
Subject: Could State supported trains be run by someone other than Amtrak?

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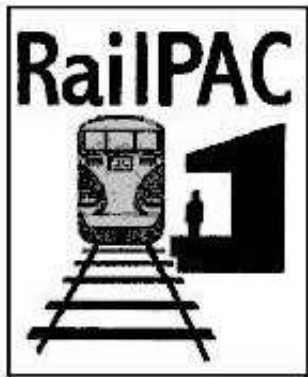
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RailPAC Weekly E-Newsletter for February 4, 2013

Edited by Noel T. Braymer

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Rail Passenger Association of California

www.railpac.org

Traffic? Gas Pains? We need more Trains!



This is the view near the Moorpark Metrolink Station of stored Metrolink Cars surplus at least for now with the delivery of new cars. With shortages of passenger cars in the state holding back expanding service, let's hope that after little work we can see these cars back passenger service. Photo by Noel T. Braymer

[The future of Union Station — take Metro's online survey!](#)

One of the more exciting things going on is Metro's purchase of Union Station in April 2011. With this purchase, Metro kicked off an effort to develop a Master Plan to make it a 21st century transit station.

Metro is giving you the chance to chime in on this effort through [an online survey](#) available now through February 4th.

My personal wish list includes MORE BATHROOMS: they are always crowded and often dirty. Also reopening the Booking Hall to the public as a Travel and Tourism Center for making reservations to hotels, attractions, rail, bus and air travel. Pedestrian tunnels to cross the major streets by the station and building a new shopping mini-mall at the station but not using space used by passengers in the station building. NB

Breaking: Tuesday, January 29, 2013 U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood has announced he will not stay for a second term, but will remain at DOT until a successor is confirmed. Read the [U.S. DOT Press Release](#) and [his announcement to fellow DOT employees](#).

[Will Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa's Transportation Track Record Pass White House Muster?](#)

KPCC Southern California Public Radio

[Villaraigosa seeks to squelch Cabinet rumors](#)

Los Angeles Times- Feb 1, 2013

Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa said Friday that he plans to stay mayor until the end of his term June 30, an announcement aimed at ending talk of him taking a post as President Obama's secretary of Transportation.

[Environmental lawsuit against state bullet train settled](#)

Los Angeles Times Jan 28, 2012

The state's bullet train agency said Monday that it settled one of three pending environmental lawsuits brought against the project in the Central Valley.

[Losing rail bidders will get \\$2m each](#)

U-T San Diego- Feb 3, 2013

Only one out of five bidders to design and build the first phase of California's high-speed rail project will win the \$1.8 billion contract — but they will all get paid.

[Brawl over unions divides contractors vying for piece of rail project](#)

Bakersfield Californian- Feb 3, 2013

In a bitter dispute that threatens to divide support for California high-speed rail, union and non-union contractors are fighting over a draft plan ...

[Caltrain kicks off environmental review of electrification project](#)

Progressive Rail Roding- Feb 1, 2013

In 2012, the California High Speed Rail Authority recommended funding corridor electrification as one of its early investment projects. That money, when combined with other federal, regional and local funds, will total \$1.5 billion and enable Caltrain to electrify the peninsula corridor from San Francisco to Tamien Station in San Jose.

Caltrain has posted the [Notice of Preparation of the Environmental Impact Report for the electrification project](#), along with the schedule for four public meetings between February 27 and March 7. Written comments are due March 18.

[Push to overhaul CEQA law divides Democrats](#)

Santa Rosa Press Democrat- Feb 1, 2013

Evans, however, stated her opposition to blanket exemptions for such projects in her Capitol Weekly piece, writing that utility-scale renewable energy or high-speed rail can have "significant environmental and public health impacts."

Most of the Lawsuits against the High Speed Rail Project and rail in general are based on CEQA. NB

[Competitive bidding for corridor passenger rail service in play](#)

RailwayAge Magazine (blog)-Feb 2, 2013

State-subsidized passenger rail corridors currently number 27 in 19 states—all fewer than 750 miles long and all now operated by Amtrak under contract with states....Section 209 of PRIIA provides that effective Oct. 1, states must pay 100% of the operating subsidy for these corridor passenger trains (while the 80/20 capital investment cost sharing remains in place)....As part of PRIIA reauthorization, it is logical that experienced commuter train operators—such as Bombardier, Herzog Transportation, Keolis Rail Services, and Veolia Transportation—will seek legislative language creating a competitive bidding process

for operation of corridor passenger trains similar to the open bidding process used by 11 of 17 commuter agencies where Bombardier, Herzog, Keolis, and Veolia compete with Amtrak for commuter operating contracts.

California officials are already having Sticker Shock from what Amtrak is proposing to bill them when the law changes in October. Private operators with much lower overhead than Amtrak can outbid with lower costs. The big problem on the Surfliners is unlike the Capitol Corridor and San Joaquin's which the State owns the rolling stock, Amtrak owns most of the equipment for the Surfliners. There is also the need for maintenance facilities which Amtrak is unlikely to want to share. Amtrak has the legal right to operate on all of the railroads and does so at a discount. The railroads may be interested in giving the private operators access if they pay the same rate or higher mileage rates when operating commuter service for corridor service which is quite a bit more than what Amtrak pays the railroads. NB

[Man arrested after fire lit in Amtrak train bathroom](#)

The Register-Guard- Feb 1, 2013

A California man faces arson and reckless endangering charges after he allegedly barricaded himself inside the bathroom of an Amtrak train and set fire to a paper towel dispenser on Friday afternoon in Eugene, police said.

[\\$92 Million Underpass Could Force Out Businesses](#)

Orange County Register Jan 29, 2013

The project, north of Angel Stadium, aims to reduce State College congestion.

Now, that swath and new developments are expected to bring more traffic – traffic that could force out Patetta's tile store and others on State College Boulevard.

[ONT passenger traffic decline continues in December](#)

Contra Costa Times-by Liset Marquez-Jan 29, 2013

While the Ontario Airport Alliance is currently in negotiations with Los Angeles officials about the transfer of the airport to local control, Los Angeles Councilman Bill Rosendahl has said he is not in favor in selling the airport.

Rosendahl has proposed connecting ONT to rail or local ground transportation in an effort to attract more international flights to the medium-hub airport. A report on the issue is expected in about a month. ...

With the lack of direct flights, and John Wayne Airport in Santa Ana being too far away, Washington said she has no option than to fly out of LAX.

[Pacific Electric Red Car In LA Covered 25 Percent More Mileage Than NYC's Subway Today \(PHOTO, VIDEO\)](#)

The Huffington Post Jan 31, 2013

Los Angeles used to have a public transit system that covered about 25 percent more track mileage than New York City's current subway system.

In its eco-heyday in 1945, LA had more than 900 hydro-electric Pacific Electric "Red Cars" that covered more than 1,100 miles, from Pasadena to downtown LA, Santa Monica, Long Beach, Balboa and Santa Ana. It connected LA, Orange, Ventura, San Bernardino and Riverside counties. In comparison, New York City's subway today covers 842 miles.

[LA Metro and Metrolink find solution to rider transfer issue](#)

89.3 KPCC-by Ashley Bailey-Jan 28, 2013

Los Angeles County Metro and the Metrolink regional commuter rail system have worked out a way to ease passengers' transfers between the ...