



Transfer

Surface Transportation Policy Project's Electronic Update

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Announcement

STPP is currently accepting resumes for two positions; a Transportation Specialist based in Pittsburgh, PA, and a California Policy Director based in our state office in San Francisco. For more information and complete job listings, [click here](#).

[Transfer Archives](#)

Quote of the Week

"We have left Amtrak little alternative but to defer maintenance, cut employees and endanger the public. We will continue to put our people in danger until we find a dedicated funding source for rail."

- Rep. Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC)

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REAUTHORIZATION NEWS

Transportation and Air Quality Addressed in Senate EPW Committee

Michael Replogle of Environmental Defense testified before the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee hearing July 30th on "Transportation and Air Quality." Witnesses included representatives of the Environmental Protection Agency, the Federal Highway Administration, the California Air Resources Board, and the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources.



The witnesses were supportive of the CMAQ program on the whole and most suggested increasing program funding. Scott Johnstone of the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources recommended that the CMAQ share of the surface transportation program be increased and that attainment areas also qualify for CMAQ funding. He also proposed that CMAQ be expanded to include greenhouse gases, air toxics, and fine particulates, as well as providing government incentives for smart growth.

Michael Replogle, who also spoke on behalf of STPP, pointed out that CMAQ funding will have to double in order to meet the needs of existing and new non-attainment areas. According to FHWA's Mary Peters, once the new eight-hour ozone and fine particulate standards are implemented, many new areas will exceed standards established under the Clean Air Act.

Many of the witnesses spoke to the progress achieved so far from emissions control technology. However as Replogle pointed out, those benefits are "significantly offset by the increase in driving." Agreeing that "technology cannot do it alone," EPA's Jeffrey Holmstead said that Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) increased 143% between 1970-1999. As Chairman Jeffords said in his opening statement, "we know that a pedestrian or a transit rider generates far less pollution per passenger mile than a motorist in even the cleanest of today's cars."

For more information on the hearing, [click here](#).

Senate Appropriations Panel Sets Highway Funding at \$31.8 Billion

On July 25, a Senate Appropriations Subcommittee voted to put \$8.6 billion more into transportation programs in FY03 than President Bush had proposed in his budget. This move builds upon other recent actions taken by Congress, which restored highway spending to the "guaranteed" level provided in TEA-21 as part of the supplemental appropriation bill. The Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation raises the FY'03 spending level further, from \$27.6 billion made possible by the supplemental appropriations bill to \$31.8 billion.

The initial proposal of \$23.2 billion for highway projects followed the formula outlined in TEA-21 in 1998, and was a result of decreased revenues from fuel taxes.

For more information, [click here](#).

For background on the funding adjustment, [click here](#).

Hearing on Special Needs Transit: "A Lifeline for America's Citizens"

The Senate Subcommittee on Housing and Transportation held a hearing July 17 on public transit services for elderly, disabled and low-income riders, those groups most dependent on transit for their transportation needs. Among the issues discussed were the Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) program, a TEA-21 program targeted to TANF recipients. The needs of the elderly and persons with disabilities were also reviewed, with specific attention given to efforts to adhere to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).



Two members of the Transportation Equity Network testified about their own experiences, one who moved from welfare to work with the help of JARC's subsidized transit and now works with the JARC program to aid others in that transition. Another witness spoke about her experience as a social worker in Appalachia and of her own need for transit to access medical services. All three witnesses concurred that public transportation is essential for quality of life and equal access to jobs, health care and community involvement.

In addition, witnesses from the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) and the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD) stressed that greater investment in transit and paratransit are necessary to fill the current gaps in service. Although paratransit services remain essential to mobility for the elderly and disabled, they also emphasized the need to expand fixed-route systems and make them ADA compliant. Planning for mixed-use development, witnesses said, will also help improve accessibility and efficiency of transportation systems.

Transportation services administered through programs such as Medicare, Medicaid, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF/welfare), HeadStart, and social services for refugees and people with developmental disabilities are currently estimated at between \$2.5 and \$3.5 billion annually.

For more information on this hearing, [click here](#).

Grimshaw Testifies Before House Subcommittee on Behalf of STPP

STPP's Steering Committee Chair, Jackie Grimshaw (of Chicago's Center for Neighborhood Technology) testified July 25th before the House Subcommittee on Highways and Transit. The hearing, "Transportation Solutions in a Community Context: The Need for Better Transportation Systems for Everyone," featured representatives from a broad array of organizations, including the Rails to Trails Conservancy, the League of American Bicyclists, Scenic America, the Transportation Research Board, and the Active Living Campaign.



Grimshaw's testimony highlighted the success of ISTEA and TEA-21 to create opportunities for innovative transportation projects. Fuller implementation of the law will be a key point in the reauthorization of TEA-21, said Grimshaw. In response to a question from Rep. Brown's (SC-R) regarding funding what he described as "non-traditional" transportation projects while highway revenues are expected to decrease, Grimshaw pointed to the efficiency of these projects, saying that the solutions people are seeking are often smaller projects. "Money isn't the main problem," she said, "it's connecting resources with local decision-makers."

Grimshaw also introduced the Alliance for a New Transportation Charter (ANTC), a national coalition of advocates for a transportation policy that supports healthy communities. ANTC is developing policy recommendations for TEA-21's reauthorization that will be available later this year.

Other witnesses described a broad array of suggestions in reauthorizing TEA-21. Keith Laughlin of the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy spoke of the disparity in Transportation

Enhancements program – which funds trail projects – between approved projects and funded projects. He pointed out the strong demand for the program, despite an obligation rate of only 69%. No new categories of eligibility should be added, Laughlin maintained, as the program is already stretched thin. Elissa Margolin of the League of American Bicyclists pointed out that funds are available for bike projects in categories other than enhancements and she called for more explicit language regarding this eligibility.

Meg Maguire of Scenic America spoke of the Scenic Byways program and the importance of “contact sensitive highway design,” that better project delivery should be achieved through administrative changes, not by weakening environmental protections.

For more information on this hearing, see visit <http://www.transact.org/tea3.asp>.

House Subcommittee Discusses Sources of Revenue for Highway Trust Fund

The House Subcommittee on Highways and Transit held a hearing July 16th to explore new revenue sources for the Highway Trust Fund (HTF). The primary issue was the long-term viability of the motor-fuel tax to finance the HTF, which currently receives 88% of its revenues from fuel taxes. Lawmakers are concerned that HTF revenues will decline as cars become more fuel-efficient and eventually move away from petroleum-based fuels altogether. This comes at a time when the USDOT has estimated an average of \$56.6 billion over the next 20 years needed to maintain our nation’s roads and bridges, and \$10.8 billion per year to maintain transit infrastructure. Because of the 2001 economic downturn, HTF revenues in that year were \$4.5 billion less than projected. \$1.1 billion of this deficit was attributed to the use of gasohol, a blend of gasoline and ethanol which reduces emissions. The tax rate is lower for gasohol than gasoline and a portion of the revenues goes directly to the General Fund.



Representatives from various organizations were asked to testify on future funding options for the HTF. The American Road & Transportation Builders Association (ARTBA) recommended a 2-cents-per-year fuel tax increase that would bring revenues up to target level by 2009. An automated road use fee was suggested, as was a reimbursement from the General Fund to the HTF for revenues they would have received without the gasohol tax incentive. AASHTO, the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, proposed an innovative financing solution and recommended that a commission of experts assess the situation, and the Wisconsin Transportation Builders Association suggested tying the tax to the Consumer Price Index, since the fuel tax has been rising slower than inflation.

For more information on the hearing, [click here](#).

Transportation Secretary Invites Comments on Future Surface Transportation Programs

U.S. Transportation Secretary Norman Y. Mineta has asked individuals and groups across the country to take advantage of a new online service to express their opinions and offer ideas as the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) prepares its proposal to Congress on reauthorization of the nation's surface transportation programs.



"As we develop new proposals for our surface transportation program, we want to hear from our state and local partners, the private sector and all those who are interested in meeting the transportation challenges of tomorrow," Secretary Mineta said. "The new Web site and the traditional vehicles we have provided will enable stakeholders and citizens everywhere to submit ideas and comments, which will be valuable resources as we move forward with the reauthorization process."

Participants are encouraged to use the Web site to submit comments online. They can do so by [logging on to the DOT website](#).

LOCAL REPORT

Temporary Assistance to Needy Families

In the midst of the TEA-21 renewal process, the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) bill passed the Senate Finance committee and will go before the full Senate soon. It includes several provisions for transportation assistance, several of which make it easier for states to use TANF block grant monies as match for federal Job Access Reverse Commute (JARC) grants. JARC grants allow local communities to figure out how to make the transportation system work better to enable all people to gain access to good jobs, education and training.

A good example is Ride DuPage, in DuPage County, Illinois, which assists clients of various human services agencies get to jobs, health care, and shopping with a flexible and easy to use system. Ride DuPage was developed in response to a 1996 study for the County that found forty specialized transportation services operating independently in the county, each with different eligibility criteria, service areas, and fare policies. The new system funnels all trip requests to a scheduling center, where rides are coordinated and dispatched using GPS. A smart card system allows clients to use any provider, including buses, paratransit vans, taxis, and makes it easy for the County to track billing and collect data on unmet transportation needs.

The challenge is making these limited federal resources serve more people more effectively. While all states are required to demonstrate that human services and transportation agencies work together to coordinate transportation aids, states such as Wisconsin and New Jersey have gone one step further by formalizing the relationships and dedicating funding for coordinated JARC applications. In Illinois, lawmakers are considering the Transportation Resources for Innovative Projects Law, HB 4941. It would create a Coordinating Committee on Transportation staffed by the Governor's office, the Department of Transportation and the Department of Human Services.

"There used to be an ad-hoc committee that met when staff had time and usually once during the session, with little other planning or follow through. The new state law would make coordinating these services part of someone's job, which we hope will result in more great collaborative projects like Ride DuPage," said Julie Sampson, Director of Policy Initiatives for the Work, Welfare, and Families Coalition in Chicago, Illinois. She is working to secure more funding for transportation assistance, child care, and other supportive services for TANF recipients in the new TANF bill.

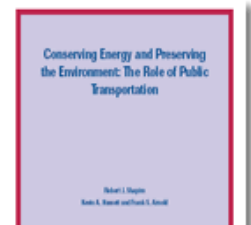
For more information about the Illinois legislation and THE Work, Welfare, and Families COALITION, visit www.workwelfareandfamilies.org.

For more information about Ride DuPage, [click here](#).

REPORTS & RESOURCES

APTA Study Links Public Transportation Investment and Clean Air

On July 17, the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) released a new national study entitled "Conserving Energy and Preserving the Environment: The Role of Public Transportation", which shows for the first time how increasing investments in public transportation are the most effective way to improve air quality and reduce energy consumption without imposing new government mandates, taxes or regulations.



Authors Dr. Robert J. Shapiro, Dr. Kevin A. Hassett, and Dr. Frank S. Arnold calculated that public transportation currently saves more than 855 million gallons of gasoline or 45 million barrels of oil each year. If one in ten Americans were to use public transportation regularly, our foreign oil needs would be reduced by 40 percent, close to the quantity of current yearly imports from Saudi Arabia.

In addition, the report proves that public transportation generates 95 percent less carbon monoxide, 92 percent less volatile organic compounds, and roughly half the amount of carbon dioxide and nitrogen oxide than private vehicles, per passenger mile. Moreover, if one in ten Americans used public transportation, the U.S. would be able to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by more than 25 percent of the standard set by the Kyoto Agreement. Even small increases in transit use would help many major US cities that currently fail to meet EPA air-quality standards.

As author Dr. Robert J. Shapiro said, "We all know that a rail car or bus carrying 40 people is far more efficient than a car moving just one person. What people may not realize is exactly how much energy is being saved, and how these savings add up to millions of barrels of oil conserved and millions of tons of harmful emissions avoided each year."

For more information, visit www.apta.com.

Issue Forum Linking Physical Activity and the Built Environment

The National Coalition for Promoting Physical Activity (NCPA), in cooperation with the Livable Communities Task Force and the Northeast-Midwest Coalition, hosted an issue forum July 18th on physical activity and the built environment. NCPA's Kathy Spangler highlighted the relationship between decreasing physical activity and an alarmingly rapid increase in America's obesity rate. Andy Clarke, Executive Director of the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals, spoke of the physical barriers to walking and biking, including unsafe and inconvenient physical environments. Marya Morris of the American Planning Association (APA) focused on the planning tools available to overcome those obstacles.



For more information on the presentations, see <http://www.ncppa.org/>

Information on the obesity epidemic can be found [here](#).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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Smart Growth America (SGA) is searching for a Policy Director. SGA is a nationwide coalition of more than 80 organizations promoting a better way to grow: one that protects farmland and open space, revitalizes neighborhoods, keeps housing affordable, and provides more transportation choices. The Policy Director will be expected to coordinate with SGA's Steering Committee and partner organizations to identify, develop and advocate smart growth policies pertaining to transportation, environment, housing, economic development, open space and farmland protection. [Click here](#) for more information.

The US Environmental Protecting Agency has launched its 3rd annual Clean Air Excellence Awards Program, designed to honor outstanding, innovative efforts that help make progress in achieving cleaner air. Entries must be submitted by September 18, 2002. For more information, [click here](#).

Transfer is written and edited by John Goldener of the Surface Transportation Policy Project, with contributions by Andrea Broaddus, Leah Dawson, Mike Danielson, Michelle Ernst, and Nancy Jakowitsch. Readers are invited to reprint newsletter items; proper citation is appreciated. If you are not currently subscribed, please send us a note via e-mail to: transfer@transact.org. Be sure to include your full mailing address and name of your organization, phone and fax numbers. For comments and suggestions about Transfer's content, contact John Goldener at jgoldener@transact.org.

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