



Metropolitan
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Authority

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TO: MTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS
FROM: SHARON L. LANDERS, DCEO *slk*
SUBJECT: FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

ISSUE

This report provides you with the latest actions regarding the Reauthorization of ISTEA. Also included is an update regarding our FY 99 Appropriations issues.

BACKGROUND

ISTEA REAUTHORIZATION

- On Tuesday, March 24, 1998, the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure completed action on the ISTEA reauthorization bill. The bill authorizes \$218 billion for highway, highway safety and transit programs for six years. The House bill is a \$4 billion increase over the Senate bill. The bill will go to the House floor next week, and is expected to go to conference in late April, early May.
- The House bill authorizes our New Starts, MOS III projects, (North Hollywood, Mid-Cities and East Side) for final design and construction; and MOS IV projects (East Side and the San Fernando Valley East West) for alternatives analysis and preliminary engineering.
- On the highway side, the Los Angeles area received about \$234 million in highway special project funds.
- The Alameda Corridor East Project received earmarks of approximately \$47 million and our I-10 HOV lane/El Monte Busway Extension project received an earmark of \$2.94 million. Despite the fact that our Santa Monica Boulevard Transit Parkway Project and our Bus request were included in our 1997 ISTEA project request list, these were not listed in the bill.
- The Bus and Bus Facility earmark is about \$500 million per year. Of that, \$232.5 million was earmarked for specific transit agencies for FY '99 and FY 2000, leaving a balance of \$267.5 to be allocated in the Appropriations process for each of those two years. The \$232.5 million earmark was distributed among 146 bus projects across the nation; that averages out to \$1.59 million per project.

- For FY '99 California received \$17.525 million for 20 projects, the largest being Foothill Transit, \$1,625 million; the MTA received no bus earmark.
- In comparison, for FY '99 the largest amount earmarked is \$10 million for the entire state of Michigan; the City of Atlanta received \$9 million (attributed to Speaker Newt Gingrich); Illinois received \$6.8 million statewide although Chicago received no earmark; and New York City also did not receive an earmark.
- Chairman Schuster will submit an amendment on the floor to make technical corrections to the bill, due to a computer glitch resulting in highway projects being listed twice. We have been told that no debate is expected on this amendment.
- In connection with our Santa Monica Blvd. and our Bus request, we are developing a strategy to promote our interests.
- Yesterday, Congressman McKeon announced he is drafting an amendment to the ISTEA reauthorization bill, which would force the MTA to share ISTEA funds on an equitable basis, based on population. We will address this issue when we discuss Assemblyman Runner's legislation at our Special Board Meeting on April 8.

FY '99 APPROPRIATIONS

- Congressman Frank Wolf (R-WV), Chair of the House Transportation Appropriations Subcommittee will be advancing the Appropriations bill in late April/early May.
- Under ISTEA I, bus funding earmarks were almost completely within the domain of Appropriations (unlike highways and rail authorizations which included funding earmarks). For this reason, when the House Transportation Appropriations Subcommittee earmarks FY '99 bus purchases, subcommittee members will not feel bound by earmarks in the ISTEA reauthorization bill.
- We will continue our efforts to achieve the highest numbers for MOS-3 Metro Rail Red Line to North Hollywood and for our bus purchases. We are seeking \$25 million in Section 3 Discretionary Bus funding to address the need for additional vehicles and \$100 million in New Starts money for the MOS-3 Metro Rail Red Line to North Hollywood.
- The Senate Transportation Appropriations Subcommittee schedule follows the House by about two weeks. We will be pursuing support for our projects with Senators Boxer and Feinstein.

cc: J. Burke