

MINUTES OF THE SENATE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Dwayne Umbarger at 8:40 a.m. on February 3, 2010, in Room 152-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Senator Anthony Hensley- excused

Committee staff present:

Bruce Kinzie, Office of the Revisor of Statutes
Daniel Yoza, Office of the Revisor of Statutes
Julian Efird, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Jill Shelley, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Cindy Shepard, Committee Assistant

Conferees appearing before the Committee:

Debra Fischer-Stout, President, Northern Flyer Alliance
Mark Corrison, Vice-President Kansas, Northern Flyer Alliance
Shelby Smith, Founder, Economic Lifelines
Carey Maynard-Moody, Station Renovation & Passenger Rail Service, Lawrence, Kansas
Terri Heidner, Legislative Liaison, Kansas Department of Transportation
Mark Coates, Legislative Chair, Kansas Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired
Chris Cardinal, Legislative Coordinator, Kansas Sierra Club
Ty Drago, Director of the Kansas State Legislative Board, United Transportation Union

Others attending:

See attached list.

Chairman Umbarger opened the hearing on **SB 409 - Establishing the passenger rail service program.**

Debra Fischer-Stout, President, and Mark Corrison, Vice President Kansas, Northern Flyer Alliance appeared as proponents of **SB 409**. They indicated that the bill provides an appropriation mechanism, for a potential state passenger rail funding program and is the next step in restoring intercity passenger rail service in Kansas and the region (Attachment 1). Copies of the Northern Flyer Alliance, Inc., KU School of Business, Jayhawk Consulting *Final Return on Investment Review*, December 2009 were distributed. Noted in the executive summary, study results show that the states of Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas should proceed aggressively with passenger rail planning (Attachment 2).

Shelby Smith, Founder, Economic Lifelines spoke in favor of **SB 409**, stating that the benefits, both immediate and long term, of passenger rail service to the economy of every town, city, and state along its routes are very significant. A recent Financial Impact Study conducted by the University of Kansas School of Business demonstrated a passenger rail route will return \$3.20 for every \$1 dollar invested. All the start-up capital costs, locomotives, passenger coaches, and necessary improvements to the track are federally funded. The Legislature will be required to subsidize operational costs in the future (Attachment 3).

Carey Maynard-Moody, Station Renovation & Passenger Rail Service, Lawrence, Kansas testified in support of **SB 409**, indicating the future of the Kansas economy will depend on taking full advantage of all modes of transportation; highway, air and rail. She stated that passenger rail is 17% more energy efficient than either commercial airlines or automobiles (Attachment 4).

Terri Heidner, Legislative Liaison, Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) testified, as a matter of public policy, supporting the general concept of passenger rail service if economically feasible. **SB 409** is a broad framework of enabling legislation to allow KDOT to develop and administer a passenger rail program for Kansas at such time that the Legislature decides that a passenger rail program, including funding, is needed (Attachment 5).

Mark Coates, Legislative Chair, Kansas Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired, appeared in favor of **SB 409**. He stated that the only options people who cannot drive have when they must go from one city to another, in Kansas, or to travel to cities in other states, is to use Greyhound or one of the other very few and limited bus lines that serve Kansas. He noted that as a representative of Kansans who are blind and

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visually impaired, we must take every opportunity to increase the frequency, convenience, and prevalence of public transit in our State ([Attachment 6](#)).

Chris Cardinal, Legislative Coordinator, Kansas Sierra Club, testified in support of **SB 409**. He stated that rail provides a solution for many of our most urgent transportation, energy and environmental problems. This legislation would spur economic growth in communities across Kansas, provide faster and more energy-efficient means of travel, and establishes a new industry in the state that provides stable, well-paid jobs over time ([Attachment 7](#)).

Ty Dragoo, Director of the Kansas State Legislative Board, United Transportation Union appeared as a proponent of **SB 409**. A new rail corridor from Kansas City to Wichita and onto Fort Worth, will dramatically improve our state's long-term competitiveness. He testified that feasibility studies have concluded that a one mile stretch of new rail line cost approximately \$2 million to construct, while for the same one mile stretch of highway it can nearly cost 10 times as much. Mr. Dragoo also provided an Amtrak 2009 fact and figure sheet for Kansas, support resolutions and letters from towns and cities all over Kansas, and a map representing how Kansas could potentially become the key state to someday provide the critical Mid Continent North-South link that the National Passenger Rail System so desperately needs ([Attachment 8](#))

Written testimony in support of **SB 409** was submitted by:
Matt Zimmerman, City Manager, Emporia, Kansas ([Attachment 9](#))

There being no further conferees, the hearing on **SB 409** was closed.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 a.m. The next meeting is scheduled for February 4, 2010.