



Executive Director's Report

February 17, 2009

STATE UPDATE

Senate Stands One Vote Short of Finalizing Elimination of STA: Marathon legislative sessions throughout the weekend failed to produce the votes necessary to pass the latest state budget proposal, which calls for eliminating the State Transit Assistance (STA) Program for at least the next five years. The STA program is the only ongoing source of state funding for day-to-day transit operations. The plan cites a \$536 million cut in transit funding, achieved through the cancellation of the remaining \$230 million due to transit agencies from the September budget's STA allotment of \$306 million and the eradication of the entire \$306 million in fiscal year 2009-10. The plan continues zeroing out STA for the next five years. While the Assembly appears to have wrangled the needed votes to pass the package, the Senate remains one vote short. Both Houses will re-convene today, with the apparent focus on incentives needed to entice one more Republican vote in the Senate. It's time for one last push in an effort to head off what we have long considered to be the "Armageddon" scenario. **Call your legislators TODAY and tell them enough is enough – transit has already borne far more than its fair share of this budget crisis.** [Click here](#) to see the flyer we dropped off Friday afternoon at all 120 legislative offices, and use the information as talking points in your discussions.

Task Force Efforts Spur Certification of Diesel Hybrids: The Association's Task Force on Hybrids has been working toward achieving certification for medium-duty diesel hybrid engine packages for urban buses over the last year. As a result of great efforts between our members and Air Resources Board (ARB) staff, these hybrid engine packages can now be certified by the ARB. The ARB released an Executive Order last week which allows the certification of medium-duty diesel hybrid engine buses ordered through December 31, 2009 with delivery before July 2010. Therefore, if your agency is interested in purchasing a hybrid-diesel bus, please be aware of this ordering deadline. [Click here](#) to see the Executive Order as posted on the Air Resources Board website. Please contact Legislative and Regulatory Assistant Sabrina Means at 916-446-4656 or by email at sabrina@caltransit.org with any questions.

AB 118 Program Considers Funding for Clean-Air Buses: Legislative and Regulatory Assistant Sabrina Means attended a working group meeting last week on the AB 118 Air Quality and Improvement Program (AQIP). AQIP is a voluntary incentive program administered by the Air Resources Board (ARB), and was created by the California Alternative and Renewable Fuel, Vehicle Technology, Clean Air, and Carbon Reduction Act of 2007 (AB 118, Chapter 750, Statutes of 2007). This incentive program will fund clean vehicle and equipment projects to reduce criteria pollutant emissions, research on the air quality impacts of alternative fuels, and advanced technology workforce training. The working group meeting last week was specifically focused on potential transit and school bus demonstration projects that the program is looking at incorporating into a funding plan. While transit agencies currently under the Zero-Emission Bus (ZEB) regulation would not qualify for funding for projects mandated by the regulation, any projects over and above the regulation scope may be eligible for these program funds. The AQIP process is moving along quickly – if you have project ideas or other considerations relating to this program, please contact Sabrina at 916-446-4656 or by email at sabrina@caltransit.org with any questions.

Foundation Seeks "Tranny" Award Nominees: The California Transportation Foundation is seeking nominations for its 20th annual "Tranny" Awards, recognizing outstanding projects, programs and people of 2008. This year, the Foundation has created awards categories specifically honoring achievements in public transit. There are people in your organization or others you know of who did an outstanding job in 2008 – project managers, critical problem solvers and innovators – who deserve recognition. Take a few minutes to nominate them. Any California projects open to the public for the first time in 2008, and any programs completed or operational for the first time in 2008 are eligible. The deadline for nominations is March 2. [Click here](#) for more information.

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. The Sheraton Grand Sacramento Hotel will serve as Lobby Day headquarters. To receive the discounted room rate of \$199 for the evening of March 24, call 916-341-3627 **by March 3**, and ask for the California Transit Association group rate.

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