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**Amendment Crafted in U.S. Senate Seeks to Strip Congestion Reduction Funds**

As I shared with you earlier today, an effort is underway by several Members of Congress to redirect the funds the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) has designated for its congestion reduction program. Today, I learned that an amendment has been crafted in the U.S. Senate that would, if adopted into law, direct the Federal Transit Administration to allocate \$213 million in undesignated discretionary funds to the Bus and Bus Facilities account.

These funds were originally appropriated in Fiscal Year 2007, when Congress adopted a year long continuing resolution that did not earmark transportation funds in the bus and bus facilities account. The lack of earmarks provided the USDOT the flexibility to make these funds available for their congestion reduction program. It appears that the authors of this amendment will seek to attach it to legislation that is moving towards adoption by the full Senate. For your review, I have attached a copy of the amendment. Our government relations staff and our federal advocates are already working on this matter and I will issue a legislative alert at the appropriate time to ask that Board members encourage the U.S. Senate to reject this amendment.

**Half-Cent Sales Tax**

Today, Media Relations issued a news release noting action taken by the Board of Directors towards putting a new local half-cent sales tax measure on the November ballot. The Board asked staff to report back in June with a comprehensive package of specific street and highway improvements and public transit projects that could be

funded by a new transportation sales tax in Los Angeles County. The report would also include options for accelerating the schedule of new rail and bus projects already in the pipeline if a tax is approved by voters, a list of short-term transportation improvements that could ease traffic congestion and a draft ordinance.

In June, the Board will consider requesting that the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors put a new half-cent sales tax for transportation on the November ballot. The discussion will coincide with the Board's review of the agency's draft Long Range Transportation Plan that looks ahead to the year 2030 and addresses mobility improvements necessary to deal with another two million people living in the county and exponential growth in truck and rail traffic moving cargo from the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach.

### **Bus Purchase**

This afternoon, Media Relations distributed a news release announcing that the Board of Directors approved purchasing up to 260 new 45-foot compressed natural gas (CNG) buses from North American Bus Industries. The total procurement is \$170,915,626, which includes spare parts, diagnostic equipment and training. Delivery of these buses will be completed by June 30, 2010. These new buses have 15 percent more capacity than standard 40-foot buses.

The new buses will replace the oldest 40-foot diesel buses in our fleet. We also expect that some of our original CNG buses put into service during 1995/1996 will also be replaced by this purchase.

### **Media Attending Today's Board Meeting**

Numerous media outlets attended today's Board meeting, including the Los Angeles Times, Daily News, City News Service and all local television outlets. Reporters were interested in the proposed service changes as well as congestion pricing. Stories on these issues are expected to air later today and tomorrow.

### **Suspected Tagger Arrested**

A Transit Services Bureau Deputy assisted by personnel from the North and South Bureaus served search and arrest warrants at the residence of a suspected tagger known as "Kuwma" from the tagging crews "RTH-Running Through Hollywood" and "US-Urban Squad". There are 14 cases attributed to him with damages totaling \$23,000 from Divisions 2, 7, and 10.

During an interview with deputies, the suspect admitted that he was Kuwma and that he had tagged an unknown number of our buses. He also stated the word on the street is: "stay off of the Metro or the Metro Sheriffs will be hot after you". In addition, a small quantity of Marijuana was seized during the arrest.

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