...performance benchmarks... such as on-time performance, faster travel times and frequency of service.” ■

WSDOT’s releases: www.bit.ly/watrain

TRAVELERS’ ADVISORY

“Express” *Pacific Surfliner*: Amtrak’s 7:05 AM weekday San Diego departure now makes only four stops before its 9:33 Los Angeles arrival: Solana Beach, Oceanside, Irvine and Anaheim. This began Feb. 15. For the weekend 7:05, the timetable still calls for a 9:50 Los Angeles arrival and all intermediate stops.

Southbound Coast Starlight (Train 11) detours to the San Joaquin Val-

ley and over the Tehachapis, missing regular stops between Oakland and Los Angeles, on Mar. 23-31, Apr. 8-15, Apr. 23-25 (departing Seattle the previous day). Buses will serve missed stations. The detour, caused by track-work, will use the Altamont Pass (ACE) line to Stockton and Metrolink from Lancaster to L.A. Union Station. *Capitol Corridor*, *San Joaquins* and *Surfliners* will run normally, with delays.