



Executive Director's Report

February 23, 2009

STATE UPDATE

It's Official – State Eliminates Funding for Transit Operations: With a stroke of his pen Friday afternoon, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger formally assumed the role of Transit Terminator by signing off on the complete elimination of the State Transit Assistance (STA) program. The final budget agreement retains second-quarter STA payments for 2008-09 – bringing the final score for the current fiscal year to Transit Funds \$153 million, Transit Cuts \$1.8 billion – and zeroes out the STA completely beginning in 2009-10. Thus ends the 37-year run of the only source of state funding for transit operations, first established in 1971 by then-Gov. Ronald Reagan. **However, by no means is that the end of our fight.** We're cautiously optimistic based on personal assurances from legislative leaders who have expressed a commitment to work with us to establish a reliable stream of operations funding. There's no way to sugar-coat the dismal news this budget brings, but, now that the pressure to adopt a spending plan has subsided, we look forward to productive discussions aimed at reversing the pain inflicted by this and too many other recent state budgets.

SB 375 Advisory Committee Hears Transit's Concerns: Last week, Legislative and Regulatory Assistant Sabrina Means attended a working group meeting for the SB 375 Regional Targets Advisory Committee, which will be advising Air Resources Board (ARB) staff on the factors and methodologies for setting regional greenhouse gas (GHG) targets as mandated by the ARB's AB 32 Climate Change Scoping Plan. The working group's role is to prepare information that will be presented at each RTAC meeting in response to questions raised by RTAC members during regular committee meetings. Last week's workgroup meeting looked at MPO modeling capabilities for regions and at economic factors that influence how consumers, builders, and local governments make decisions which affect land use patterns. Sabrina reminded the group that transit is one of the factors in affecting these decisions. The next regular RTAC meeting will be March 4. You can contact Sabrina at 916-446-4656 or by email at sabrina@caltransit.org with any questions about the meeting.

ARB Plans GHG Reduction Workshop: The ARB will host a public workshop on "Local Government Assistance to Reduce GHG Emissions" in order to inform, educate, and assist local governments regarding the ARB's efforts to reduce GHG emissions at the local government level, consistent with the overall goals of the AB 32 Scoping Plan. Specific focus will be given to a Local Government Toolkit and a Climate Leadership Recognition Program. The toolkit is a compendium of guidance and resources to assist local governments. It will include financial resources and case studies that highlight California local governments that have successfully and profitably reduced GHG emissions, as well as provide information on cost-saving actions to reduce GHG emissions including energy efficiency and conservation, renewable energy, green transportation, green building, waste reduction and recycling, water conservation, recycling and reuse, and environmentally preferable purchasing. The workshop is Monday, March 9, 2009 in Sacramento. Please [click here](#) to see the workshop notice (PDF, 19KB). Please contact Legislative and Regulatory Assistant Sabrina Means at 916-446-4656 or by email at sabrina@caltransit.org with any questions.

New Coalition Seeks Association Participation: The California Transit Association has been asked to join a new national coalition organized by the South Coast Air Quality Management District "to advocate on behalf of a broad coalition of governmental environmental and transportation agencies, industry, faith, public health and environmental stakeholders for clean and efficient transportation, including infrastructure and technologies that cut air pollution, protect public health, enhance mobility, improve energy efficiency and reduce petroleum dependence." This coalition will work with Congress to improve our nation's transportation system as well as the environment. We will soon be asking the Association's legislative committee to consider joining this coalition. The next coalition meeting will be March 5, 2009. Please contact Legislative and Regulatory Assistant Sabrina Means at 916-446-4656 or by email at sabrina@caltransit.org with any questions.



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STATE UPDATE (continued)

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

Deadline Nears for Lobby Day Discounted Room Rate: The deadline for discounted accommodations during Transit Lobby Day is next Tuesday, March 3. To receive the discounted room 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 and ask for the California Transit Association group rate. After March 3, the regular room rate is \$309 per night. 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**, scheduled for March 25, 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](#) to register.

Membership Satisfaction Survey Now Under Way: We are currently conducting our annual Membership Satisfaction Survey. It's your opportunity to provide feedback regarding your perception of the benefits of membership and the performance of the Association on your behalf. Survey feedback will be summarized and reviewed by Association Staff and the Executive Committee, and will serve to enhance Association activities for 2009 and beyond. Please [click here](#) to complete this very brief survey. Your feedback is greatly appreciated.



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