



Travel Choices: A nationwide passenger rail network will provide travel choices

Choices are critical in an emergency.

- After a highway collapse shut down a major arterial route into San Francisco, local commuter rail agencies were able within hours to add cars and shift schedules and get people moving the next business day with minimal disruptions (Source: San Francisco Chronicle, "The Maze Meltdown: Easy Does It: Once again, commute is faster than expected," May 2, 2007.)

Choices ease family pocketbooks.

- Cities with the greatest transportation choices pay the fewest dollars for transportation per household. For example, families in auto-centric Houston spend 20 cents of every dollar on transportation, while those in transit-friendly Baltimore spend 14 cents. (Source: Surface Transportation Policy Project, "Driven to Spend", June 14, 2005.)

Many communities have no choice today.

- Even in its truncated state today, Amtrak serves 174 communities, mostly in rural areas, that are outside the service areas of even the smallest "hub" commercial airports. Amtrak's long distance trains serve 51 communities without intercity bus service. (Source: Comparison of Amtrak schedules to www.faa.gov/airports_airtraffic/airports/planning_capacity/passenger_allcargo_stats/passenger/media/cy05_primary_np_commercial.pdf and bus information www.greyhound.com and www.strayhound.com.)

People demand choice.

- One in five Americans age 65 and older does not drive. The number of people aged 65 and older is expected to more than double between 2002 and 2030. This may be why AARP calls on Congress to "support nationwide passenger rail service...and establish a dependable funding mechanism that ensures continuing broad-based nationwide passenger rail service." (Source: AARP studies and policy documents, including "Community Mobility Options: The Older Person's Interest" (2005), "Reimagining America; AARP's Blueprint for the Future. " (2005) "The Policy Book: AARP Public Policies 2007.")

- A pre-9-11 Boeing study found one in three Americans afraid of or anxious about flying (Source: www.fearofflying.com/research.shtml)
- Nearly 80% of adults would like to see an increasing share of travel by commuter or intercity rail, and almost two thirds say their communities need more transportation options. (Source: Harris and Wirthlin polls found at www.harrisinteractive.com/harris%5Fpoll/index.asp?PID=638 and www.apta.com.)