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Senate Passes Amended Highway Corrections Bill

Today, after nearly a week's worth of debate due to parliamentary maneuvering, the U.S. Senate overwhelmingly approved the SAFETEA-LU Technical Corrections bill. The legislation, which passed with a vote of 88-2, includes local match language for the Expo and Foothill Light Rail Projects, and it also authorizes the Metro Rapid System Gap Closure Project.

The Senate adopted an amendment by Senator Barbara Boxer (D-CA) that calls for a Justice Department investigation into the legality of a controversial highway earmark in Florida that was reportedly added to SAFETEA-LU after both houses cleared the final version in July 2005 but before the bill was signed into law.

Given the addition of the Boxer provision, it is not clear if the House will try to pass the Senate version of the bill (which now includes a Justice Department investigation of the inner workings of the House), or whether the House will strike or modify the provision and send the bill back to the Senate again. We will keep you apprised of new developments.

Earth Day Celebration

In celebration of Earth Day, we will be hosting a promotional "Rock & Ride" event on Tuesday, April 22, 2008 from 12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m. on the South Patio of Union Station. Entertainment will be provided by the environmentally hip rock group "Canon".

The purpose of the event is to encourage people to celebrate Earth Day by "Going Metro" and to promote Earth Day during lunch time to a very hip and young audience.

Media Attending Today's Committee Meetings

City News Service attended today's Board Committee meetings. The reporter was interested in action taken by the committees on Senator Oropeza's (D-Long Beach) legislation to create a Metro Green Line Construction Authority (SB 1722) and on the proposed Metro Bus service changes recently approved by the governance councils. Stories are expected to run tomorrow.

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