

SESSION OF 2010

**SUPPLEMENTAL NOTE ON SENATE BILL NO. 409**

As Recommended by Senate Committee on  
Transportation

**Brief\***

SB 409 would authorize the Secretary of Transportation to establish and implement a passenger rail service program. With the program, the Secretary would be authorized to take the following actions:

- Enter into agreements with Amtrak, other rail operators, local jurisdictions, and other states;
- Provide assistance to local jurisdictions to ensure that rail stations and terminals are designed and developed to meet safety and efficiency standards, aid intermodal transportation, and encourage economic development; and
- Provide loans or grants to passenger rail service providers from a Passenger Rail Service Revolving Fund established by the bill. Those loans or grants could be used for three purposes:
  - Restoration, conservation, improvement, and construction of railroad lines, switching yards, sidings, highway grade separations, and other railroad-related improvements;
  - Rail economic development projects that improve rail facilities, including locomotives and rolling stock; and

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\*Supplemental notes are prepared by the Legislative Research Department and do not express legislative intent. The supplemental note and fiscal note for this bill may be accessed on the Internet at <http://www.kslegislature.org>

- Costs associated with the initiation, operation, and maintenance of passenger rail service.

Expenditures from the Passenger Rail Service Revolving Fund would be made in accordance with appropriations.

The bill would authorize the Secretary to adopt rules and regulations to implement its other provisions.

The bill would become effective upon publication in the *Kansas Register*.

## **Background**

Senators Dick Kelsey and Roger Reitz and representatives of the Northern Flyer Alliance, KDOT, the Kansas Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired, the Sierra Club, and the United Transportation Union testified in favor of the bill, as did private citizens Carey Maynard-Moody and Shelby Smith. Written proponent testimony was provided by the city manager of Emporia.

Proponent conferees cited economic, social, and environmental benefits of having this type of public transportation more available in Kansas and support for passenger rail among communities in Kansas. Several also stated that it was their understanding from Amtrak officials that Kansas would be more likely to receive federal passenger rail funding if the authority the bill outlines were in place.

No opposition testimony was presented.

According to the fiscal note, because the bill does not propose a revenue mechanism for financing any of the activities the bill would authorize, the Kansas Department of Transportation indicates it would not initiate any such activities nor incur any additional expenses.