



Executive Director's Report

February 9, 2009

STATE UPDATE

Assembly Transportation Committee Hears From Us: I was asked to testify last week in front of the Committee, which was seeking an overview from various transportation interest groups on the current “state of the state” with regard to transportation funding. I of course focused on the recent diversions of nearly \$5 billion away from public transit operations and capital projects, and urged members to tell legislative leadership that enough is enough, and to vote NO on further transit funding raids. To drive home the point that Californians are taking transit in record numbers, despite these diversions, I presented visual evidence to the Committee, including photos taken that morning at various transit stops and on various trains and buses around the state. Thanks to Marc Littman and Gayle Anderson (L.A. Metro), Phyllis Hall (North San Diego County Transit District) and our own Communications Director, Jeff Wagner, for getting up early the day of the hearing and snapping the excellent photos that I was able to present later that afternoon. To view the video of the hearing, please [click here](#).

ZEB Task Force Voices Concerns Over Purchase Requirements: Representatives of the Association’s Task Force on Zero Emission Buses met last week with Air Resources Board (ARB) Chief Deputy Executive Officer Tom Cackette and other ARB staff to discuss the Association’s concerns regarding the proposed 15 percent ZEB purchase requirement, which will be brought before the ARB Board this July. The meeting was productive and the task force will continue to work with ARB as July draws nearer. Please contact Legislative and Regulatory Assistant Sabrina Means at 916-446-4656 or by email at sabrina@caltransit.org with any questions.

ASSOCIATION NEWS AND ACTIVITIES

Association’s Lobby Day Set for March 25 in Sacramento: More than ever, it is critical that the transit community make its voice heard on the importance of maintaining funding for operations and capital expenditures on the state level. **Transit Lobby Day** is our first chance to inform Sacramento policymakers about the impact these budget cuts will have on public transit’s ability to operate service in communities statewide. **Therefore, it is vital that all members of the Association participate in this year’s annual event.** We will be making appointments with all 120 legislators, and representatives of Governor Schwarzenegger. [Click here TODAY](#) for information on registration and accommodations.

Taking our Fight to the Opinion Leaders: Over the past 12 days, our fight for state transit funding has taken me inside the editorial boardrooms of both the *San Francisco Chronicle* and the *Sacramento Bee*. While we wait to see if the *Chronicle* visit will result in editorial support, the *Bee* weighed in with [this opinion piece](#) that appeared in Saturday’s edition. This important outreach effort, coordinated by Association Communications Director Jeff Wagner, allowed us to make the case for preserving the State Transit Assistance (STA) Program and establishing a stable source of operations funding, as well as to discuss the merits of the Association’s lawsuit to recover funds raided from the Public Transportation Account (PTA). Many thanks to Executive Committee members Mike Wiley of Sacramento Regional Transit, Jim Gleich of AC Transit and Katherine Strehl of BART, and Legislative Committee member Kate Breen of San Francisco MTA— as well as to Carli Paine from TransForm – for comprising our panel of experts for these meetings. Thanks also to Judson True and Kristen Holland (SFMTA), Clarence Johnson and Beverly Greene (AC Transit), Alane Masui and Connie Garcia (Sacramento RT), Linton Johnson and Jim Allison (BART), Mark Simon (Samtrans/Caltrain) and Mary Currie (Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District) for their help in arranging these meetings and assembling our panels. Meanwhile, more editorial support surfaced last week in Southern California in the form of [this article](#) from the *Los Angeles Business Journal*, thanks in part to the efforts of L.A. Metro’s Michael Turner and Marc Littman.

Association to Join Discussion on 21st Century Economy: At their recent joint meeting, the Executive and Legislative Committees directed that the Association become involved with the governor’s “Commission on the 21st Century Economy,” which is a 12-member commission appointed by the governor and legislative leaders to re-examine and modernize California’s out-of-date revenue laws in order to help prevent and/or stabilize swings in the economy. The Joint Committee received a presentation from Guest Speaker Fred Keeley (Member, Governor’s Commission on the 21st Century Economy; Treasurer-Tax Collector, Santa Cruz County; Leadership Council Member, California Forward; Former Assemblymember; and, Former Assembly Speaker pro Tempore), who talked about the Commission’s goals and challenges, and the role that the California Transit Association can play in providing input to the Commission. Executive Committee Chair Michael Burns directed that Executive Director Josh Shaw encourage the Legislative Committee to consider the Association’s participation in providing input to the Commission. Please contact me at josh@caltransit.org if you have any ideas we should consider for submittal to the Commission. [Click here](#) for more information about the Commission.



By Joshua W. Shaw

www.caltransit.org // p. 916.446.4656 // f. 916-446-4318