



WASHINGTON RAIL NEWS

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A Not-for-profit Consumer Organization
"Moving forward... On Rail."

All Aboard Washington hosts successful Legislative Rail Caucus luncheon

By any measure, the Feb. 6 luncheon for members of the bipartisan Legislative Rail Caucus (LRC) hosted by All Aboard Washington was a complete success. Ten AAWA members met and mixed with 17 or 18 legislators, several legislative staffers and one spouse.

The lunch fare was modest – sub sandwiches, cookies and assorted beverages – but appreciated by the legislators, most of whom had just adjourned for lunch during a lengthy House Transportation Committee meeting.

AAWA literature was available for all legislators and staffers attending. "Mixed seating" (AAWA members alternating with or near one or more legislators) encouraged good conversations.

LRC leaders Rep. Matt Manweller (R-Ellensburg) and Rep. Luis Moscoso (D-Bothell) gave brief introductory and welcoming presentations, emphasizing the importance of both freight and pas-

senger trains to the well-being of the state of Washington. House Transportation Committee Chair Judy Clibborn's (D-Mercer Island) impromptu statement of how trains had always been of interest and importance to her pleased everyone present. She praised what she considers the very important work of the LRC.

In addition to one-on-one conversations between AAWA and LRC members, and the remarks from Reps. Clibborn, Manweller and Moscoso, several questions and comments came from other legislators. Notable were those of Rep. Gael Tarleton (D-Seattle), with comments on the need for redundancy and security of transportation infrastructure.

AAWA Executive Director Lloyd Flem, pleased by the excellent legislator attendance, praised Manweller and Moscoso for their leadership of the LRC and Clibborn for her enthusiastic support of the LRC. He also noted those in attendance included a relatively even mix of Democrats and Republicans and from both sides of the Cascades. Flem advised those, particularly from Central and Eastern Washington, when working toward more passenger train service, to negotiate "fair, friendly and tough" with the Class One railroads.



Scenes from the Legislative Rail Caucus luncheon.

Photos by Jim Hamre

A few legislators and staffers with other obligations arrived late but still had positive interaction with AAWA members, who remained to greet any and all.

(See Lloyd Flem's page 2 column for his personal thoughts on our successful luncheon.)

Rep. Hans Zeiger and BNSF's Johan Hellman speak to All Aboard Washington



Rep. Zeiger listens to a question from Bruce Agnew. Photo by Zack Willhoite

State Rep. Hans Zeiger (R-Puyallup) and BNSF's Johan Hellman spoke at our March 8 meeting in Tukwila.

Zeiger started his remarks by stating "I have a passion for rail." He grew up two blocks from the BNSF mainline in Puyallup. He thanked Lloyd Flem for his leadership on passenger rail issues.

Zeiger said that rail is the wave of the future. We need an ambitious national high speed rail program to support economic development, allow us to improve our lives, help us better deal with population growth and provide a transportation system that young people want.

Though Zeiger supports a limited role for government he said there are times when major government investment is needed. He listed the Interstate Highway System, the space program and high speed rail as examples.

He also strongly supports our state's freight rail network as a critical component of freight mobility, allowing us to respond to competitive pressures from other states and British Columbia.

Zeiger was the lone House Republican to support a transportation tax package a year ago during the 2013 legislative session. He stated rail must be a component of any revenue package that is finally approved. (The Legislature again this session failed to reach an agreement on a transportation package.) Four other keys to approval for Zeiger are freight mobility improvements, preservation of the existing system, safety and reforms to things like permitting.

Johan Hellman is government affairs (See Zeiger, page 6)



*From the desk of
the Executive
Director
by
Lloyd H. Flem*

The Legislative Rail Caucus and the 2014 Session of the Legislature

From the viewpoint of this rail advocate, the best news from the Legislature continues to be the energy and commitment of those in the Legislative Rail Caucus (LRC). In past years we certainly had legislators supportive of rail, but only since 2013 has a group of legislators been established to explicitly support pro-rail transportation policies and funding.

AAWA successfully hosted a Feb. 6 luncheon for 17 or 18 House members associated with the LRC. (To date, nearly all those who have been active in the LRC are in the House.) Here, some thoughts and opinions concerning the luncheon:

First, thanks to Rory Paine-Donovan and Breanne Elsey, legislative assistants for Rep. Luis Moscoso (D-Bothell) and Rep. Matt Manweller (R-Ellensburg) who helped in organizing the event. And special thanks to Kelsey Kamitomo, LA for House Transportation Committee (HTC) Chair Judy Clibborn (D-Mercer Island), who, among other things, secured a location for the luncheon – right in the House Office Building.

While Reps. Manweller and Moscoso, the leaders of the LRC, were always supportive of our planned AAWA-LRC luncheon, two uncertainties confronted us while planning the event: when and where. Early on, February 6 seemed to be a reasonable date. But after establishing and publicizing February 6 to AAWA members and some legislators who were invited to attend, I learned the HTC was scheduled to meet all day on February 6. Since most LRC members were on the HTC, our lunch would have our AAWA people but few legislators if the HTC did not have a lunch recess. But HTC Chair Judy Clibborn not only agreed to grant the recess in coordination with the time of our planned lunch, but she encouraged members of the HTC to attend. The “where,” verified just days before the lunch, was a very adequate venue and, importantly, was just downstairs from where the HTC hearing was being held.

Rep. Manweller was the first LRC person to arrive, directly followed by Rep. Moscoso. OK, so the two Rail Caucus leaders were on board. Then, by one, twos and threes, more legislators arrived. I had told fellow AAWA members that at the Capitol other luncheons and activities directly conflicted with our meeting, and that we could have as few legislators as three and as many as twenty. We came close to the

latter number!

Yes, I had hand-delivered letters of invitation to the offices of all on the list Rory had provided, plus other legislator’s offices I thought would be interested. I worked at “selling” our luncheon to the LAs of all those invited. Lots of phone calls and reminders.

I was insistent that the ten AAWA members present and the LTC members mix. AAWA literature was placed at every other seat. What was not wanted was AAWA members in one corner, the legislators and staffers in another. It worked just as hoped: alternate seating and good conversations.

A couple of AAWA attendees came by Amtrak. Most of the AAWA people met at my home for a light breakfast and a “pre-luncheon briefing.” I asked that we have friendly chats with legislators and this was not the time nor place for hardedged lobbying.

I think our luncheon was a total success. The enthusiasm of the LRC people for rail

I think our luncheon was a total success. The enthusiasm of the LRC people for rail was obvious.

was obvious. Brief presentations by the two LRC leaders and Judy Clibborn were more than good. This little lunch meeting took days of planning and coordinating, but the result was more than worthwhile. A significant number of pro-rail legislators are now more familiar with All Aboard Washington and we with this newly evolving set of lawmakers.

Kudos to AAWA members Karen Keller, Bruce Agnew, Bob Lawrence, Mark Foutch, Harvey Bowen, Jim McIntosh, Jim Hamre, Louis Musso and George Barner. who not only met, mixed and educated our guests a bit about AAWA, but were indispensable doing the many mundane tasks associated with hosting of such an event.



The Legislative Rail Caucus had met away from Olympia on several occasions. Two such events were in Quincy and Everett, with freight rail being the focus.

On March 3 of this year, the LRC hosted a “Rail 101” dinner at an Olympia restaurant. Many of those legislators who attended our Feb. 6 meeting were also at this dinner. The program again was on freight rail, with presentations by representatives of Washington’s short lines, the Ports Association and BNSF Railway.

Besides a good number of legislators, several interest groups were represented, most concerned with freight rail. I’ve been told future events will emphasize passenger rail service. It is important for passenger rail advocates to also have interest and support for freight rail, however. Reps. Manweller

and Moscoso were hosts and reinforced the principle that the LRC is bipartisan, statewide, and interested in freight and passenger rail.

The recently ended 2014 session of our State Legislature had perhaps a bit more ideology and partisanship than in some past years, in my judgment. I hope more bipartisan cooperation will prevail, and our Legislature will not copy the extreme partisanship that has brought gridlock to the US Congress. (The LRC a modest bastion of bipartisan cooperation, in my view.)

During the session, which ended on March 14, I met individually with many members of the House and Senate Transportation Committees and other non-HTC and -STC legislators. Most, but not all, were affiliated with the LRC. Emphasis was on a few issues. Not every visit covered every issue. Emphases varied based upon the legislative district and specific interests of the legislator.

My single most important job was to support our WSDOT rail programs. I was candid that given the 2008 PRIIA (see Feb-March column), which went into full effect last October, the state would need to pay a larger operating subsidy for the Amtrak Cascades than in past years. I praised the Rail Division’s Ron Pate for his success in decreasing the total additional sums Amtrak-DC originally proposed for our state. While applauding the efforts of the Rail Division, I represented the views of many AAWA members that the total of only ten minutes removed from the Seattle-Portland Cascades schedule, following completion of the Point Defiance Bypass plus over \$500 mill. in other infrastructure improvements through 2017, is insufficient. I also said that AAWA believes there are places between Olympia-Lacey and Vancouver where a safe 90 MPH maximum speed should be sought. And in some cases I expressed the views of AAWA that there are other issues where WSDOT needs to be encouraged to go beyond the sound but cautious plans now on the shelf.

The second most discussed topic in my legislator meetings was the need for future legislation that would make it more difficult to rip up railroad tracks and easier to have tracks re-installed. The obvious case is the Eastside Line east of Lake Washington. (This old geography prof made ample use of that most traditional and valuable tool, the printed map!) To all, I said AAWA and our pro-rail allies are not anti-trail; we are for rail **AND** trail. What we oppose is **JUST** a trail where the potential and need for freight and passenger rail is great. I cited the extreme difficulty of re-railing a corridor once trails are in place and the parochial interests of a few outspoken NIMBYs stand in opposition to the use of a rail corridor for trains!

Virtually every legislator with whom I (See **Flem**, page 4)



WITH
JIM
CUSICK

Backwards To The Future!!

Trains?

We don't need no stinkin' trains in the Eastside Rail Corridor!

What we need is modern, high-tech and futuristic!

We need the [Kirkland Cross Corridor Advanced Transportation Symposium!](#)

Bicycles! (Carbon fiberists need only apply.) Gondolas! What a view! ... Hmmm, wait a minute...

[PRT \(Personal Rapid Transit\)!](#)

Ignore the detractors who say PRT is just Gadgetbahn, meant to distract the decision makers from some of the lower cost, and sensible, options...

I support PRT.

Why? A long time ago I checked out a technical book from the Seattle Public Library which outlined the specific possibilities and challenges of PRT. This book essentially fleshed out what is now promoted as the [JPOD](#) type system.

[Microsoft entertained the idea of PRT](#) at one time, but decided to stay with their [Microsoft Connector buses, and make use of the public highways.](#)

That JPOD technical paper was well thought out, and the only thing holding it back was the technology of the day.

So, if we don't want government chasing the "PRT pipe dream," you would have thought the private sector would get involved and Microsoft, of all companies, would be able to create the technology needed. After all, we have computerized driving aids for parking, passing, braking, cruising, etc. Heck even [Google](#) claims to have driverless cars plying the public highways.

Before you think I'm some sort of Ludite, afraid of any and all new technologies let me go back in time ... a long time, in the early days, when the computers I programmed were man-sized!

At the advent of the first computer avionics development for fighter jets a good friend of mine was a computer programmer in the Air Force. During the walk through of the code, the bench check revealed ...

Okay, I guess I need to explain to both the readers with no technical expertise, and those who have only recent expertise on the wee computers of today what a "bench check" of computer code is.

Back in the days when computers were gigantic and computer time was expensive, programmers wrote their code (sometimes

on punch cards, but in my time) on CRT terminals. Before they actually ran the program to test it, they took the printout of that computer code, and studiously walked through the logic in the program to see if it performed as they expected.

Effective walk-throughs are ones where other programmers are invited to also review the program code, since a fresh set of eyes would find flaws in the logic, or at least ask questions the writer of the program didn't think of.

Back to my friend ...

One thing she and her compatriots discovered on one of the walk-throughs of the software for this particular avionics device was that when the jet got to the equator, it would flip over and fly inverted.

Oooops!

Hey, that's what test pilots are for! They have the Right Stuff. Whatever that Stuff is since they put it in the hands of computer geeks. Oy!

This was when there were [Real Programmers](#) – not Quiche-eating metro-natural hipster “software engineers.”

So, back to the present. We now have Google telling us they have the ability to operate autonomous vehicles, and in fact they currently use them for those lovely “street views” on Google Maps.

Well, maybe not completely autonomous, since there still is someone in the vehicle to take over, much like an airplane. (You do realize with all that testing by said test pilots that current avionics are supposedly sophisticated enough that they could fly a plane from runway to runway without human intervention.)

Let's pose the question: Would you get on an airplane if there were no pilots on board? There's talk about doing just that – [flying commercial jets autonomously.](#)

Let's apply that to driving. Would you send your family out in the car, sans driver, to the grocery store? Would you step in front of a driverless vehicle?

If Google is so confident of the infallibility of their software, (a.k.a. 'hubris'), then the Google execs should have no problem doing exactly that. In fact, it would be a wonderful idea if they required all air travel by their employees to be via pilotless planes!

Now that's a real Beta test! We'll see if they have the right stuff.

If they are real programmers, I'm sure they would have no problem.

PRT to BRT

Google can make PRT work.

Think about it. Here you have a private company, Google, touting the advantages of having driverless vehicles plying the highways using their infallible software.

The best way to assure the accident avoidance ability would be to supply the software and even the hardware to make JPODs work. It's up and away from inter-

fering pedestrians and cars with unreliable drivers in them.

No government intervention needed, save for access to the right-of-way, and even then, based on the JPOD model, those would be obviously unobtrusive support columns sharing the ROW with the walking path below.

Below ... meaning it would be elevated.

"We don't need no peeping PRTers in our backyard!!!"

What is the best use of this corridor, since the unnamed-most-knowledgeable-people-in-the-Internet-world have spoken, and commuter rail is an obvious railfan's pipe dream?

Ah, BRT!

If you think a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system on the eastside is the preferred alternative, and that its convertibility to a future light rail line is key, then you would follow Sound Transit's ideas for that portion of the corridor.

Sound Transit's Eastside High Capacity Transit Analysis studied BRT in certain segments, and specifically tailored their BRT design to be light rail convertible for their “high performance” option.

However, ST's BRT segment in the area north of Bellevue specifically uses the Eastside Rail Corridor (ERC) right-of-way from South Kirkland to Totem Lake (as opposed to WSDOT's Freeway BRT plans). The freeway based BRT performance was lower since WSDOT required ST to design for HOV/carpool use.

"We don't need no stinkin' buses in the Eastside Rail Corridor."

The Good, the Bad, and the ?

So, let's ignore the fact that commuter rail in the ERC and Freeway BRT garner the same ridership in the segments that each project shares, and that commuter rail costs less in those segments. (ST's high-performance BRT costs almost twice as much), and go with the idea that rail is only good for high-density neighborhoods already in place.

BRT is the supposed logical stepping stone. This even though it seems impossible to pin down the actual cost of BRT because the definition of BRT is very nebulous, along with the idea of Business Access/Transit (BAT) lanes, where the cost is masked because the project can be considered a capacity enhancement for SOV's, and therefore built with gas tax revenue.

Mind you there is no one in the rail advocacy community that thinks that a robust bus system is a negative. In fact, it enhances the connectivity to the main trunk rail lines. But be aware, unless you are putting your BRT in its own exclusive right-of-way, it is being overlaid on the current arterial system. That means a robust BRT based system will build on the traffic pat-

(See [Cusick](#), page 5)

Amtrak's Long-Distance Routes Gain Marketing, Lose Amenities

By Matthew Melzer

Southwest Division Leader, National Association of Railroad Passengers

Against a backdrop of unprecedented ridership, constrained capacity, and operational challenges, Amtrak's national network of the 15 long-distance routes recently came under the aegis of Mark Murphy, Amtrak's new General Manager Long Distance Services. The reorganized business line is now largely overseen by a cadre of Amtrak veterans such as Murphy, who graciously presented to the joint NARP and RailPAC (Rail Passenger Association of California) "Steel Wheels" member meeting in Los Angeles on February 1.

Alongside his experienced deputies Joy Smith (Business Liaison Director of Service Excellence) and Mike Dwyer (Route Director for the *Coast Starlight* and *Southwest Chief*), Murphy outlined an optimistic vision for the national network trains whose sense of security has ebbed and flowed with the political winds and Amtrak's finances over the years. With diminished debt, record ridership for 10 of the last 11 fiscal years, and a record 89% operating ratio (89 cents in fares recovered for every dollar of expenses), Amtrak is the strongest it has been in modern times – albeit below its historical high water-marks of route breadth and fleet size.

The long distance trains are the linchpin of this success, accounting for 44 percent of all Amtrak passenger-miles. They punch far above their weight considering that they carry only about 16% of total system passengers. The average trip length is 600 miles, and 23 states have no other form of intercity passenger trains (many communities also have little in the way of air or bus service). Murphy articulated a tripod strategy to build on this success, focusing on Financial Excellence (further improving the operating ratio), Safety and Security (forging industry-leading safety standards), and Customer Focus ("to acquire and retain the most satisfied customers of any travel company in the world").

To the latter point, Murphy was also bold in declaring that "every revenue opportunity is on the table" and that cost-cutting will not be the prevailing mentality going forward, even as Amtrak seeks to make food and beverage services more efficient. One of his slides concluded, "We're not trying to chop our way to success." So imagine the shock of rail advocates when Amtrak issued an internal notice three days later announcing the elimination of many on-board amenities in the coming weeks for the long distance trains, whose product had always been at the heart of their appeal for choice riders (particularly in the highly profitable sleeping cars).

There was a subsequent memo announcing the elimination of the separate

sleeper lounge and wine reception on the *Auto Train*. While these cuts are fairly small in the grand scheme, they make the product incrementally less attractive. They're also a reminder of the very short institutional memory at Amtrak, despite the experienced management.

In 2007 the *Coast Starlight's* Pacific Parlour Cars for sleeper passengers – the crown jewel of the long-distance fleet – were endangered due to mounting maintenance costs and lack of directly-attributable revenue. Management at the time was able to recapitalize and save this valuable sub-fleet by turning it into a revenue center, with the traditional wine tastings becoming fee-based (\$5, or \$10 for any coach passengers wanting to occupy any unused spots), plus the addition of an alternative meal service option. A few years later, the wine tasting fee went away. So why now throw the baby out with the bath water by eliminating this signature event? If the goal is to control food and beverage costs, why not bring back the tasting fee? Living in San Francisco, I often face from friends some variant of the question, "I know there's a train from Oakland to LA, but it takes all day. Why should I ride?" No longer can I cite the memorably differentiating factor of the wine tastings.

Meanwhile, on the Marketing side, Amtrak is investing promotion of the long-distance experience to a variety of audiences. Under the branded hashtag #AmtrakLive, dozens of creative influencers rode the *Texas Eagle* from Los Angeles to Austin for the South by Southwest (SXSW) Festival. This is a shrewd play for Amtrak to gain cultural currency amongst a group that skews towards the young, affluent and highly connected.

Even more exciting from the perspective of guerrilla marketing is the burgeoning #AmtrakResidency program to give away long-distance sleeper tickets to influential writers. Amtrak made the program official weeks after leaking the details to writing publications to generate initial buzz. Amtrak is investing in what will surely be heaps of free publicity from the writers' output (even if it's not uniformly positive, especially with fewer perks).

Finally, Amtrak has launched a national advertising campaign to promote long distance trains and their extant amenities, at what appears to be a laudably unprecedented scope. While these Marketing campaigns will likely be very successful and deliver a handsome return on investment, there is no substitute for the marketing power of excellent product itself.

As rail advocates, it's our job to defend Amtrak against scurrilous political attacks on the very notion of offering high-quality food and beverage services and other amenities that define the train as the most human intercity travel option. The announced cuts play into the hands of the

most vocal members of a micromanagerial Congress who claim to want Amtrak to become more efficient and operate more like a business, but who in their hearts are philosophically opposed to competitive passenger train service and would rather dictate or incent artificially inferior service. It dignifies the framing of "freebie" amenities being a waste and not a valuable marketing tool or a potentially key driver of revenue.

Stable, long-term funding for passenger trains at parity with other modes would end these distracting conversations. Let's set Amtrak free to execute a truly long-term strategic plan that leverages its inherent strengths. Amtrak must step off its historic roller coaster of short-term product investment and cuts, instead resolving to work across departments and crafts – and with passengers themselves – to continually innovate a product that maximizes ridership, financial performance, and customer satisfaction. The traveling public deserves nothing less.

Adapted from the NARP Blog (posted March 11) – <http://narprail.org/blog>

Flem, from page 2

spoke favored rails being preserved or restored, though a couple supported the policy but expressed caution about providing state money to accomplish such an end. With new leadership among the most politically active trail advocates, we hope AAWA can work more cooperatively with these potential allies in the months and years to come and have rail and trail service for the densely populated, rapidly growing and traffic congested Eastside suburbs.

I stated AAWA's strong support for freight rail statewide, and to east-of-Cascades legislators, our interest in working toward daytime passenger train service, particularly from the Puget Sound region across Stampede Pass, serving Cle Elum, Ellensburg, Yakima, Pasco and on to Spokane.

The topic of the endemic wet-season mudslides, where we continue to push for solutions, arose several times.

Concerning coal and oil trains: When asked, I repeated AAWA's concerns for both safety and for potential negative impacts on passenger train service, while citing the AAWA Board's neutral position in reference to coal trains.

At our March 8 meeting in Tukwila, Rep. Hans Zeiger (R-Puyallup) was our one of our speakers. I was very pleased that Rep. Brad Klippert (R-Kennewick) also joined us to see his colleague's presentation and enjoy lunch and the remainder of the day's program. Rep. Klippert is a fine example of the bipartisan, statewide reach of the Rail Caucus. I end here by repeating that the LRC is the best news emerging from the State Capitol for AAWA and for the rail mode in Washington.

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All Aboard Washington: AllAboardWashington.org

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Amtrak: www.amtrak.com

Amtrak Cascades: www.amtrakcascades.com

Sound Transit: www.soundtransit.org

Cusick, from page 3

terns set up by the automobile.

To get to higher capacities, those 2 lane highways will be enlarged to 4 lane arterials, and then to accommodate a faster bus service, BRT if you may, the arterials are then "enhanced" with more BAT lanes in each direction, along with better left turn facilities.

This creates 7-lane wide roadways (turn lane/landscaped median), and in certain areas expands to 8 lanes for double turn lanes on to connecting arterials.

What does this do for walkability?

Nothing.

Oh, you can add signalization to accommodate pedestrians, but adding a pedestrian crossing cycle for such a wide roadway slows traffic flow down because it takes roughly three times longer for pedestrians to clear an intersection than vehicles. Is that the idea, to lower the performance for the single occupants of the vehicles on that arterial?

Bothell has just spent \$150+ mill. upgrading the intersection of SR 527 and SR 522 around their downtown core. It is no longer the narrow-road-but-pedestrian-friendly environment, but the newest of the signalized crosswalk variety that is friendlier to through traffic. Main St is no longer the **main street**, but merely one of the shopping district grid streets.

Let's compare two different areas that, from these satellite views, seem to be chasing highway capacity improvements to solve their mobility issues.



View 1, bottom left, shows seven lanes at a major intersection, where the state route is running top to bottom. Sure seems like a lot of space devoted to the use of the car!

Look at all that parking!
 What is this, a view of LA?



View 2, above, shows the same type of configuration where the main state route runs left to right, but it seems that there aren't as many parking lots, or auto centric businesses. Hmm, is it an east coast city?

It can't be New York or one of the local suburban cities, not enough high rises.

Essentially they look the same.

Except view 1 appears to have buses in their curb lanes, and view 2 seems to have regular traffic.

Well, my gut tells me I'm looking at Los Angeles in View 1, only because there is so much area dedicated to parking.

Or maybe it's Texas? No, too green.

I know, Florida! After all, in View 1 that walking path has high tension electrical poles, that cross the intersection and continue through the parking lot, suggesting it might have been a rail bed at one time, and Florida, as we know, is not the most rail-friendly of states.

But why would there have to be so many traffic lanes if View 1 wasn't supporting a large auto dependent lifestyle?

View 2 is harder to pin down. No bus lanes, but there are buses.

Wait, in View 1, I think I can make out ... yes ... in the upper right, that looks like Sky Nursery, and the lower left, that's a Fred Meyer store! Why View 1 is 180th and Aurora (SR 99) in Shoreline, Washington!

And that rail bed-cum-walkway/power line right-of-way was ... the route of the old Interurban?

"We don't need no stinkin' light rail on an old rail line!"

Better it be put next to the freeway, where people live and where there are businesses and other destination points, right?

View 2 is Santa Monica Blvd (Hwy 2) and North Crescent Heights Blvd in LA.

Maybe Santa Monica Blvd doesn't have bus lanes, but if you've ever ridden the LA buses ... well, "We don't need no stinkin' BAT Lanes!"

Why does the Pacific Northwest need arterials as wide as those in Los Angeles?

Is what is represented by View 2 our vision of the future?

This is the history of the "We don't need no stinkin' ..." phrase: The line was popularized by the 1948 film adaptation of the B. Traven's 1927 novel *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre*. In one scene, a Mexican bandit leader named "Gold Hat" (portrayed by [Alfonso Bedoya](#)) tries to convince Fred C. Dobbs ([Humphrey Bogart](#)) that he and his company are [Federales](#):

Dobbs: "If you're the police where are your [badges](#)?"

Gold Hat: "Badges? We ain't got no badges. We don't need no badges! I don't have to show you any stinkin' badges!"

President proposes \$19 billion for intercity passenger trains

[NARP reports](#) that on March 4, the Obama Administration released details about a \$302 billion transportation package that includes \$19 billion over four years for passenger trains. The proposal also includes \$72 billion for transit over four years that will fund commuter rail, streetcars and light rail across the U.S. The President's transportation plan is paid for through corporate tax reform—a principle that is being supported by leading Republicans. The President has offered a plan to move passenger rail funding from year-to-year appropriation battles to a dedicated, guaranteed source of funding; this will allow Amtrak and states to do multi-year planning.

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All Aboard News

May 10: National Train Day at King St. Station from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. All Aboard Washington plans to participate in the festivities. Come join us. More details will be posted to our webpage and social media sites.

Use the Amtrak *Cascades* to and from National Train Day. Watch for Amtrak to offer bonus Guest Rewards points for May 10.

June 14: All Aboard Washington is planning a **meeting and tour at the Amtrak/Talgo maintenance base in Seattle**. Details are pending. Full details will be in the next newsletter and posted to our webpage and social media sites.

Use the Amtrak *Cascades* to and from the meeting.

All Aboard Washington has recently welcomed the following new members: Henry and Judy Koepfle, Walla Walla; and Dave and Sally McCray, Renton.

All Aboard Washington members contributing to this newsletter include: Zack Willhoite, Barry Green, Mark Meyer, Charlie Hamilton, Lloyd Flem and Jim Cusick.

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director for BNSF in Washington State. He started with the railroad last year, having previously been a lobbyist and legislative aide. His presentation was entitled "Washington's freight rail backbone: Delivering safety and prosperity in the Pacific Northwest."

He noted BNSF, through its predecessor railroads, has been in the Northwest for over 100 years. He outlined BNSF's network in our state and the benefits of rail for moving cargo, noting the importance of the system to the economic vitality of Washington.

In 2013 BNSF invested an industry record \$4.3 bill. in its infrastructure. This year the railroad plans to invest \$5 bill., with substantial amounts being spent on its lines in Washington, Montana and North Dakota. Hellman noted that **all** investments (whether public or private) benefit **all** users on the rail network.

(Editor: It will take several years to complete these improvements so the *Empire Builder* will continue to suffer. AAWA and NARP have continued to publicly and privately push Amtrak to work with BNSF to develop interim adjustments to the *Builder's* schedule so that passengers would have at least some expectation of on-time reliability. A temporarily lengthened schedule appears

to be nearing implementation.)

Hellman wrapped up his presentation by discussing BNSF's on-going efforts to improve safety on its system:

- Employee engagement
- Bridge and track inspections that go beyond that required by FRA
- 24/7 weather warnings
- Proactive railcar defect detection technology
- Support for increased design standards for tank cars that carry oil
- Hazmat responders stationed throughout its system
- Free hazmat training for local first responders



The Portland Visitors Bureau has wrapped and decorated the Bistro car



on the Mt Jefferson trainset to promote tourism travel to Portland.