



**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
RAILROAD PASSENGERS**

TRAINS: A TRAVEL CHOICE AMERICANS WANT

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May 29, 2009

The Honorable James L. Oberstar, Chairman
Attention: David Heymsfeld
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

As you are painfully aware, the climate change bill which the Energy and Commerce Committee passed last week, H.R. 2454, is woefully inadequate in its treatment of transportation. About 20% of the bill's revenues come from transportation users, yet none of those funds would be invested in transportation infrastructure.

Since yours is one of nine committees to which the bill is referred, we urge you to work hard towards having **mass transit and passenger trains get some of the bill's revenues.**

The National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study Commission said, in its final report, "Congress may enact a tax on carbon or a 'cap and trade' system to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. To the extent that such a taxation or trading system encompasses transportation related-sources, Congress should ensure that transportation activities that reduce greenhouse gas emissions receive a proportionate share of any revenue generated by these new schemes [pp. 43-44]...Intercity passenger rail is...more energy efficient than many other modes of passenger transportation...[Freight] rail is less energy intensive [than trucking; p. 3-21]..."

The United States transportation system is:

- the largest in the world and one of the most energy intensive, as reflected in the fact that the U.S. with 4.5% of world population uses 25% of the world's oil;
- almost entirely responsible for U.S. dependence on oil as the major source of energy (About 60% of U.S. oil is imported. Transportation consumes seven of every 10 barrels of oil consumed in the United States.);
- a major source of global GHG emissions and the fastest growing domestic source of such emissions; and
- responsible for one-third of U.S. CO2 emissions.

**Our Mission: A modern, customer-focused national passenger
train network that provides a travel choice Americans want**

The Honorable James L. Oberstar
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Experts say that fuel efficiency offers the most immediate and largest potential for reducing CO₂ emissions from the transportation sector over the next three decades. The transport emissions reduction policy measure that would have the most immediate impact is the one that demands more from the most fuel and carbon efficient forms of transportation—notably, trains and transit. To do that will require resources that will be difficult to obtain in the current economic environment.

H.R. 2454 does not provide an allocation for fuel/carbon efficient transportation. Consequently, the current form of the bill is bad public policy. The current state of the Highway Trust Fund (which also has been providing 80% of Federal funding for transit) underlines the importance of making every effort to include transportation infrastructure investment in climate change legislation.

Since polls show that environmental causes have taken a hit because of the economy, it is important to remember—and to remind your colleagues—that *good public transport reduces total transportation costs of households* by giving citizens more choices, including the opportunity to drive less.

You know as well as anyone that raising the “flag” now can prove helpful even if your immediate efforts are not successful. There is widespread doubt that the Senate will do a counterpart bill this year. In any event, every effort to remind your colleagues that climate change is not all about electric power companies will be helpful in the long run.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ross B. Capon". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ross B. Capon
President

cc: The Honorable John Mica
The Honorable Corrine Brown
The Honorable Bill Shuster
The Honorable Peter A. DeFazio
The Honorable John J. Duncan Jr.