



NARC

Building Regional Communities

National Association of Regional Councils

777 North Capitol Street, NE Suite 305

Washington, DC 20002

202.986.1032 (tel) 202.986.1038 (fax)

www.NARC.org

FY11 CONTINUING RESOLUTION TALKING POINTS

High Speed and Intercity Passenger Rail

Please use to guide phone conversations or in-person meetings with Congressional Members and/or staff.

IMMEDIATE ACTION: *Please support the inclusion of funding for **High Speed and Intercity Passenger Rail** within the FY 2011 Continuing Resolution (H.R. 1) under development by Congress to ensure vital local and regional programs continue to boost the economy and create jobs. Currently, H.R. 1 not only eliminates this program this year, but also rescinds money previously authorized under the federal stimulus law and FY 2010 Appropriations law. H.R. 1 reduces funding for this program by nearly \$8.7 billion (\$2.5 billion from FY10) and cuts \$152 million (\$1 billion from FY10) in Amtrak capital grants.*

GENERAL STATEMENTS:

- Reforms to and consolidation of federal funding and programs should be looked to in order to save money and increase government efficiency, while decreasing the national debt.
- Domestic, discretionary programs, which are only 12 percent of the federal annual budget, are critical to the ability of local governments and regions to carry out their responsibilities as service providers for both the federal and state governments.
- Due to economic challenges, local governments have experienced reduced revenue streams due to decreased taxes (primarily property and sales) and major reductions in state financial assistance, while at the same time facing an increased demand for services. As a result, local governments of all sizes and in all parts of the nation have been forced to institute significant layoffs, furloughs and service reductions, which could continue for several years to come.
- Federal assistance to state and local governments and regions will help mitigate further layoffs. Current unemployment rates are already at 9.4 percent nationally.
- Federal investment in state, local and regional infrastructure produces jobs and promotes local economic development.
- Deficit reduction should not be accomplished by shifting costs to states and local governments, imposing unfunded mandates, or pre-empting local government programs or taxing authority.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Please consider the following when making **High Speed and Intercity Passenger Rail** funding determinations in the FY11 Continuing Resolution (H.R. 1):

- According to the Associated General Contractors of America, for every \$1 billion in government infrastructure spending, 28,000 new jobs are created and, to date, over 52,000 skilled construction employees are now out of work and ready to put a shovel to the ground. In addition to the other industries a robust transportation network supports, the transportation industry alone accounts for the fifth largest industry in the nation.
- High-speed rail (HSR) is an important component of creating a diversified transportation network that can add up to \$13.2 billion in increased mobility benefits through 2030. The Environmental Law and Policy Center estimates that HSR will provide \$1.3 billion in highway congestion relief and \$700 million in airport congestion relief.
- A single railroad track can carry as many people as a ten-lane highway. High-speed rail and intercity passenger rail can pull together regional economies around America and is the unique solution to providing interconnectivity to all forms of travel, benefiting all Americans.
- High-speed and intercity passenger rail is an environmentally beneficial transportation option, and is 71% lower in carbon dioxide emissions as compared to auto and 76 lower as compared to air travel.



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LOCAL/REGIONAL CONSTITUENT EXAMPLE: In our region alone, continued investment in the **High Speed and Intercity Passenger Rail** is needed for: [INSERT PROJECT DETAILS]

Project Name

Project Type and Description

Cost Estimate

Number of Jobs Created

Cost Efficiencies

Project Effectiveness/Improvements for community or region

Start/Finish Time (i.e. immediately, 3 months, 6 months)

- **PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE:** Investment in **High Speed and Intercity Passenger Rail** must continually be promoted at all levels of government to ensure competitiveness, job creation, economic growth and the ability to address future challenges and opportunities.
- Thank you for your consideration of our recommendations and your commitment to sustained and strategic public investments. We offer our support and assistance to you and your colleagues on these important and timely efforts to stimulate jobs, reinvigorate local and national economies and possibly forestall deep problems within state and local governments.