Ohio Hub plan gaining speed

Public says “Build it now”

From across the state and across the board, business, government and community leaders, as well as everyday Ohioans made emphatic comments to the Ohio Rail Development Commission (ORDC) in a series of statewide public meetings about the Ohio Hub plan.

“The crisis is here. We needed this yesterday,” said the Hamilton County Engineer. “Build it now.” said a Toledo citizen. “This is the answer for the Rust Belt,” insisted the mayor of University Heights in suburban Cleveland.

“The message is loud and clear,” said ORDC Executive Director Jim Seney. “People understand the need for a plan like the Ohio Hub and what it means for economic development, creation of more and better jobs and how it will improve the mobility and quality of life for themselves, their families and neighbors.

“I have rarely seen such almost unanimous public support for a major project in all of my years as a public servant,” added Mr. Seney, who served 19 years as Mayor of Sylvania, Ohio before going to the Ohio Department of Development and then becoming ORDC’s executive director.

He said more than 700 people attended the 14 public meetings and almost 1,000 one-on-one briefings. They expressed a significant sense of urgency about the need for reinvesting and redeveloping Ohio’s rail corridors for passengers and freight.

They also expressed support for:

• creating the Ohio Hub System as part of a national rail system;
• the jobs, economic development and increased freight capacity that would be created by investing in such a regional rail system;
• connections the system would create to major international airports, centers of commerce, major universities and others.

Things keep tilting in favor of trains, but will our leaders? Fortunately, more are doing just that. High energy costs, booming ridership on trains, bankrupt airlines, an aging populace and the daily grind of flying and driving clarify the need for boosting public investments in trains. Soon, European-style trains that tilt into curves on existing tracks could be as common in Ohio as they are in the Pacific Northwest. This one glided through Kent, WA in August 2005.

Cleveland Mayor joins growing
Cleveland Mayor joins growing chorus for the Ohio Hub

By Ken Prendergast
Editor, Ohio Passenger Rail News

CLEVELAND — At a well-attended press conference recently, Cleveland Mayor Jane L. Campbell announced her support for the Ohio Hub System, which would create fast passenger train services and enhance freight rail infrastructure. She was joined by longtime rail supporter Rep. Steve LaTourette (R-Painesville), chair of the House Railroad Subcommittee, in advocating for high-speed rail as the next big transportation investment for Greater Cleveland.

The detailed plan, called the Ohio Hub, is proposed by the Ohio Rail Development Commission to be built in phases, beginning with 79-mph trains using existing, high-quality freight tracks to Columbus, Cincinnati, Pittsburgh, Detroit, Toronto and Chicago. Cleveland will be the hub of a network of rail services, with train speeds safely increased to 110 mph with additional investments in infrastructure. For links to the Ohio Hub plan and maps, visit www.allaboardohio.org on the Internet.

Both Mayor Campbell and Rep. LaTourette said

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Train of Thought
from Ohio Passenger Rail News Editor
Kenneth Prendergast

Hurricanes Katrina and Rita gave Americans a preview of a future that cannot be avoided. But it’s not about human suffering or governmental bungling — or, at least it needn’t be. It’s about Americans’ behavioral reactions to sharply higher energy prices.

As often happens in times of crisis, some of those reactions were irrational, while others were surprisingly sane.

Higher energy prices are unavoidable because of the geologic limitations on oil supplies and our unwillingness, thus far, to come to grips with that fact. Oil itself is a miraculous carrier of stored energy. When refined and combusted, it can do the work in seconds that would otherwise require the labor of hundreds of humans over many hours or days. It’s light and portable, capable of being pumped out of rock deep beneath a desert or an ocean, and then carried thousands of miles to waiting consumers. Sadly, oil has no equal — yet. And, that’s part of the problem.

The other part of the problem is that it’s nonrenewable. Oil isn’t about to run out. But the global supply is about to pass a crest, marking its halfway point. After that, for each average year, there will be less oil supplied than the year before. For most Americans, who consume four times as much oil as the next-most thirsty nation — China and its 1.2 billion citizens — that’s a sour pill of crude to swallow.

Unless alternatives to oil are found soon, or much more efficient means of using petroleum are encouraged, gas prices of $3 per gallon will seem like a fond memory. The only thing that could keep oil prices in check is what’s called “demand destruction.” In lieu of alternatives, that’s a nice way of calling a recession, like the last time oil demand was destroyed in the 1970s after global politics tightened the petro-spigot like a noose around our necks.

Now, numerous emerging economies are begging for more of the black gold or, more accurately, the black crack. When oil barons have a product that some nations are willing to kill for, you can be darn sure they’re going to sell it to the highest bidders, then return to their mansions each night with ever-bigger smiles on their faces.

So, what changes in behavior did we see in the wake of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita? On the rational side, we heard some Americans question the locations of where they lived or worked. In the past, cheap gas made it affordable to reside far from our jobs, more often in McMansions set in car-oriented exurbs. Even a short-term gas price spike woke many to the unsustainability of their lifestyles. A long-term structural change could cause the end of urban sprawl, and perhaps cause urban areas to draw in their citizens for the efficiencies of greater development densities.

And, despite our sprawling cities and the difficulties of transit to serve them, ridership on many transit systems took their largest jumps in years. Toledo Area Regional Transit Authority buses carried 7 percent more passengers in the week after Labor Day, while ridership on the Washington, D.C., Metro jumped 12 percent.

But, there was also a dark side. People bought more fuel-efficient cars. On the average, they would have to travel 50 miles to get the same “miles per gallon” they previously got from their low-mileage cars. That’s a lot of extra travel, especially if you live far from work. The 50-mile commute has long been considered a banana peel, and now it’s become a millstone. The greater the miles you drive, the more you’ll have to pay for the privilege...

Rivers of gasoline were sloshing over the levee of morality. Either we act now or our kids will wake up to a world we’re not so fond of. If you don’t like the results of Katrina and Rita, it could be the least we’ve seen.
Photos and Articles

Clippings from newspapers and magazines must include the publication's name and date. Your articles and news briefs should be typed and double-spaced, though very short items may be legibly written. Preferably, send hard copy with IBM-compatible text files on CDs, or send e-mail submissions to:

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We reserve the right to edit all non-published submissions. Original photos should be sharp, bright prints—avoid negatives. Always include your name and phone number!

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Cleveland Mayor joins growing chorus for the Ohio Hub

"Endorsement" from page one

the 21st-century rail network would create thousands of new jobs, increase mobility and provide an affordable travel choice in an era of rising gas prices. At the Sept. 1 press conference, Mayor Campbell first listed the $146 million worth of road, transit and bike path projects for Greater Cleveland that were included in Congress' recently passed surface transportation funding reauthorization. She then said the next transportation priority for the region should be the development of fast, regional passenger trains.

"This is the next step in the transportation discussion," Mayor Campbell said. "It will give us a new transportation infrastructure to take advantage of Cleveland's great location. I think it's more than doable; it's exciting."

Mayor Campbell was a state legislator in the 1980s when Ohio sought to go it alone in funding a high-speed network. When a reporter asked her what is different this time around, Mayor Campbell turned to Rep. LaTourette and said that having a federal funding partner appears more likely.

Rep. LaTourette said that while federal funding has been lacking for high-speed trains, legislation is moving through Congress to reform Amtrak, the national passenger railroad. It would also provide $11 billion over six years for Amtrak, including an 80 percent federal share for capital improvements, such as new trains, upgrade tracks and stations. U.S. Senator Mike DeWine is a co-sponsor of the reform bill.

That legislation, coupled with Rep. LaTourette's pending bill, the Railroad Infrastructure Development Act for the 21st Century (House Bill 1631), would provide $60 billion in federal funds to build infrastructure for high-speed trains and relieve freight train traffic congestion.

"It's gaining support in Congress every day," Rep. LaTourette said.

At the Ohio Association of Railroad Passengers' summer meeting in Ashtabula County, Rep. LaTourette was the keynote speaker. He said it would be worthwhile to consider seeking a federal funding earmark to develop an introductory level of passenger train service in Ohio. Similar federal funding initiatives were secured for other intercity rail projects, such as the Keystone Corridor between Harrisburg and Philadelphia, the Downeaster service between Boston and Portland, ME, and for much of the Northeast Corridor.

"We need to push this," Rep. LaTourette said. "We can add only so many lanes to I-71. The future of this nation must include passenger rail."

Stu Nicholson, public information officer for the Ohio Rail Development Commission, said the Ohio Hub System needs political champions like Mayor Campbell and Rep. LaTourette. He added that their endorsement gives a "huge boost" to the prospects for building the system.

At full build-out, the Ohio Hub system would offer 5-8 daily trains in each direction; traveling at 110 mph on new tracks. A region having more than 22 million people would be served. Total cost of the fully developed system would be about $3.2 billion, paid for by a mix of local, state and federal transportation dollars. A tax increase would not be required, Nicholson emphasized.

"This is the next step in the transportation discussion" said Cleveland Mayor Jane L. Campbell, referring to the Ohio Hub System of fast passenger trains and expanded rail freight traffic capacity. She was joined at a Sept. 1 City Hall press conference by U.S. Rep. Steve LaTourette (R-Painesville) to announce her support for the Ohio Hub and the thousands of non-exportable jobs it will create.

"The success of the plan depends on having the endorsement of Cleveland's mayor, since Cleveland will be the focal point of the Ohio Hub," said Dominic Liberatore, executive director of All Aboard Ohio. "We are grateful to Mayor Campbell for her endorsement of a rail system that will bring Northeast Ohio into the 21st century. We are entering an era when regions reap the greatest economic rewards by being smarter in their use of natural resources."
Ohio Hub plan gaining speed

"Ohio Hub" from page one

rail and rail-related projects as the state’s potential match for federal dollars, once a federal program becomes available.

The “Public & Agency Involvement Report” is available for viewing and download on ORDC’s Web site at www.dot.state.oh.us/ohiorail under the link: Ohio & Lake Erie Regional Rail / Ohio Hub Study.

Hub plan gets important endorsements

Add the cities of Cleveland, Dayton and Shelby to the growing list of endorsements of the Ohio Hub plan. However diverse, the common thread these and other cities share is recognition that improving our rail infrastructure for passenger rail service and greater freight capacity means a direct and positive impact in terms of jobs, economic development and increased mobility.

Perhaps the most dramatic show of support for the Ohio Hub came recently from Cleveland Mayor Jane Campbell, who devoted a City Hall news conference to the Ohio Hub and what it potentially offers the Greater Cleveland area (see “Cleveland Mayor joins growing chorus for the Ohio Hub” on Page One).

Other endorsements and resolutions of support have come from numerous other communities and organizations (see sidebar this page). Community leaders and association members who would like to see their local governments pass similar resolutions should contact All Aboard Ohio’s Columbus office at (614) 228-6005 or the ORDC at (614) 644-0306 to receive a sample resolution.

When your township trustees, city council or county commission passes a resolution, please send the approved copy to All Aboard Ohio and ORDC.

Where do we go from here?

The ORDC has two immediate projects, one of which is already underway. That is a study to add two new routes to the base plan for the Ohio Hub:

- Pittsburgh - Columbus - Lima - Fort Wayne - Chicago
- Columbus - Toledo - Detroit

The desire for these new routes is a direct result of public input from the series of statewide meetings conducted by ORDC in the past year. Also, Lima Mayor David Berger spearheaded a letter signed by his fellow mayors of Pittsburgh, Columbus, Fort Wayne and Chicago. That letter asked Ohio Gov. Bob Taft to request that ORDC include the new route in its feasibility study. That study should be finished by late this year or next spring.

The second study is a detailed economic impact study of the Ohio Hub plan. The initial Ohio Hub Study revealed very encouraging preliminary numbers: 6,000 new construction jobs, 1,800 permanent railroad jobs, and more than 6,000 new jobs connected to economic development around the rail system. The numbers also show significant increases to property values, household incomes and tax revenues.

But Mr. Seney said although positive, don’t show enough of a detailed picture of what communities and segments of Ohio economy benefit and by how much.

“A major portion of this project is moving dirt,” he said. “We’re talking about a significant source of new business just for the heavy construction industry, who are the very people who build our highways.”

Mr. Seney says he has gained the support for the Ohio Hub plan from the Ohio Contractors Association, which represents the heavy construction industry.

“We need to take a closer look at what other industries and segments of Ohio’s economy will benefit in terms of jobs, income generated, redevelopment of property around stations and other impacts,” Mr. Seney said. Armed with that information, he explained that “we can build the political will to get the Ohio Hub underway and growing.”

The next major step will come next year, when ORDC hopes to begin the federally-required Programmatic Environmental Impact Study (PEIS) phase. That will be the stage where ORDC will be able to determine the exact needs to build the system: routes, potential station sites, how much track needs to be laid, identifying rail bottlenecks and possible solutions, and other aspects.

“If we can complete the PEIS in a timely fashion,” Mr. Seney concluded, “Ohio will have a funding-ready regional rail plan in place when a federal funding program becomes available.”

A sampling of support for Ohio passenger rail development

As of September 2005

City of Cincinnati Council, Resolution No. 0050-2005
City of Cleveland, Mayoral Press Conference, 9-1-05
Commission of the City of Dayton, Resolution 653-05
Council of the City of Galion, Resolution No. 2005-19
Council of the City of Lima, Publication: 1-31-05
Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission, 8-4-2005
Midwest Legislative Conference of The Council of State Governments Resolution on Passenger Rail Development in the Midwest July 31-August 3, 2005
Monroe County Planning Commission, Motion approved 4-6-2005
Ohio Contractors Association, Letter of Support, July 26, 2005
The City of Shaker Heights, Mayor, Letter of Support, August 30, 2005
Sylvania City Council, Resolution No. 31-2004
Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority, Letter of Support, 12-20-2004
Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments Resolution No. 2004-21
Traffic congestion...on the rails

By Ken Prendergast
Editor, Ohio Passenger Rail News

Traffic congestion isn’t unique to highways and airports. In recent years, as freight railroads have increased efficiencies, lowered shipping rates, improved customer service and expanded their share of the market, traffic congestion has come to them, too. But, unlike their highway and aviation counterparts, railroads are seriously limited in their ability to access funding to relieve congestion.

Traffic growth on the railroads is booming. Tonnage carried have increased by 64 percent since the rail freight industry was deregulated by the federal government in 1980. The U.S. Department of Transportation estimates rail tonnage will increase by another 50 percent or more by 2020. That has profound implications for the nation’s economy, especially as rising energy prices in the past two years have caused more shippers to turn to fuel-efficient railroads.

It also has profound implications for passenger rail services, be they intercity or regional commuter trains, which are dependent on using freight railroad-owned tracks throughout much of the nation.

“Congestion and cargo jams on some of the nation’s largest freight railroads are also causing severe delays on some of Amtrak’s passenger trains,” wrote Daniel Machalaba in a recent article in the Wall Street Journal. “Amtrak said the latest figures represented its worst on-time performance in recent memory.”

In Ohio, Amtrak had to drop two stations - Elyria and Sandusky - from its westbound Capitol Limited schedule, because of freight traffic congestion on Norfolk Southern’s main line. However, if those two stations gained station platforms for passengers on both sides of the NS tracks, full Amtrak service might be restored, said Bill Hutchison, president of All Aboard Ohio.

This past summer, Amtrak President David Gunn wrote to Michael Ward, chief executive officer of freight railroad CSX, complaining about the worsening

Additional freight traffic will further clog the nation’s railroads, divert shipments to highways, further delay Amtrak and commuter train passengers, and hinder efforts to expand passenger train services.

Central to this problem is that railroads don’t earn enough revenue from shippers to cover their cost of capital. Prior to deregulation, railroads saw a return of only 4 percent on the capital investments they made to their infrastructure. That has since improved to 8 percent. But, the cost of capital standard for U.S. industries is 10 percent. Railroads are extraordinarily capital intensive. They spend five times more to maintain and

“This would shift almost 900 million tons of freight and 31 billion truck vehicle-miles traveled to the highways, costing shippers $326 billion, costing highway users $492 billion (in travel time, operating, and accident costs), and adding $21 billion to highway costs over the 20-year period. This $21 billion is a conservative figure that does not include the costs of improvements to bridges, interchanges, local roads, new roads, or system enhancements. If these were included, the estimate could double,” according to AASHTO’s Freight Rail Bottom-Line Report.

Highway departments are already having a difficult

Worsening freight traffic congestion is causing more delays, expense and inconvenience to railroads, shippers and passengers. Amtrak has seen its on-time performance drop to historic levels nationwide as it threads its passenger trains along busy freight railroad routes. Such complications caused Amtrak to cut station stops
This past summer, Amtrak President David Gunn wrote to Michael Ward, chief executive officer of freight railroad CSX, complaining about the worsening delays to Amtrak trains and offered to discuss solutions. CSX’s tracks host more Amtrak trains than do any other railroad.

“These service problems,” Amtrak’s Mr. Gunn wrote, “are causing significant inconvenience to Amtrak’s customers and significant Amtrak operating inefficiencies, leading to Amtrak revenue losses and cost increases. We simply must do better.”

CSX said it isn’t immune either. Its on-time freight arrival rate fell to 34 percent in 2004, down from 78 percent two years earlier. Other large freight railroads also have suffered worsening delays, and said they have had to turn away potential freight customers due to lack of capacity.

Unless more financial resources can be found to increase the traffic capacity of railroad mainlines and terminals, there isn’t much CSX and other freight railroads can do, according to the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO).

### Major railroad projects get federal funding

Nearly $1.9 billion in federal funding over six years for railroad projects was authorized this summer through a renewal of the federal surface transportation funding program. While this is a help, significant rail infrastructure needs of about $75 billion remain unfunded over the legislation’s six-year period, according to the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials.

For Ohioans, a significant project — the Heartland Corridor — received funding to increase rail intermodal equipment clearances between Virginia and Ohio. Also, the $1.5 billion Chicago Regional Environmental And Transportation Efficiency project (CREATE), to relieve Chicago-area freight and passenger rail traffic bottlenecks, received modest support.

### Worsening freight traffic congestion is causing more delays, expense and inconvenience to railroads, shippers and passengers

Amtrak has seen its on-time performance drop to historic levels nationwide as it threads its passenger trains along busy freight railroad routes. Such complications caused Amtrak to cut station stops starting this year at Elyria and Sandusky on its westbound Capitol Limited service.

Here is a list of railroad-related federal earmarks from the new surface transportation law:

- $100 million for initial federal funding of CREATE;
- $125 million for the Alameda Corridor East extension in California;
- $90 million for the Heartland Corridor Project;
- $30 million for rail relocation projects in Portsmouth, Va., and St. Teresa, N. Mex.;
- $220 million annually for the Section 130 grade-crossing safety program (previous funding level was $165 million annually);
- $35 million annually in Railroad Rehabilitation and Improvement Financing loans authorized for distribution by the Federal Railroad Administration (the collateral requirement for these loans also was lifted).

These improvements, structures and equipment than does the average U.S. manufacturing industry on their facilities and equipment.

Through the private marketplace, freight railroads have been able to increase their capital expenditures from $3.6 billion in 1990 to $5.7 billion in 2002. Of that, about $2 billion annually is invested by the railroads and private lenders in expanding railway traffic capacity. That seems to be the maximum the railroads have been able to leverage through the private marketplace.

AASHTO says if that level of investment continued for the next 20 years, and the railroads hauled the same volume of freight they are handling today, the railroads will lose market share and divert freight traffic growth to highways, raising prices for shippers and, ultimately, U.S. consumers.

AASHTO, formerly comprised of state highway officials, predicted that a more aggressive investment strategy — with substantial increases in public-sector funding for railroads — would have substantial benefits.

"This would allow freight rail to carry a larger percentage of freight tonnage in 2020 than it carries today," the AASHTO report said. "The aggressive investment scenario removes 1,035 million tons of freight and 40 billion truck vehicle-miles traveled from the highways, saves shippers $401 billion, saves highway users $635 billion, and saves $27 billion in highway costs over the 20-year period. Inclusion of costs for bridges, interchanges, etc., could double this estimate."

AASHTO and the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) estimate that $13 billion in private and public investment is needed per year — more than double the current level of investment.

Some increased, public-sector investment in railroads is occurring, thanks to the recent reauthorization of the federal, six-year surface transportation reauthorization (see sidebar article “Major railroad projects get federal funding”). However, that legislation provided railroads with a patchwork of uncoordinated funding earmarks. A coordinated rail capital program is needed at the federal level, with substantially more funding.

"For the first time since World War II, limited rail capacity has created significant choke-points and delays," according to an ASCE report. "This problem will increase, as freight rail tonnage is expected to increase at least 50 percent by 2020."

"In addition, the use of rail trackage for intercity passenger and commuter rail service is increasingly being recognized as a worthwhile transportation investment. Congestion relief, improved safety, environmental and economic development benefits result from both freight and passenger market shifts to rail are creating a rationale for public-sector investment," the ASCE report said.
Ohio has its share of railroad traffic congestion problems, most of which are concentrated at certain locations. These include junctions, rail yard access points and drawbridges over navigable waterways. Here is a sampling of those locations:

**Cincinnati** - CSX, from Queensgate Yard north to Ivorydale Junction (also used by NS and Amtrak), sees more than 110 trains freight trains per day, roughly equally divided between CSX and NS, plus six Amtrak trains per week. Numerous Ohio Hub passenger trains are planned, as well as a possible commuter rail service. Queensgate is also the site of Cincinnati Union Terminal, housing the Amtrak station. A third main track was built north Queensgate in the 1990s to ease rail traffic congestion, but continued traffic growth caused congestion to return.

**Cleveland** - Norfolk Southern, from Berea to Cleveland's downtown lakefront has several congested points, including Ford Yard, Rockport Yard, Whiskey Island/C&P Ore Docks, and Cuyahoga River drawbridge. In addition to 70 NS freight trains per day, there are four daily Amtrak trains. Plus, numerous Ohio Hub passenger trains are planned on four converging routes. EcoCity Cleveland, in a Blue Project report by Ken Prendergast (see www.ecocitycleveland.org), proposed upgrading several disconnected NS rail lines to create a Lakefront Bypass, costing about $150 million.

**Toledo** - Norfolk Southern, from Air Line Yard east to Vickers Crossing (an at-grade junction with CSX's north-south mainline) has additional congestion points at Air Line Junction (with NS's Detroit Line), Amtrak's MLK Plaza Station and NS's Maumee River drawbridge. NS runs about 80 freight trains a day here, plus four Amtrak trains, while numerous Ohio Hub passenger trains are planned. Officials from NS, CSX and the Ohio Department of Transportation have identified some of the areas where service can be improved.

**Significant additional public-sector funding** of more than $7 billion per year, when added to the nearly $6 billion in existing private-sector funding, would allow freight railroads to expand their main-line and terminal capacities. That would allow them to maintain market share, respond to projected growth, and save shippers and highway users more than $1 trillion over the next 20 years.

Other notable locations in Ohio that are congested with freight train traffic include:

**Cleveland-area** - several rail yards clog NS from Maple Heights to Macedonia (on the proposed Ohio Hub passenger corridor between Cleveland and Pittsburgh);

**Columbus** - Buckeye Yard, served by NS, CSX and Ohio Central (between two proposed Ohio Hub corridors to Cincinnati and to Detroit);

**Dayton** - downtown joint trackage of NS and CSX is a choke point (on the proposed Ohio Hub 3-C Corridor);

**Fostoria** - a busy at-grade junction of one NS and two CSX tracks.

“Broadly speaking, the choice for the nation's freight-rail system is between "market-driven evolution" of the freight-rail system and "public-policy-driven expansion" of the system. Market-driven evolution will accommodate some of the forecast freight growth, but relieve little of the forecast congestion on the highway system. A public-policy-driven expansion could produce a rail industry that provides the cost-effective transport needed to serve national and global markets, relieve pressure on overburdened highways, and support local social, economic, and environmental goals.”
Ohio Hub passenger trains are planned. Officials from NS, CSX and the Ohio Department of Transportation are planning to grade-separate Vickers Crossing to help ease congestion. Also, All Aboard Ohio has proposed upgrading the NS/CSX Fort Wayne Line as a detour route for through freight train traffic.

Fostoria - a busy at-grade junction of one NS and two CSX route is possible Ohio Hub corridor between Detroit and Columbus;
Greenwich - at-grade junction of two CSX mainlines (one is proposed for the Ohio Hub 3-C Corridor).

Making rail traffic more fluid

Two pending pieces of legislation, if approved by the U.S. Congress, would provide the kind of funding necessary to begin addressing railroad capacity constraints for shippers and passengers:

**Senate Bill 1516, the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2005** - This is a six-year Amtrak budget reauthorization, offering $11.4 billion in federal operating and capital funds. The capital funding in the bill totals $6.3 billion, which would help restore the passenger rail network to a state of good repair. Of that, $1.4 billion would provide the basis for a state capital grant matching program with a federal share of 80 percent. It could allow some additional passenger train services in Ohio.

Other features in the bill will allow Amtrak to reform its business practices, increase competitive bidding for services, standardize its cost-allocation methodology for state-funded trains, establish standards for measuring the performance of Amtrak trains and routes, and restructure its debt. The last component is crucial, as interest payments on Amtrak's $4 billion debt comprise a large portion of its annual operating subsidy. All told, the reforms contained in S.B. 1516 would allow Amtrak to reduce its operating subsidy by 40 percent over the life of the bill. However, the Bush Administration said the bill doesn't go far enough to reform Amtrak. The bill preserves long-distance trains, which the administration vehemently oppose.

Chief sponsors of the bill are Sen. Trent Lott (R-Mississippi) and Ted Stevens (R-Alaska). Sen. Mike DeWine (R-Ohio) is among the cosponsors. On July 28, the bill was passed 18-4 by the U.S. Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation.floor action by the Senate floor in cooperation with House of Representatives leaders over combing Senate-passed House Resolution 1630 - its version of the Amtrak reauthorization bill contains some reforms.

**House Resolution 1631, the Railroad Infrastructure Development and Expansion Act for the 21st Century (RIDE-21)** - The bill would provide $60 billion in tax-exempt and tax-credit bonds, federal loans and loan guarantees for high-speed rail and freight railroad infrastructure projects over 10 years. Specifically, the bill establishes authority for states or interstate compacts to issue $12 billion in federally tax-exempt bonds and $12 billion in federal tax-credit bonds for infrastructure improvements to permit more and faster passenger trains nationwide.

Federal Railroad Administration corridor-development programs would see annual funding increased from $35 million to $100 million. And, the legislation expands the existing Railroad Rehabilitation & Infrastructure Financing (RRIF) loan program by increasing funding authority from $3.5 billion to $35 billion of outstanding loan principal at any time. Legal obstacles that have dissuaded use of the RRIF program would be removed. Freight and passenger projects by companies, states or compacts of states would be eligible for loans and loan guarantees.

Passage of this bill could allow for much, if not all of the Ohio Hub System to be built, once Ohio undertakes and completes the environmental impact study phase. Chief sponsors of the bill are Rep. Don Young (R-Alaska) and Rep. Steve LaTourette (R-Ohio). S.B. 1516, contains a place-holder for adding a much larger capital investment program, such as what LaTourette and Young are proposing.

Please contact your U.S. Senator or Congressperson at their local office today to ask for their sponsorship of these bills. Go to www.allaboardohio.org or check your phone book for contact information. Kindly refer to each legislation by their bill numbers.
Ohio rail traffic “choke” points

Ohio has its share of railroad traffic congestion problems, most of which are concentrated at certain locations. These include junctions, rail yard access points and drawbridges over navigable waterways. Here is a sampling of those locations:

**Cincinnati** - CSX, from Queensgate Yard north to Ivorydale Junction (also used by NS and Amtrak), sees more than 110 trains freight trains per day, roughly equally divided between CSX and NS, plus six Amtrak trains per week. Numerous Ohio Hub passenger trains are planned, as well as a possible commuter rail service. Queensgate is also the site of Cincinnati Union Terminal, housing the Amtrak station. A third main track was built north Queensgate in the 1990s to ease rail traffic congestion, but continued traffic growth caused congestion to return.

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**Toledo** - Norfolk Southern, from Air Line Yard east to Vickers Crossing (an at-grade junction with CSX’s north-south mainline) has additional congestion points at Air Line Junction (with NS’s Detroit Line), Amtrak’s MLK Plaza Station and NS’s Maumee River drawbridge. NS runs about 80 freight trains a day here, plus four Amtrak trains, while numerous Ohio Hub passenger trains are planned. Officials from NS, CSX and the Ohio Department of Transportation stated it is the single “choke point” for freight trains in the Ohio

**Other notable locations in Ohio that are congested with freight train traffic include:**

- **Cleveland-area** - several rail yards clog NS from Maple Heights to Macedonia (on the proposed Ohio Hub passenger corridor between Cleveland and Pittsburgh);
- **Columbus** - Buckeye Yard, served by NS, CSX and Ohio Central (between two proposed Ohio Hub corridors to Cincinnati and to Detroit);
- **Dayton** - downtown joint trackage of NS and CSX is a choke point (on the proposed Ohio Hub 3-C Corridor);
- **Fostoria** - a busy at-grade junction of one NS and two CSX tracks by the Maumee River.

**Significant additional public-sector funding** of more than $7 billion per year, when added to the nearly $6 billion in existing private-sector funding, would allow freight railroads to expand their main-line and terminal capacities. That would allow them to maintain market share, respond to projected growth, and save shippers and highway users more than $1 trillion over the next 20 years.

“Broadly speaking, the choice for the nation’s freight-rail system is between “market-driven evolution” of the freight-rail system and “public-policy-driven expansion” of the system. Market-driven evolution will accommodate some of the forecast freight growth, but relieve little of the forecast congestion on the highway system. A public-policy-driven expansion could produce a rail industry that provides the cost-effective transport needed to serve national and global markets, relieve pressure on overburdened highways, and support local social, economic, and environmental goals.”
Making rail traffic more fluid

Two pending pieces of legislation, if approved by the U.S. Congress, would provide the kind of funding necessary to begin addressing railroad capacity constraints for shippers and passengers:

**Senate Bill 1516, the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2005** - This is a six-year Amtrak budget reauthorization, offering $11.4 billion in federal operating and capital funds. The capital funding in the bill totals $6.3 billion, which would help restore the passenger rail network to a state of good repair. Of that, $1.4 billion would provide the basis for a state capital grant matching program with a federal share of 80 percent. It could allow some additional passenger train services in Ohio.

Other features in the bill will allow Amtrak to reform its business practices, increase competitive bidding for services, standardize its cost-allocation methodology for state-funded trains, establish standards for measuring the performance of Amtrak trains and routes, and restructure its debt. The last component is crucial, as interest payments on Amtrak’s $4 billion debt comprise a large portion of its annual operating subsidy. All told, the reforms contained in S.B. 1516 would allow Amtrak to reduce its operating subsidy by 40 percent over the life of the bill. However, the Bush Administration said the bill doesn’t go far enough to reform Amtrak. The bill preserves long-distance trains, which the administration vehemently opposes.

Chief sponsors of the bill are Sen. Trent Lott (R-Mississippi) and Ted Stevens (R-Alaska). Sen. Mike DeWine (R-Ohio) is among the cosponsors. On July 28, the bill was passed 18-4 by the U.S. Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation. Floor action by the Senate is expected in September. The House version of the bill, H.R. 3571, is expected to be considered by the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure this fall.

**House Resolution 1631, the Railroad Infrastructure Development and Expansion Act for the 21st Century (RIDE-21)** - The bill would provide $60 billion in tax-exempt and tax-credit bonds, federal loans and loan guarantees for high-speed rail and freight railroad infrastructure projects over 10 years. Specifically, the bill establishes authority for states or interstate compacts to issue $12 billion in federally tax-exempt bonds and $12 billion in federal tax-credit bonds for infrastructure improvements to permit more and faster passenger trains nationwide.

Federal Railroad Administration corridor-development programs would see annual funding increased from $35 million to $100 million. And, the legislation expands the existing Railroad Rehabilitation & Infrastructure Financing (RRIF) loan program by increasing funding authority from $3.5 billion to $35 billion of outstanding loan principal at any time. Legal obstacles that have dissuaded use of the RRIF program would be removed. Freight and passenger projects by companies, states or compacts of states would be eligible for loans and loan guarantees.

Passage of this bill could allow for much, if not all of the Ohio Hub System to be built, once Ohio undertakes and completes the environmental impact study phase. Chief sponsors of the bill are Rep. Don Young (R-Alaska) and Rep. Steve LaTourette (R-Ohio). S.B. 1516, contains a place-holder for adding a much larger capital investment program, such as what LaTourette and Young are proposing.

Please contact your U.S. Senator or Congressperson at their local office today to ask for their sponsorship of these bills. Go to www.allaboardohio.org or check your phone book for contact information. Kindly refer to each legislation by their bill numbers.
All Aboard Ohio President’s Column

“The Long Emergency”: My Thoughts

By Bill Hutchison
President, All Aboard Ohio

A couple of months ago, I read a copy of “The Long Emergency” by James Howard Kunstler, who offers up a grim prophecy of hard times due to many things, but mainly a decline in the supply of oil. He foresees upheaval in the face of unrelenting demand for oil in the face of diminishing supplies to the point where civilization itself could collapse.

I don’t see the future in such stark terms, since we are an innovative and adaptable lot, but I do believe we have a 10- to 20-year window of opportunity to react to changing conditions. After that, all bets are off. Whatever happens will have to be sweeping and all-encompassing.

What could happen? Inner-ring suburbs could be redeveloped into walkable, neo-traditional-style communities. Urban areas might see new, dense infill development and redevelopment all stitched together with large-scale pedestrian and bike access, massive investment in every sort of transit, be it light rail, commuter rail, or bus.

Light-rail lines would blanket our cities and extend far out into areas once thought impossible to serve (remember the interurban?) and could also be used as a means to forward containerized freight, keeping truck use to a minimum.

Outer exurbs might die back to a sustainable core, again tied to other areas by greatly expanded light rail or other transit. McMansions and huge SUVs will be a thing of the past, except for the truly wealthy who will always be able to afford such extravagances.

Small towns and cities will have to have regional public transportation services to tie them to the outside world or risk being isolated. Many new feeder bus or regional rail services could become the norm.

Travel by auto to perform all manner of tasks, with today’s average of eight daily trips per household, will be a thing of the past. We will drive far less and what we drive will most likely be powered by fuel cell or a hybrid.

You may see grocers and others making door-to-door deliveries with hybrid vehicles. Kroger tried this a while back. Remember “Peapod?” Otherwise people will cluster in areas where it will be possible to pick up the dry cleaning or groceries on the way home from work. Some new transit centers are already set up with this in mind.

All forms of transportation will have to be tied together in a seamless, multi-modal network, rather than the hit-or-miss (mostly miss) “system” we now have. It should be possible to walk or ride a bike to the nearest transit stop (which would run very frequently) and from there be able to go nearly anywhere one would wish to go.

As far as intercity transportation might go, I think there will be a quick end to short-hop aviation between such places as Cincinnati-Dayton, due to the high cost of fuel. Smaller cities will continue to lose air service, with airlines concentrating on core trunk or long-distance routes. Indeed, there may be very little aviation for trips of less than 500 miles.

Intercity rail passenger service will boom to make up for the void left by the airline retrenchments and the much higher cost of driving. Every sort of rail passenger service will see an increase, whether it’s corridor, commuter, regional, mid- or long-distance. There will be no question as to whether we should have train service. The only questions will be how much and how soon can we have it.

Likewise, bus service will boom, feeding the passenger rail system and linking many smaller communities with the national transportation system. There will also be a maximum of 25-50 miles.

On the freight side, there will have to be a massive (and I mean massive) investment by both the private and public sectors in rail freight and passenger infrastructure, intermodal terminals. On the plus side, booming demand for rail freight service will make the cost of capital more affordable, but the overall scale of investment needed will far outstrip the freight’s ability to carry out improvements alone.

Rail lines will be upgraded to the point where new rights of ways might be needed. If you live near an abandoned or little used rail line, that could become a heavily used railroad in short order. Massive electrification will be underway, reducing use of diesels to a minimum on trunk lines. There may be a dedicated system of high-speed rail freight and passenger corridors separate from present lines that carry bulk commodities as well.

Maintaining our present overbuilt highway system will become a major problem, due to ever-increasing maintenance demands, coupled with imploding gas tax receipts, due to less driving. And use of new sources of power not subject to the gas tax. User taxes will have to rise to make up the loss and many roads will become toll highways with peak pricing to discourage unnecessary auto use.

In some places, highways might be torn out or rebuilt on a smaller scale to reflect current use or to put new transit lines in their place. Interstate highways in rural areas may be abandoned altogether.

One thing is for sure: If we see a continued rise in the price of oil, change will be massive. Some of it will be good, but much of it will be bad. How bad it is depends on how quickly we react. Otherwise, much of what James Howard Kunstler predicts will come true.

This is one reason why it is so important for us to do all we can to get the pro-rail legislation in Congress (H.R. 1630 and H.R. 1631) passed, as well as the Ohio Hub plan. Without these we are setting ourselves up for major problems down the line.
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Updated: Sept. 2005
The Executive Director Report

Don't vote this Election Day!

By Dominic J. Liberatore
Executive Director, All Aboard Ohio

On Nov. 8, 2005, each and every person who reads this newsletter should stay at home and watch the candidate they don't like get elected. Ok, ok, you know I'm not actually serious, but I did get your attention.

As many of you know, we can now register people to vote through our Web site www.allaboardohio.org. If you live in Franklin County, you can walk into our office and register to vote. We even have signs in the office informing people that they can register to vote while visiting our office. My point to you is this: last year, during the 2004 presidential election in Ohio, even with the thousands of newly registered voters on the books, less than 75 percent of all Ohioans voted on Election Day. This, my friends, I find to be very sad.

More than 200 years ago, our Founding Fathers fought a revolution over voting. You remember, the "representation" part of "no taxation without representation." Less than 100 years ago, women could not vote. So they organized and won that right. While African-Americans got the right to vote after the Civil War, (the men, anyway) it wasn't made absolute until the 1965 Voting Rights Act.

Throughout all of this, our forefathers and foremothers have endured jail, fire hoses, dogs, lymphings, muskets and cannon fire and all for the right to be heard -- a right that we all too often have taken for granted.

So the moral of the story is this: passenger rail support-
Longtime rail advocate passes

Only months after Amtrak’s National Limited was eliminated in 1979, ending all passenger train service to Central Ohio, an honest, true gentleman named Robert M. Boyce of Columbus joined the Ohio Association of Railroad Passengers to make a difference. In the 25 years that followed, he did more than make a difference in the rail advocacy scene; he made the people around him more caring and thoughtful.

Bob passed away July 20 at the age of 86. Most of us who knew him recognized him as the man who started the Columbus OARP local meetings, held each month at the Red Door Tavern on the city’s near-west side. But his involvement in the association goes deeper, and his life story extends back to difficult times.

Born in Akron in 1919, Bob served his country in World War II, earning the Purple Heart for wounds he received in combat in the Pacific. In 1951, he married Geraldine, though most knew her as Gerry. He attended Antioch College and graduated from The Ohio State University.

Former OARP board member John Manning, who now has the honor of coordinating the Red Door meetings, has been a friend of the Boyces for many years. He wanted to make sure that those who were close to Bob, take the time to look in on Gerry.

“At the August Red Door meeting, we held a moment of silence in Bob’s memory. We will continue our monthly informational meetings as Bob had established them. The stamp of his personality will be with us at every meeting,” Mr. Manning said.

Bob retired after 31 years as a journalist in the university’s Office of Communications. He was a clarinetist in the Greater Columbus Concert Band, and a member of Trinity United Methodist Church, OSU Alumni Association, OSU Faculty Club and a Life Member of Ohio State Retirees Association.

But most of us knew Bob for his role in OARP, now All Aboard Ohio. As Columbus Coordinator, he led a petition drive in the early 1990s for returning passenger trains to Central Ohio, collecting thousands of signatures. The petition was one of the reasons why the Ohio Department of Transportation’s first Access Ohio plan gave more than passing attention to passenger trains. It also was a factor that led to the creation of the Ohio Rail Development Commission.

In 1992, he organized the Festival of Stations, held at Columbus’ Toledo & Ohio Central station. It attracted community officials from throughout the state to hear from ODOT’s then-Director of Modes John Platt how a new federal law, the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act, could be used to renovate historic train stations. A second Festival of Stations was held in Galion. A number of cities applied what they had learned, eventually leading to renovations of stations in Toledo, Lima, Galion and Elyria.

After the ORDC was formed in 1994, Mr. Boyce regularly attended commission meetings, and kept others in OARP apprised of developments at the commission. Yet, his memory lives on in the monthly Red Door meetings, which have introduced people to the association and its goals.

“He was actually the first person to introduce me to OARP,” said Stu Nicholson, ORDC’s public information officer. In the early 1990s, Mr. Nicholson became co-editor of OARP’s newsletter, and later became director of the association’s Ohio Mobility Partners. “Add his name to the list of OARP members we will need to remember and recognize the day we get the trains back.”

“We shall all miss Bob,” said Larry Robertson, secretary of All Aboard Ohio and a longtime friend of Mr. Boyce. Mr. Robertson also worked at OSU with Bob. “He was a wonderful friend, and his efforts with the Red Door group and other key activities held the Central Ohio supporters of rail passenger service together for at least 15 years.”

Even in failing health, he made it a point to attend the OARP Annual Meeting June 25 in Ashtabula County. Bob was gone less than a month later.

“I will miss him dearly as will all of us,” said Bill Hutchison, president of All Aboard Ohio. “I will remember him as that soft-spoken fellow whose faith in the cause of better rail service never wavered and also as the reason why there was a Red Door group in the first place. Because of his efforts, we had a ready pool of volunteers to work at the office and other things.

Above all else, Bob was a gentleman.
### All Aboard Ohio Fall Dinner Benefit and Membership Meeting Registration Form

(Please Print)

Name(s) ________________________________
Address _____________________________________________________________
City __________________ State _______ ZIP ______
Telephone(_____) __________________________
Email _______________________________________________________________

Food catered by the Oberlin Inn Garden Restaurant, recipient of the Gourmet Diners Club of America’s Silver Spoon Award for dining excellence.

You must pre-select your meal(s). Please mark your meal selection(s):

- Chicken Picatta
- Citrus Buttered Scrod

**Registration deadline: October 28**

Make check or money order payable to: All Aboard Ohio/OARP Fall Meeting
309 South 4th St, Suite 304
Columbus, OH 43215-5428

Please register ________ people at $40 each
$________ total enclosed

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### Calendar of Events/Meetings

All meetings are subject to change. We firmly suggest that you confirm dates, times and locations for all meetings.

#### October 2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Contact person &amp; phone number</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Columbus Local Meeting</td>
<td>9:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Red Door Tavern</td>
<td>John Manning 614 / 443-8742</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Toledo Local Meeting</td>
<td>10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Toledo Amtrak Station</td>
<td>Bill Gill 419 / 536-1924</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Passenger Rail Leadership Conference</td>
<td>9:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Courtyard at the Depot, 255 S Third Ave, Minneapolis MN</td>
<td>Dominic Liberatore 614 / 204-4628</td>
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#### November 2005

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>All Aboard Ohio Fall Meeting</td>
<td>5:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Black River Landing &amp; Transportation Center, Lorain</td>
<td>AAO Office 614 / 228-6005</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Columbus Local Meeting</td>
<td>9:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Red Door Tavern</td>
<td>John Manning 614 / 443-8742</td>
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<tr>
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<td>10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Toledo Amtrak Station</td>
<td>Bill Gill 419 / 536-1924</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Ohio Rail Development Comm.</td>
<td>10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Riffe Center; 77 S. High Street, 31st Floor; Columbus</td>
<td>ORDC 614 / 644-0306</td>
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#### December 2005

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