

2007 TDA Fly-in Summary of TDA Positions

Highways & Transit

- Fully fund the federal highway and transit programs through the appropriations process up to the levels authorized in SAFETEA-LU, including New Starts and the \$631 million in additional highway funding due to RABA (Revenue Aligned Budget Authority). Without the RABA adjustment, 2008 highway funding will increase less than 2% over 2007 levels.
- Recent studies have shown that the Highway Account of the HTF may be bankrupt by early 2009, if not sooner. Short-term strategies need to be found to prevent the draw down of the HTF and the economic impacts that would result from a sudden and severe reduction in guaranteed funding.
- Support adequate Bus Capital funding. Between 1998 and 2005, Wisconsin received an average of \$15 million annually from the Bus Capital program, with much of this funding coming through the annual appropriation process. In 2006, the state's funding was reduced to approximately \$8 million. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) is requesting \$72.4 million in 2008.
- Support the National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Commission and encourage the development of a national transportation policy and the evaluation of new revenue sources.

Aviation

- Reauthorize \$3.8 billion for the Airport Improvement Program (AIP) in 2008 with increases in AIP each year. The President's reauthorization plan and budget propose \$2.75 billion for AIP in 2008 which is \$765 million less than the amount appropriated in 2007. Under the President's budget for 2008, WisDOT estimates a reduction in improvement funds of \$18.9 million – approximately 30% of Wisconsin's annual federal AIP funding. AIP is the primary funding source for airport expansion and reconstruction projects.
- Ensure adequate Aviation Trust Fund (ATF) revenue to maintain a safe and efficient aviation system as air travel continues to grow.
- Increase general fund support for FAA operations. FAA operating costs are now supported with a 70-80 percent subsidy from ATF revenues (over \$5 billion in 2007). These are funds that should be used for aviation programs. Utilizing general fund revenues for agency operating expenses is not only appropriate, but will free up additional ATF revenues for their intended purpose of aviation programming and development.
- Assure Wisconsin's fair share of funding in the next reauthorization. Modify the apportionment formula for general aviation airports to improve funding for Wisconsin's nearly 90 general aviation airports. The current formula provides \$5 million annually, which only allows the state to address 2 modest projects per year.

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2007 TDA Fly-in Summary of TDA Positions

continued

Amtrak

- Oppose the President's 2008 Amtrak budget. The proposed funding level would not allow Amtrak to maintain current operations, and Wisconsin would probably need to increase funding or cut service.
- Support enactment of a long-term authorization bill for Amtrak. A multi-year authorization such as S. 294 would establish predictable funding levels and program reforms. The cornerstone of intercity passenger rail reform should include a dedicated, multi-year federal capital program for states, so they can make infrastructure and equipment investments. The capital program in S. 294 provides an 80 percent federal and 20 percent state cost sharing approach.

Ports, Harbors & Waterways

- Provide adequate funds in the 2008 Energy and Water Development Appropriations Bill to address the backlog of dredging projects at Wisconsin ports.
- Support enactment of the Water Resources Development Act to improve Wisconsin ports and shipping on the Upper Mississippi River – Illinois Waterway.
- Support federal funding for Soo Locks reconstruction, which will constitute half of the \$300 million project cost. Wisconsin has committed its \$5.8 million share to the project, which has yet to begin due to the lack of federal money. The project would provide a second 1,000-foot lock and refurbish the existing lock to provide a reliable link between the Great Lakes and the world.
- Support adoption of federal legislation establishing consistent national standards, as opposed to state-by-state standards and legislation, for the treatment of a ship's ballast water to prevent the introduction and spread of aquatic invasive species and including a federal research program to develop ballast water treatment technology.

2007 TDA Fly-in Highways & Transit

Background

In 2005, President Bush signed into law the Safe, Accountable, Flexible and Efficient Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). This multi-year reauthorization of federal surface transportation provides each year approximately \$630 million for Wisconsin highways and \$65 million for transit. Wisconsin relies on federal funding to provide 25-30 percent of the state's transportation budget.

The Highway Trust Fund (HTF) is being threatened on two fronts – inadequate revenue streams and high construction inflation. It is widely recognized that investment in the transportation system is not sufficient for the U.S. to remain competitive in a global economy. In the next reauthorization, the debate surrounding two issues will likely determine Wisconsin's share of future federal funding: privatization versus new revenue and the equitable distribution of funds.

TDA Position

- Fully fund the federal highway and transit programs through the appropriations process up to the levels authorized in SAFETEA-LU, including New Starts and the \$631 million in additional highway funding due to RABA (Revenue Aligned Budget Authority). Without the RABA adjustment, 2008 highway funding will increase less than 2% over 2007 levels.
- Recent studies have shown that the Highway Account of the HTF may be bankrupt by early 2009, if not sooner. Short-term strategies need to be found to prevent the draw down of the HTF and the economic impacts that would result from a sudden and severe reduction in guaranteed funding.
- Support adequate Bus Capital funding. Between 1998 and 2005, Wisconsin received an average of \$15 million annually from the Bus Capital program, with much of this funding coming through the annual appropriations process. In 2006, the state's funding was reduced to approximately \$8 million. The Wisconsin Department of Transportation is requesting \$72.4 million in 2008.
- Support the National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Commission and encourage the development of a national transportation policy and the evaluation of new revenue sources.
- TDA supports Dane County and KRM commuter rail lines as they prepare to apply to the Federal Transit Administration New Starts program for approval to begin preliminary engineering.

2007 TDA Fly-in **Air Reauthorization & 2008 Aviation Funding**

Background

Airports, aviation and related industries in Wisconsin account for \$2.1 billion of economic activity, supporting over 41,000 jobs with a payroll of \$775 million. The economic impact is even greater if the income produced by existing businesses that depend on air cargo shipments is taken into account. Between 1997 and 2001, 85 percent of all new and expanding manufacturing firms located within 15 miles of the state's 49 jet-capable airports.

Wisconsin received on average \$60 million per year under the existing four-year aviation authorization (Vision-100). These funds make up 60-70 percent of Wisconsin's aviation program and are allocated to both commercial passenger service and general aviation airports. The current authorization expires September 30, 2007.

TDA Position

- Reauthorize \$3.8 billion for the Airport Improvement Program (AIP) in 2008 with increases in AIP each year. The President's reauthorization plan and budget propose \$2.75 billion for AIP in 2008 which is \$765 million less than the amount appropriated in 2007. Under the President's budget for 2008, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation estimates a reduction in improvement funds of \$18.9 million – approximately 30% of Wisconsin's annual federal AIP funding. AIP is the primary funding source for airport expansion and reconstruction projects.
- Ensure adequate Aviation Trust Fund (ATF) revenue to maintain a safe and efficient aviation system as air travel continues to grow.
- Increase general fund support for FAA operations. FAA operating costs are now supported with a 70-80 percent subsidy from ATF revenues (over \$5 billion in 2007). These are funds that should be used for aviation programs. Utilizing general fund revenues for agency-operating expenses is not only appropriate, but will free up additional ATF revenues for their intended purpose of aviation programming and development.
- Assure Wisconsin's fair share of funding in the next reauthorization. Modify the apportionment formula for general aviation airports to improve funding for Wisconsin's nearly 90 general aviation airports. The current formula provides \$5 million annually, which only allows the state to address 2 modest projects per year.
- Establish a longer-term authorization. Short-term authorizations and late appropriations frequently result in project grants not being issued in a timely manner. This is particularly damaging to aviation programs in northern states that have shorter construction seasons.
- Maintain the provision in Vision-100 that requires the federal government to spend all the funds collected in the Aviation Trust Fund on aviation programs.



2007 TDA Fly-in
**Amtrak Reauthorization
& 2008 Rail Funding**

Background

The Chicago-to-Milwaukee service on Amtrak's Hiawatha route offers an affordable and reliable option for those traveling the 85 miles between the largest cities in Wisconsin and Illinois. The Hiawatha has growing ridership and continues to earn one of the best on-time ratings among the Amtrak routes. Wisconsin has supported the service financially since 1989 and currently funds approximately 75 percent of the non-federal subsidy. Illinois funds the remaining 25 percent of the non-federal subsidy. Reductions in federal Amtrak funding would mean cost increases for Wisconsin or service cuts.

Amtrak has been without authorizing legislation since 2002. Recently, S. 294 was introduced in the Senate. The legislation would provide \$19.2 billion over the next six years, create a matching-fund capital program to encourage states to increase their investment in the system, and require operating efficiencies and standards. A similar bill passed the Senate in 2005. The President's 2008 budget requests \$800 million for Amtrak – \$500 million for capital and \$300 million for "efficiency grants" – and would likely result in service cuts.

In addition to Amtrak, high-speed rail is a key next step for intercity passenger rail in Wisconsin. A 110 mph Milwaukee-to-Madison, and later Minneapolis, high-speed rail corridor would be part of the proposed Midwest Regional Rail System, envisioned as a 3,000-mile Midwest passenger rail network radiating from Chicago and serving nine states. High-speed rail hinges on significant federal funding.

TDA Position

- Oppose the President's 2008 Amtrak budget. The proposed funding level would not allow Amtrak to maintain current operations, and Wisconsin would probably need to increase funding or cut service.
- Support enactment of a long-term authorization bill for Amtrak. A multi-year authorization such as S. 294 would establish predictable funding levels and program reforms. The cornerstone of intercity passenger rail reform should include a dedicated, multi-year federal capital program for states, so they can make infrastructure and equipment investments. The capital program in S. 294 provides an 80 percent federal and 20 percent state cost sharing approach.

2007 TDA Fly-in
Ports, Harbors & Waterways

Background

Wisconsin's 15 commercial ports offer manufacturers and shippers a major transportation alternative many states cannot provide. A commodity-flow study conducted by Reebie Associates for the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) in 2002 indicated that Wisconsin's commercial ports annually handle some 44 million tons of cargo with an estimated value of more than \$7 billion. According to a 2004 economic overview of Wisconsin's commercial ports published by WisDOT, our state's ports support 11,387 jobs and annually generate more than \$1.3 billion in economic output and nearly \$377 million in personal income.

Increased federal investment is vital to maintaining and modernizing the U.S. water transport system. In the previous session, both houses of Congress passed a version of the Water Resources Development Act. The versions included a \$3.4 billion project for navigation improvements and ecosystem restoration along the Upper Mississippi River-Illinois Waterway, a 1,200-mile, 9-foot-deep navigation channel created by 37 lock-and-dam sites and thousands of channel-training structures. However, the two bills were not reconciled and signed into law before the end of the session. Both the House and Senate will have to pass new authorization bills in the current session.

TDA Position

- Provide adequate funds in the 2008 Energy and Water Development Appropriation Bill to address the backlog of dredging projects at Wisconsin ports.
- Support enactment of the Water Resources Development Act to improve Wisconsin ports and shipping on the Upper Mississippi River – Illinois Waterway.
- Support federal funding for Soo Locks reconstruction, which will constitute half of the \$300 million project cost. Wisconsin has committed its \$5.8 million share to the project, which has yet to begin due to the lack of federal money. The project would provide a second 1,000-foot lock and refurbish the existing lock to provide a reliable link between the Great Lakes and the world.
- Support adoption of federal legislation establishing consistent national standards, as opposed to state-by-state standards and legislation, for the treatment of a ship's ballast water to prevent the introduction and spread of aquatic invasive species and including a federal research program to develop ballast water treatment technology.
- Support H.R. 981, legislation exempting certain cargo shipped on the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway System from the U.S. Harbor Maintenance Tax, as a means of encouraging the movement of freight from congested surface transportation systems to marine alternatives.