



NEWS

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METRO RED LINE SUBWAY TO NORTH HOLLYWOOD STAYS ON TRACK

CONGRESS EARMARKS \$62 MILLION FOR METRO RED LINE SUBWAY PROJECT; FUNDS ALSO ALLOCATED FOR BUSES AND REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

Following approval by the House last night, the U.S. Senate today passed the Fiscal Year 1999 federal omnibus spending bill that earmarks \$62 million for construction of the Metro Red Line subway project that will keep the North Hollywood segment of the subway system from Hollywood/Highland to Universal City and North Hollywood on schedule for service to begin in May 2000.

The spending bill also includes \$3 million in discretionary funding for the purchase of new buses and \$8 million to be used for a regional transit study and preliminary design and engineering in the development of transportation projects in the Eastside and Mid-City areas of Los Angeles County.

"This new appropriation is great news for Los Angeles and the MTA," said Los Angeles Mayor and MTA Board Chairman Richard Riordan. "It demonstrates the confidence our funding partners in Washington, D.C. have in the leadership of MTA CEO Julian Burke and his management team and the direction of the agency. These funds will allow the MTA to complete critical transportation projects for the transit dependent public and continue toward our goal of an efficient, broad-based transit system for all Angelenos."

Earlier this year the Senate had recommended only \$30 million be appropriated for the subway project and nothing for new buses or planning. However, the House recommendation included \$62 million for the subway and additional amounts for the regional transit analysis and bus purchases, which the Senate agreed to during Conference Committee negotiations.

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"We are delighted with this level of appropriation," said MTA CEO Julian Burke. "Indeed, it is the amount we sought from Congress in order to keep our restructuring plan on course, including the timely completion of the North Hollywood extension of the Metro Red Line. This result could only have been achieved with the united and bipartisan effort of our Congressional delegation and the unprecedented support of business, labor, community leaders and local elected officials."

Burke cited Mayor Riordan's intense lobbying efforts which included three trips to Washington, D.C. and numerous phone calls to Congressional leaders. He also acknowledged the special involvement in the effort by Yvonne Burke, vice chair of the MTA Board, and Board members Don Knabe and Jose Legaspi. Burke and Knabe also are Los Angeles County supervisors.

In addition, Burke gave special thanks to Southern California Congressional representatives Julian Dixon, Esteban Torres, David Dreier, Lucille Roybal-Allard, Jerry Lewis, and Howard Berman for their invaluable bipartisan leadership in securing the funding, as well as to Rep. Frank Wolf, chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, and Senator Richard Shelby, chairman of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, for supporting Los Angeles' appropriation request.

"MTA staff and management have worked hard over the last year to make significant progress in addressing its management and financial problems and to begin overhauling the Metro bus system," Mayor Riordan noted.

The Hollywood leg of the Metro Red Line subway project is a 4.6-mile segment along Vermont Avenue and Hollywood Boulevard. It is now entering its final stages of construction and will open to the public in May 1999.

The North Hollywood Segment of the project is a 6.3-mile segment that will operate from Hollywood and Highland, through the Santa Monica Mountains with stations at Universal City and North Hollywood. It is scheduled to be completed and operational by May 2000.

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Once completed the entire Metro Red Line subway system will run 17.4- miles from Union Station in downtown Los Angeles, through the Central Business District to Hollywood, Universal City and North Hollywood in the San Fernando Valley.

Projected ridership on 60-miles of rail, that will include the Long Beach to downtown Los Angeles Metro Blue Line, the Norwalk to El Segundo Metro Green Line as well as the Metro Red Line subway system when completed to North Hollywood, is estimated at 200,000 boarding passengers each weekday.

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