

<b>Subject:</b>	Courts gives CA HSR final Green Light to build, Metrolink faces "Imminent Change"?
<b>From:</b>	Rail Passenger Association of California (noelnoelt@cox.net)
<b>To:</b>	ntbraymer@yahoo.com;
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## **RailPAC Weekly E-Newsletter for October 20, 2014**

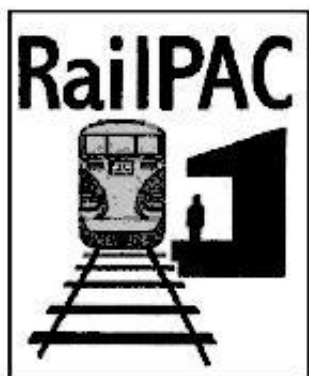
Edited by Noel T. Braymer

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**Traffic? Gas Pains? We need more Trains!**



Image from the California High Speed Rail Authority of what High Speed Rail service could look like in Fresno.

### [California High-Speed Rail Gets Go-Ahead](#)

Daily Beast - Oct 15, 2014

The final legal obstacle for California's bullet-train plan was overcome Wednesday when the California Supreme Court decided not to review a lawsuit against the state's funding plan. This means that the construction can legally begin. The issue was whether the California High-Speed Rail Authority had acted properly in selling \$8.6 billion in bonds approved by voters in 2008 for a project now projected to cost \$68 billion.

### [High-speed rail opposition: You can't pass the Tehachapis](#)

Sacramento Business Journal-Oct 14, 2014

A grassroots group of Central Valley residents called the Citizens for California High-Speed Rail Accountability presented a letter to the authority Tuesday that charges the agency with covering up the fact that any route selected through the Tehachapis would violate the terms of Proposition 1A, the 2008 rail bond measure.

### [Officials: High-speed rail threatens key fire station](#)

Hanford Sentinel-Oct 15, 2014

County officials say that the design of the California High-Speed Rail Authority's proposed route east of Hanford would erect a large retaining wall in front of the county's Houston Avenue station, which provides emergency services to south Hanford and eastern Kings County from Burris Park in the north to Corcoran in the south.

The wall is part of an overpass the Authority is tentatively planning to build on Houston Avenue to take vehicle traffic over the rail line.

**The 3 stories reported above all come from Kings County. Kings County's population is 151,000. The person most likely behind most of the anti-HSR lawsuits is a major property owner in Kings County. Yet these stories and lawsuits which often get a great deal of publicity are portrayed as grass roots actions representing a major portion of the population. NB**

### [Rail authority releases small business report](#)

Fresno Business Journal-Oct 15, 2014

More than 156 small businesses are helping make high-speed rail a reality, including 39 in the Central Valley, according to a new report by the California High-Speed Rail Authority.

### [All Aboard for the California High-Speed Rail Chronicles!](#)

The Atlantic-Oct 12, 2014

The HSR proposal is important, as the largest infrastructure project now being considered in our infrastructure-deficient land. It's timely, since Governor Jerry Brown has made it a central part of his legacy and platform as he runs for an unprecedented fourth term, with the election just three weeks away. And I think it deserves attention from the country as a whole, as a real-time test case for the way we make big, expensive decisions whose full costs and benefits can't fully be known when the choice is made.

### [UK government to sell Eurostar stake before general election](#)

The Guardian - Oct 13, 2014

Eurostar has carried more than 145 million passengers since its services began in 1994. **It made a profit of £18.6m in 2013, of which the Treasury received £7.4m. Emphasis added NB**

George Osborne is to announce on Monday that the government is selling its 40% stake in Eurostar before the election.

The chancellor will say he is looking for bids by the end of the month and is hopeful the privatisation of the Channel tunnel train operator will raise up to £300m.

### [Law change can save high-speed rail](#)

Taipei Times-Oct 2, 2014

The fate of the Taiwan High Speed Rail Corp (THSRC) hangs in the balance, as it has an accumulated loss of NT\$52.2 billion (US\$1.71billion), which amounts to nearly 50 percent of the company's capital....

Last month, Minister of Transportation and Communications Yeh Kuang-shih (葉匡時) spoke of measures to save the debt-ridden company from going bankrupt, including reducing capital and later increasing it, and extending the concession period.

**The Taiwan HSR service is very fancy and was expensive to build. By law it must also keep fares low. It is one of the few HSR services in financial trouble. Not that railroad bankruptcies are unknown. Almost every railroad in America has gone bankrupt at least once, some several times. NB**

### [Feds ask Norfolk Southern to explain how it will address Amtrak train delays](#)

The Plain Dealer - Oct 14, 2014

Of particular concern to the Surface Transportation Board is Amtrak service on the two lines that come through Cleveland --- the Capitol Limited that goes from Chicago to Washington, D.C., and the Lake Shore Limited, connecting Chicago and New York City, according to a letter from the board's chairman. Amtrak data shows the Capitol Limited has been punctual less than 40 percent of the time in the last 12 months, and in the peak rail traffic month of August its on-time rate was less than 4 percent, Chairman Daniel Elliott III wrote in the Oct. 6 letter to Charles Moorman, chairman and chief executive of Norfolk Southern.

### [Bus service ends for tardy trains](#)

Toledo Blade-Oct 16, 2014

Amtrak has resumed operating trains instead of buses between Toledo and Chicago, but lengthy delays on two daily roundtrips between Chicago and the East Coast, via Toledo, have persisted...

Amtrak ran buses between Toledo and Chicago for most of last week because of those chronic delays.

The railroad is alerting passengers of potential four-hour delays.

Similar warnings have gone out for much of the year to passengers on its Empire Builder trains.



## [Amtrak's summer long distance \(bad\) on time performance, and the Toledo Night Express](#)

### Commentary by Russ Jackson

*...comments in this report are those of the author, not necessarily those of the RailPAC Board of Directors*

What a summer it has been for Amtrak's long distance trains. The new fiscal year began on October 1 so the counting starts over. Usually we comment only on the western trains here, but this summer there was an implosion for two of the long distance trains that enter Chicago from the east, #29-30 the Capitol Limited, and #48-49 the Lake Shore Limited.



This is a view some years back of an eastbound Sunset stopping in Ontario. The platform was too short for the entire trains. Photo by Noel T. Braymer

### [Michigan teen sues after Amtrak bars travel](#)

Bellingham Herald - Oct 17, 2014

CASCADE TOWNSHIP, Mich. — A Grand Rapids-area teenager with a nut allergy is suing Amtrak, saying his rights were violated when he was barred from riding the train without an adult.

### ['Pets on Trains' Plan Set in Motion](#)

Roll Call (blog)-Oct 16, 2014

Tucked away in a passenger rail measure that sailed through a House panel last month is language that would create a pilot program for riders to carry pets aboard some trains, including those running between Boston and Washington. On Sept. 17, the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee easily advanced the bill in a voice vote less than a week after it was introduced.

### [CP Coast-to-Coast Railroad Vision Puts CXS in Play](#)

Bloomberg - Oct 13, 2014

Canadian Pacific made a merger proposal last week to CSX Corp. (CSX), the biggest U.S. eastern railroad, for just such a transcontinental tie-up, only to be rebuffed, people familiar with the matter said. The Calgary-based railroad could try again with CSX or may consider a new target, said one of the people, who asked not to be identified because the talks are private.

For cargo traveling between the coasts, a railroad spanning the width of North America would eliminate the need for competing railroads to hand off cargo in congested Chicago. Long discussed by the railroad industry, east-west mergers haven't gone forward in the face of regulatory opposition.

### [Railways Enlist Lumberyards in U.S. Oil-Train Speed Fight](#)

Bloomberg-Oct 15, 2014

U.S. railroads are rallying customers, including lumber and steel executives, to fight a government safety proposal to slow trains hauling another commodity: crude oil.

More than a dozen companies and business groups, urged by railroads including Union Pacific Corp. (UNP), are warning regulators that cutting speeds to 40 miles an hour from 50 would have a cascading effect, delaying other trains sharing the tracks carrying cargo such as furniture, grain and electronics.

### [Frackers' Reports on Oil Reserves Differ for Investors and Regulators](#)

Bloomberg Businessweek Oct 9, 2014

Pioneer Natural Resources' (PXD) public estimate was 13 times larger than the number it reported to the SEC. Goodrich Petroleum's (GDP) was 19 times larger. For Rice Energy (RICE), it was almost 27-fold. "The public is thoroughly misled" by such discrepancies, says Tad Patzek, chairman of the department of petroleum and geosystems engineering at the University of Texas at Austin. He says the industry's figures suggest "we're a new democratic Saudi Arabia. We aren't. We're not even close."

**The Shale Oil Bubble is ready to pop. This will surprise the railroads, but reduce congestion on their tracks. NB**

### [In Texas, traffic deaths climb amid fracking boom](#)

Houston Public Media & Houston Chronicle Oct 12, 2014

Nationwide, oilfield workers are far more likely to die on the road than other workers. Meanwhile, Texas has become the deadliest state in total traffic fatalities during the last five years. The rise in deaths are taking place during the state's ongoing fracking boom. This series explores why there are so many oilfield-related traffic deaths and the impact on loved ones left behind.

### [We Could Car Less: Traveling by train is worth a try](#)

The Salinas Californian-Oct 12, 2014

When I tell my friends that I travel by train, both to the south and north, many people express surprise.



## [Annual Steel Wheels Conference](#)

**Steel Wheels in California- Saturday, November 15th**

California State Railroad Museum Auditorium, Sacramento

[Register Today](#)

Members: \$35 / Non-members: \$45

Keynote Speaker

California Assembly Member Dickinson

Here's your chance to meet the new NARP President Jim Mathews.

NARP Chairman Robert Stewart

Dan Levitz, San Joaquin SJPA and SJRRC

Andrew Selden, President, URPA

Chad Edison, California, Deputy Secretary for Transportation

CHSRA - to be announced

Siemens -Building Trains in Sacramento

[Save 15% on Amtrak travel to Sacramento](#)

## [Capitol Corridor Monthly Report \(September, 2014\)](#)

**By David B. Kutrosky, Managing Director**

Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority Service Performance Overview

The Capitol Corridor ended FY 2014 with a bang. In September 2014, a total of 119,034 passengers rode Capitol Corridor trains, an impressive increase of 7.6% compared to September 2013, which also marks the sixth consecutive month of ridership increases for the service.

## [Amid Frustrations, Metrolink is Said to Face an 'Imminent' Change](#)

VoiceofOC-Oct 13, 2014

Southern California's main passenger railroad is in for a significant "imminent" change, Orange County's transportation board chairman said Monday, noting frustrations by the county's representatives on the railroad's board.

While he was vague about the potential change, Orange County Transportation Authority Chairman Shawn Nelson suggested the possibility of a different agency being contracted to manage rail service.

## [Metrolink sidelines four trains, changes two](#)

Inland Empire News-Oct 5, 2014

Effective Monday, Metrolink is canceling four midday and late night trains on the San Bernardino line.

But spokesman Scott Johnson says riders on the '91' line out of Riverside have more choices.

"Instead of having two trains on the '91' line in the morning, they'll have a third and the exact same thing in the afternoon."

## [Video: installing the tracks for the Gold Line Foothill Extension!](#)

The Source Oct 14, 2014

The final trackwork will be completed this Saturday at an event held by the Construction Authority at 10 a.m. the site of the downtown Azusa Station (795 N. Dalton Avenue).

## [Plans for Kinkisharyo plant in Palmdale derailed by labor dispute](#)

Antelope Valley Times Oct 14, 2014

Announced in June 2014, the proposed \$60 million manufacturing and assembly facility, to be located at Avenue M near Sierra Highway, raised expectations toward creating hundreds of construction jobs, along with 150 to 200 permanent high-paying jobs once completed...

According to the letter, the reason for pulling out of Palmdale was due to a labor dispute with Antelope Valley Residents for Responsible Development, a labor-supported group that objected to the plant because of environmental reasons...

Although the company has expressed disappointment over pulling its plans for a permanent manufacturing facility in Palmdale, the decision is not expected to affect its more immediate delivery of rail cars for the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro).

Kinkisharyo currently leases hangar space from Los Angeles World Airports in Palmdale, where it is assembling 78 light rail cars for Metro, according to Mark Madler who writes for the San Fernando Valley Business Journal.

## [Metro unveils new Kinkisharyo pilot rail car](#)

The Source Oct 17, 2014

If all goes according to plan, Metro will receive its first production car in the summer of 2015. That car will be used for testing and training on the Metro Expo Line Phase II and Metro Gold Line Foothill Extension, and then placed in service when the two lines open in 2016. All 78 cars are expected to be in service by January 2017.

Take a brief tour on the pilot car with this video:

## [LA's Orange Line should have been a Rail Line from the Start](#)

By Noel T. Braymer

The Orange Line in the San Fernando Valley is run with buses on a "Busway" between North Hollywood and Chatsworth. The main problem with it right now is that it is crowded and nearing capacity. From the start the project was something of an afterthought. The Orange Line Buses are parked across the street from the Red Line Subway station in North Hollywood. But when the Orange Line was getting ready to open no thought was given to putting in a pedestrian crosswalk so passengers could transfer between the

buses and trains. Only after public outcry was a crosswalk put in.

### [The past, present and future of Metro Rail](#)

KPCC AirTalk Oct 9, 2014

Will Metro's rail system be able to transform Los Angeles the way it envisioned and get car-shackled Angelenos out of their automobiles and into public transport?

Guests:

Art Leahy, CEO, Metro

Ethan Elkind, Author of the book, "'Railtown: The Fight for the Los Angeles Metro Rail and the Future of the City"

### [Fatality on Caltrain tracks; delays could affect Giants fans](#)

San Francisco Chronicle Oct 15, 2014

A person was struck and killed by a Caltrain in Palo Alto on Wednesday night, halting trains in both directions and snarling service in the South Bay during the evening commute....

A Caltrain spokeswoman said crews were working to restore full service in time for crowds getting out of Wednesday night's Giants playoff game. Though both tracks were estimated to open by 9 p.m., delays were expected to last well into the night.

### [Palo Alto: Patrols stepped up at Caltrain crossings following apparent suicide](#)

San Jose Mercury News-Oct 16, 2014

The city of Palo Alto is stepping up patrols at Caltrain crossings following an apparent suicide on the tracks...

The city, meanwhile, announced plans to increase the number of track guards at Caltrain crossings. Police are also providing "enhanced security" at Churchill Avenue, West Charleston Road and East Meadow Drive.

### [FRA gives Caltrain green light to start PTC implementation](#)

Progressive Rail Roding - Oct 17, 2014

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) has approved Caltrain's plan to begin implementing and testing its positive train control (PTC) system, the agency announced yesterday.

Known as interoperable incremental train control, the system will provide substantial safety and operational benefits for trains in the Caltrain corridor and allow the agency to meet the federal PTC implementation deadline by 2015's end.

### [Young Americans Won't Start Motoring Like Their Parents](#)

STREETBLOG USA Oct 14, 2014

Even as the economy has rebounded, car commuting has declined, and the drop is most pronounced among younger workers. According to the Census, between 2006 and 2013, the share of commutes by driving or carpooling dropped 1.5 percent among workers 16 to 24, 1.3 percent among workers 25 to 44, and 0.5 percent among workers 45 and older. The drop in car commuting among 16- to 24-year-olds continued after the recession ended, though at a slower pace, falling 0.5 percent between 2009 and 2013.





This is in Santee. Here the San Diego Trolley Green Line runs 4 times an hour in each direction on a section of single track in the median of Cuyamaca Street for a distance of almost a half mile. Another example of an economical way to serve areas with Light Rail. Photo by Noel T. Braymer

## We get Emails

### Re: Sharing railroads with High Level Platforms

When I was a kid back East, my mom took me to New York City to visit cousins. Now I don't remember exactly where in the suburbs it was, but the stations had high level platforms and extra rails what veered away from the platform for freight trains. I guess the drawbridges are less expensive alternative. Maybe I can find pictures of these, if so, I will share. I haven't ridden the Sprinter yet, bummer.

Regards,

Robert Toole

Hemet

**Gauntlet tracks are common (and expensive to install) on the NEC to move freight and passenger trains not stopping at a station a few inches to clear high level platforms NB**

### Re: problems with AMTRAK at Klamath Falls

I recently went to the Southern Oregon Music Festival in Medford OR. I traveled on AMTRAK from San Jose CA to Klamath Falls OR and then rode the AMTRAK connecting bus to Medford.

The problem occurs on the return bus trip from Medford to Klamath Falls. The bus leaves Medford at 3:30 PM and is scheduled to arrive in Klamath Falls at 6:05 PM. There passengers are taken to the Shuttle company bus driver's office about 300 feet from the AMTRAK station where they have to wait until 8:25 PM when the bus takes them about 300 feet to the AMTRAK station. Then they wait in the station with

no food until 10:00 PM when the Coast Starlight is scheduled to arrive.

There are no restaurants in the area and since the diner in southbound Coast Starlight is closed by 10:00 PM the passengers from Medford have no food from 3:30 PM when they leave Medford after 10:00 PM. If the train is late and the snack bar in the observation/lounge car is closed these passengers have no food for about 16 hours until the snack bar opens the next morning!

This is a serious problem for passengers from Medford. A suggested solution is to have the bus stop in downtown Klamath Falls where there are restaurants and have the AMTRAK depot in Klamath Falls open at 7:30 instead of 8:30. Having the depot open earlier will also help other passengers leaving Klamath Falls on the southbound Coast Starlight. This stop is heavily used. The depot is in an industrial area and Klamath Falls is a cold windy place. Please make AMTRAK aware of this problem and try to find solutions.

Thank you,  
Norton Bell  
Palo Alto CA

**The best way to get things done is to get the local community involved. The Klamath Falls Station is an economic asset for their community and local leaders need to be aware of this. The changes you propose are clearly in the best interest of Klamath Falls and the passengers . NB**

#### **Re: Toledo Ohio delays**

It seems to me that the freight railroads of this country are finally succeeding at the task that they set out for themselves back in 1971, destroying Amtrak

Eric Cooper

**The railroads prime interest is to make money. Towards that end they have cut costs as much as possible. This includes eliminating as much double track and right of way as possible. Looks like they have cut too much and now are having trouble keeping up with demand. NB**

#### **Re: Local news first?**

Your news letters are great, interesting and informative... BUT... Could you plz think about putting all California RR NEWS before all other non California NEWS ? thanks

Vic Stryker

**I try to lead with the most important stories affecting the most people at the top. From week to week it could be Amtrak, High Speed Rail or a local story. Until the story came out that the courts gave the final okay for the HSR Bonds, I was planning to lead with the story from Orange County that a major overhaul of Metrolink was coming. I know stories about Long Distance Rail Passenger Service are very popular with our readers. I do know that no matter where I place a story, if people like it they will find it and read it. NB**

#### **Re: High Speed Rail to Arizona**

I like Mr. Braymer's ideas about a rail hub in Victorville. He makes a very good case for Victorville to connect the routes to California, Nevada and Arizona.

On the other hand, I don't see much of a case for routing the Phoenix train on the I-10 corridor. The only substantial town along the 240 miles between Palm Springs and Buckeye is Blythe, with a population of 21,000.

Dropping down to El Centro reaches a population in the urban area of about 50,000 and an easy run along the 8 corridor to Yuma, with a population of 135,000 in the urban area.

From the state line the route might need viaduct to Araby Road and a tunnel under the mountains, but after that the Wellton cut-off should be available from UP, providing an almost complete and fairly straight right-of-way except for some mountain passes outside of Buckeye.

The idea of the shortest and fastest route between the end points is appealing, but the advantage of the train over the airline is the ability to earn extra revenue by serving intermediate points. Even the fastest Nozomi shinkansen makes four additional stops between Tokyo and Shin-Osaka.

Claude Medearis

El Cajon, CA

**Nothing I wrote is set in stone. My intent was to use the example of the Las Vegas HSR Train proposal which would save a great deal of money sharing the I-15 Freeway, rather than building a new right of way. I am all for as many connections as possible. But dealing with the UP is usually frustrating when it comes to passenger service. The main point of my article was to show the many additional markets High Speed Rail from Arizona would have by connecting it to California and Nevada High Speed Rail projects. NB**

**Opinions expressed in this enewsletter are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Rail Passenger Association of California.**

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