



Executive Director's Report

December 15, 2008

STATE UPDATE

Budget Committees Hear Testimony Protesting Transit Cuts: Association Legislative Advocate Gus Khouri and I were joined by advocates for the environment, labor, seniors, and people with disabilities in testifying Thursday before Senate Budget Subcommittee #4 and the full Assembly Budget Committee, which both considered transportation funding issues. These were strictly informational hearings, so no official action was taken. Nonetheless, several legislators appeared receptive to our contentions that transit has already borne more than its fair share of the budget cut burden, that further cuts only hit hardest on those Californians who can least afford it, that cuts to transit funding contradict the aims of recent landmark legislation to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and that the cuts already made have squandered the opportunity for significant economic stimulus. While there's no progress to report on negotiations between Democrats and Republicans, and talks among the "Big 5" have broken down, both Assembly Speaker Karen Bass and Senate President Pro Tem Darrell Steinberg expressed hope that a deal can be reached by the end of this week. Therefore, **we repeat the call for you to continue lobbying your legislative delegation to urge rejection of further cuts** to the State Transit Assistance (STA) Program, as well as **oppose the Governor's call to eliminate the STA Program beginning in 2009-10**. A new fact sheet produced by Association Communications Director Jeff Wagner incorporates some of the data compiled from our ongoing survey of Association members regarding the effects of the latest proposed STA cuts. [Click here](#) to download a PDF version suitable for faxing.

CARB Approves Final Scoping Plan: The California Air Resources Board (CARB) capped its December 11 meeting by approving the Climate Change Scoping Plan, which is a framework plan developed by CARB to reduce the state's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. The plan proposes a cap-and-trade system that will allow factories, power plants and other large pollution sources to trade a "capped" number of state-issued pollution allowances. The Plan also implements California's clean cars standards; increases the amount of clean and renewable energy used to power the state; and implements a low-carbon fuel standard that will make the fuels used in the state cleaner. I met with various CARB members and staff before the approval, and our staff will be participating in the Scoping Plan implementation process as it unfolds over the next year to seek additional resources for transit in order to maintain its role in reducing GHG emissions in the state. Please contact Legislative and Regulatory Assistant Sabrina Means at 916-446-4656 or by email at sabrina@caltransit.org with questions.

ASSOCIATION NEWS AND ACTIVITIES

Transit Advocates Rally in Support of Association Lawsuit: As we work our way towards oral testimony in late January, the appeal effort in our lawsuit to recover Public Transportation Account (PTA) funds raided from the 2007-08 state budget has received a vital boost in the form of an amicus brief filed on our behalf by a number of transit-supporting organizations. The list of supporters includes TransForm (formerly known as the Transportation and Land Use Coalition); the California Public Interest Research Group (CalPIRG); Urban Habitat, the Planning and Conservation League; California Rural Legal Assistance, Inc.; Legal Services of Northern California and the Los Angeles Bus Riders Union. The filing of this brief will play an important role in the court's consideration of the depth and breadth of support for restoring transit funding to its proper levels. You can read the amicus brief – and all the other legal documents that have been filed to date – at www.caltransit.org/lawsuit.

California Transit Association Dues Increases Limited to Maximum 2% for 2009: Dues invoices for 2009 membership in the California Transit Association were mailed the week of December 8, 2008. **Your Executive Committee recently voted to hold dues to a base line zero percent increase with a range of plus or minus two percent.** The range comes into play as the actual dues calculation for most transit agency members is based on year over year changes in transit agency expenditures from the State Controller's annual report. **Other member categories, including Commuter Rail, Support Groups, and Suppliers will see invoice amounts that are identical to 2008.** If you have any questions about your dues invoice, please contact Meetings and Member Services Director Mary Zavislan (mary@caltransit.org).



By Joshua W. Shaw
www.caltransit.org // p. 916.446.4656 // f. 916-446-4318