

“We want to thank the public for their support, and for providing the North Bay with a state-of-the-art transportation system.”

SMART BOARD VICE CHAIRWOMAN KATHRIN SEARS

Deadline Approaches For Senate And House To Fund Transportation

In July, the Senate and House Appropriations Committees both approved positive transportation budgets, providing increased funding for Amtrak and passenger rail. However, with the September 30th deadline for the current fiscal year approaching fast, Congress is quickly running out of time to turn these bills into law.

With the entire federal budget hanging in the balance, and a debt limit that must be addressed simultaneously, there’s a real threat that Congress could kick the can down the road and pass a short term extension.

While an extension—referred to in Congress as a Continuing resolution, or CR—will be more beneficial for Amtrak than in years pass as a result of successful 2017 advocacy to increase funding

to intercity passenger rail and transit programs, it will still mean losing hundreds of millions of dollars in increased investment.

NARP is asking all passengers to take action to ensure that Congress passes increased funding for Amtrak and transit!

You can help get these bills over the line by:

- [Writing your elected officials](#)
- Attending a [town hall event](#) held by your representative or senator and letting them know “I depend on Amtrak’s network!”

Standard transportation funding is even more important given setbacks to the Trump Administration’s stated goal of moving an infrastructure package.

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Summer By Rail Concludes 27-Day Journey In Washington, D.C.

Summer by Rail interns Victoria Principato and Cate Boyle returned to Washington D.C.’s Union Station on Saturday, August 26th after a 27-day 10,000 mile journey that took them to 22 cities and 10 states in the U.S. and Canada.

The two started their trip on Monday, July 31, in New York’s Penn Station. In the first week of their journey Victoria and Cate traveled to Burlington, VT, across the



Cate and Victoria pose in front of the Hollywood sign after a day of hiking Griffith Park in Los Angeles. (Photo Credit: NARP)

border to Canada and then back stateside.

“Passenger rail is such a large part of our transportation system, and this trip showed me how connected it really is,” Principato said. “Trains are a great and efficient way to see the country.”

Following the quick turn around, the travelers briefly stopped in Chicago for a connection to Kalamazoo, MI. Mayor Bobby Hopewell

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SMART Launches First Sonoma-to-Marin Transit In Decades

On August 25, the Sonoma-Marina Area Rail Transit (SMART) District in California kicked off the first area rail transit to operate in decades by offering free rides to passengers. The initial 43 miles of rail corridor includes 10 stations from Sonoma County Airport to Downtown San Rafael. When the full 70-mile project is complete, it will connect passengers with jobs, education centers, retail hubs and housing. SMART representatives and local officials at the agency's Santa Rosa Downtown Station will hold a grand opening ceremony at 7 Fourth Street in Historic Railroad Square at 9 a.m.

SMART Board of Directors Chairwoman Debora Fudge said, "We are proud to say that we are ready to roll. This is the result of years of hard work from SMART's staff, its team of contractors and consultants, and Federal Railroad

Administration Regional Administrator James Jordan and his team. Successfully opening a new transit system is a major accomplishment—and we will remember this day for generations to come."

The launch of SMART service was in question as it required federal approval from the Federal Railroad Administration, and was severely delayed over the past two years. The FRA granted

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Officials speak at the opening of SMART service. (Photo Credit: The Press Democrat)

New Study Estimates Lower Cost For North South Rail Link

A new study by Harvard Kennedy School (HKS) students, alumni and faculty found that building a tunnel under Boston to connect the North and South Stations would be far less expensive than original estimates.

The Harvard study showed costs would be between \$3.8 and \$6 million, down from \$9 million originally expected, depending on the size of the buildout. A 'maximum build' would include four tracks, two tunnels, and three stations, while the 'minimum build,' would include only two tracks, one tunnel and two stations.

The North South Rail Link was first proposed more than 100 years ago, but movement on building the 2.8-mile tunnel has been idle. Advocacy groups such as NARP expect the new research from HKS will generate a renewed push forward.

"NARP and its members have advocated for the North South Link for several

years, as it would provide a transit alternative to a congested downtown Boston," said NARP President and CEO Jim Mathews. "There is a sense of urgency from local officials and advocates that now is the time for the tunnel, and we welcome the change it can bring to Boston, as well as the entire Northeast Corridor."

The project, which would allow passengers to ride Amtrak from D.C. to Maine without interruption, was previously advocated by two former Massachusetts governors, Mike Dukakis and Bill Weld. In recent months, the link has received added political support from U.S. Representative Seth Moulton, a Harvard Kennedy School graduate (MPP 2011) who represents Massachusetts' 6th Congressional district.

Moulton writes on his website, "The North South Rail Link is the type of visionary, transformative investment

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welcomed the pair when they arrived. A 17-hour trip to Denver came next, and the two connected with Jim Souby, the President of the Colorado Rail Passenger Association. Souby and the SBR crew met up with Anthony Graves, Director of Regional Affairs, from the office of the Denver Mayor.

“This couldn’t have been a better experience. Victoria and I traveled to so many places and connected with so many people, all while showing the importance of passenger rail,” Boyle said.

Riding the California Zephyr, the two stopped in Glenwood Spring, CO, en route to California. After two weeks of traveling, Victoria and Cate arrived in Emeryville. One short bus ride later, they found themselves in San Francisco.

In Sacramento, the pair had the chance to tour the plant of railcar manufacturer, Siemens. From there, the two left for L.A., where they hiked Griffith Park in search of the famed Hollywood sign, walked among the stars on Hollywood Boulevard, and took a tour of Metro’s rapidly expanding bikeshare program.



Victoria and Cate bike through Burlington, VT. (Photo Credit: NARP)

By way of the Southwest Chief, Victoria and Cate arrived in Kansas City, MO, 36 hours later. They took full advantage of KC’s bike share system and the free KC Street Car. With only a few stops left, the interns traveled to St. Louis, MO; New Orleans, LA; and Hattiesburg, MS, before making it back to Washington. ■

SMART, from p. 2

permission for SMART to use Positive Train Control technology, which can remotely monitor and slow or stop trains that are speeding, earlier in August. With that approval, SMART trains can run on a 43-mile route that covers 10 stations from the Charles M. Schulz Sonoma County Airport in Santa Rosa to downtown San Rafael.

“This is an important moment for passenger rail in the Sonoma-Marín area,” said NARP President and CEO Jim Mathews.

“Voters first approved this service nine years ago, and there were questions if it would ever get going. It finally is, and we are expecting it to provide great benefits to community, economy and commuters.”

Following the grand opening, SMART service was free for the day with the first ride at 12:49pm. Through Labor Day, September 4, SMART fares will then be discounted 50 percent, and normal priced fares will be instituted on September 5. ■

STUDY, from p. 2

Massachusetts and New England need to compete in a 21st Century global economy.”

It won’t be easy, however, to move the tunnel forward. NARP member Tom Girsch participated as a panelist at a town hall discussion in Salem, MA on July 31. Girsch said there are a number of projects vying for funding and support over the North-South Link, but the tunnel needs to be pushed forward with the community at large. One such project competing for funding is the proposed expansion of South Station from 13 tracks to 20.

“What’s lacking more than



An Amtrak train and MBTA train at Boston’s North Station

(Photo Credit: Frank Hebbert)

anything is public awareness and public support (for the North South Rail Link),” Girsch said. “Make noise. This is a great idea. I think we should be doing this — I don’t think we should be expanding stations that don’t get me where I want to go.”

The authors of the new report are Laura White, M.P.P. ’18; Jean-Louis Rochet, M.P.P. ’17; Pete Mathias, M.P.A. ’17; Kate O’Gorman, M.P.A. ’17; and Linda Bilmes, Daniel Patrick Moynihan Senior Lecturer in Public Policy at HKS. Additional information on the study is available online at: www.hks.harvard.edu. ■

STATES NEWS • STATES NEWS • STATES NEWS • STATES NEWS

Passenger rail service between West Palm Beach and Miami is set to begin by the end of 2017. All Aboard Florida's Brightline will offer introductory fares and special deals to encourage ridership. Initially expected to launch at the end of the summer, Brightline CEO Dave Howard revised expectations to say that trains will be fully operational later this year. The full schedule should be released in the coming weeks and ticket prices will be announced 10 days before service is set to begin.

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Texas Central Partners announced that it has selected Fluor Enterprises, based in Irving, TX, and The Lane Construction Corporation in Connecticut, to further study the proposed high-speed route between Houston and Dallas. The selection of the two companies is a major milestone for Texas Central and both companies have dedicated dozens of engineers to preliminary analysis of the 200 mph train service.

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The Gateway Program Development Corp. (GDC), which oversees the development of the Gateway Program, issued a request for information (RFI) from private-sector leaders regarding the Hudson Tunnel project that will link New York and New Jersey with a new passenger rail tunnel. The GDC asked for ideas that focus on planning for procurement and delivery — including potential design, construction and solutions. The RFI also included



A close up of a Brightline train.
(Credit: TC Palm)

the final section of the Hudson Yards concrete casing project.

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In Minnesota, the development of a light-rail project that would connect downtown Minneapolis to Eden Prairie is closer to taking shape following new agreements this week between the Metropolitan Council, BNSF Railway, and Twin Cities & Western Railroad. The agreement follows a deal made earlier this year between the Council and Canadian Pacific Railway. The organizations have all agreed to allow the Southwest light-rail and freight rail to operate along much of the same corridor. The agreements allow the light-rail project to apply for \$929 million in federal funding. ■

Rail Passengers' Stories on the Importance of Long Distance Trains

Larry and Becky Schneider El Paso, TX

I understand not everything that everybody wants can be funded, but I truly believe passenger rail is really important, not only to El Paso, but for so many places across this country.

America needs a good alternative to cars and planes.

High speed rail networks throughout the nation would be awesome, but even having a faster alternative for passenger rail, one that didn't constantly compete with freight rail would be doable, and probably cost less.

They are a proven, safer form of travel, and greener as well.

Larry and Becky Schneider

Laird Schaub Duluth, MN

I'm an independent businessman whose work as a consultant and teacher, takes me all across the United States. For the last 30 years I've have been relying on trains to get me close to wherever my clients are. Not only does this choice mean I'm not placing another car on the road, but trains allow me to work en route (it's too crowded on planes to do this) and to protect time to reflect and recharge between the intensity of my work. It is the safest and most humane form of transportation.

I'm on Amtrak approximately 20 times per year and my lifestyle would be seriously compromised if I lost that option. Please keep our passenger rolling stock rolling.

Laird Schaub



NARP's RailNation Chicago THE Rail Passenger Advocacy Event

■ Thursday, November 2 to Sunday, November 5, 2017

■ Don't Miss Out...Four days packed with an exciting array of presentations, speakers, panels, exhibits, tours, excursions and events highlighting the future of passenger rail in the United States and celebrating NARP's 50th Anniversary.

- Confirmed & Invited Speakers Include:
 - ✓ Richard Anderson - President/CEO - Amtrak
 - ✓ Gov. Michael Dukakis of Massachusetts
 - ✓ Joseph Szabo - Executive Director - Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning
 - ✓ Hon. John Robert Smith - Board Chair Transportation for America
 - ✓ Daniel Elliott III - Vice-Chair Surface Transportation Board
 - ✓ Ian Jefferies - Senior VP Government Affairs - Association of American Railroads
 - ✓ Henry Posner III - Chairman - Railroad Development Corporation
 - ✓ Karen Hedlund - Director P3's Parsons Brinckerhoff
 - ✓ Richard Harnish - Executive Director Mid-West High Speed Rail Association
 - ✓ Jim Wrinn - Editor - Trains Magazine
 - ✓ Bob Johnston - Columnist - Trains Magazine
 - ✓ Don Phillips - Columnist - Trains Magazine

■ Fabulous Anniversary Celebration Gala Dinner on Saturday Evening, November 4

■ Host Hotel: Millennium Knickerbocker - E. Walton Place at N. Michigan Ave.

■ Visit the NARP website for complete information, agenda & details; to register and to reserve a room. Or call the NARP Office 202-408-8362 for assistance. Don't Delay...Discounted hotel reservations must be made by October 3rd! ■

Important Membership Reminder

■ There are still openings on the NARP Council of Representatives in several states, including one each in Alabama; Arizona; Hawaii; Idaho; Indiana; Missouri; North Dakota; Ohio; Virginia and Wyoming. If you are interested in becoming more involved with NARP and advancing our goal of 'A Connected America,' please visit our website, www.narprail.org under 'About' to 'Leadership' to 'Council of Representatives' to 'Open Seats' for more information on applying and for a complete, up-to-date list of the positions available. ■

NARP Member Benefits

■ If you haven't done so already, claim your Travelers United Advocate Membership, and broaden support for consumer focus, at: <https://travelersunited.org/welcome-narp/>

■ Review the full and growing list of NARP benefits by logging into: <https://www.narprail.org/MyBenefits> ■

DEADLINE, from p. 1

Following backlash from business leaders against President Trump's remarks relating to demonstrations and violence in Charlottesville, Virginia, the White House announced it is not moving ahead with its Presidential Advisory Council on Infrastructure.

With no plan in place to move legislation forward, it appears President Trump's campaign proposals for a massive infrastructure package are going nowhere anytime soon.

With infrastructure investment dropping to 1.4% of GDP in the U.S. in the second quarter—an all-time low—Congressional action on transportation is more important than ever.

NARP is asking every Amtrak, subway, and commuter passenger to write their elected officials today! ■

WEB EXCLUSIVE! Founding Member Of TRA Passes Away

A founding member of Texas Rail Advocates, Paul Mangelsdorf, passed away on July 28 due to complications following a surgery on July 15. Mangelsdorf dedicated much of his life to supporting and promoting transportation services in Dallas, throughout Texas and across the nation. He spent 12 years working with Dallas Area Rapid Transit, and was a major advocate for light rail service in Dallas. Mangelsdorf also advocated for building of high speed rail in Texas and across North

America. He was also the Executive Vice President of the Triangle Railroad Holding Co.

A funeral ceremony was held for Mangelsdorf on August 3 at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church in Dallas. He is survived by his sisters Ann Mangelsdorf OSU, Mary Benson Betsy (Mick) Santoro; his brother Thomas Vincent "T.V." (Lou Ann) Mangelsdorf, as well as numerous nieces, nephews and grandnieces and grandnephews. ■

NARP Traveler's Advisory

❖ Flooding rainfall from Hurricane Harvey and resulting temporary track closures in Texas have led Amtrak to extend a service disruption on the routes of the Sunset Limited (Trains 1 & 2) and the Texas Eagle (Trains 21/421 & 22/422).

• **Sunset Limited** (Train 1/421 & 2/422) will originate and terminate in San Antonio instead of New Orleans, with no alternate transportation between New Orleans and San Antonio.

• **Texas Eagle** (Train 21/421 & 22/422) will originate and terminate in Fort Worth instead of San Antonio, with alternate transportation provided between Fort Worth and San Antonio.

Amtrak Thruway Buses in central and southern Texas (Routes 6021 & 6022, 8721 & 8722, and 8821 & 8822) are canceled and the Amtrak station in Houston is closed.

❖ Effective until further notice, Wolverine Trains 350, 355 between Chicago and Detroit, and Blue Water Trains 364 and 365 that run through Michigan, may experience delays of 15 to 30 minutes while system maintenance is being performed. ■