

SB 742 ALLEN

INTERCITY PASSENGER RAIL SERVICES: MOTOR CARRIER TRANSPORTATION OF PASSENGERS

BACKGROUND

SB 804 (Perata) was passed in 1999 with the objective of protecting private intercity bus lines from competition from the state sponsored Thruway bus network. SB 804 added Section 14035.55 to the Government Code requiring that passengers using state supported Amtrak Thruway buses (associated with the San Joaquins, Capitol Corridor, and Pacific Surfliner intercity passenger rail services) must have a rail component to their journey.

California's Amtrak Thruway Bus Network is one of the largest bus networks in the United States connecting over 250 communities throughout California and major cities in Nevada. This network is underutilized because of the Section 14035.55 restriction on who can use this network, being limited to only those who ride a train on a segment of their travel. By eliminating this restriction, the State could provide transportation services to more people while reducing energy consumption and emissions.

This year, rail passenger advocates and the San Joaquin Joint Powers Authority began working together to support legislation in order to amend Section 14035.55 that would enable the Joint Power Authorities (San Joaquin, Capitol Corridor, and LOSSAN) to pick up and drop off passengers on their Amtrak intercity thruway bus routes without requiring them to have a train ticket as part of their trip.

PURPOSE

Senate Bill 742 would amend Section 14035.55 provisions to enable the Joint Power Authorities (San Joaquin, Capitol Corridor, and LOSSAN) to pick up and drop off passengers on their Amtrak intercity thruway bus routes without requiring them to have a train ticket as part of their trip. Amending Section 14035.55 provisions would increase revenues for the state at virtually no additional cost, would provide improved access to priority and underserved communities, and would reduce the amount of greenhouse gases and air pollution emissions by

diverting trips that would have previously been taken by an automobile. This change will also provide better utilization of current infrastructure and reduce congestion on some of the state's most congested freeways.

Amending Section 14035.55 could have a very positive effect on California's underserved priority and rural communities by providing a convenient and inexpensive alternative to the rising costs of automobile and airline travel. Connecting these communities to each other and to California's large economic centers would increase safe and affordable transportation options between these communities.

Intercity passenger rail and its associated Thruway bus network is environmentally friendly, and the state has a continuing interest in the provision of cost-effective and efficiently administered intercity passenger rail/Thruway bus services.

VOTES & BILL STATUS

- Senate Transportation Committee (12 - 0)
- Senate Appropriations Committee
- Senate Floor
- Assembly Transportation Committee
- Assembly Appropriations Committee
- Assembly Floor
- Senate Concurrence

SPONSORS/SUPPORTERS

- Rail Passengers Association of California and Nevada (Sponsor)
- S J Valley Regional Planning Agencies Directors' Committee¹ (Sponsor)
- Central Valley Rail Working Group² (Sponsor)

¹ San Joaquin Valley Regional Planning Agencies' Directors' Committee Member Agencies are: Fresno Council of Governments, Kern Council of Governments, Kings County Association of Governments, Madera County Transportation Commission, Merced County Association of Governments, San Joaquin Council of Governments, Stanislaus Council of Governments, and Tulare County Association of Governments.

- San Joaquin Joint Powers Authority
- Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority
- San Joaquin Valley Rail Committee
- Sacramento Regional Rail Working Group
- Downtown Stockton Alliance
- Valley Vision
- Mendocino Transit Authority
- Los Rios Community College District
- Downtown Sacramento Partnership
- King City
- San Joaquin Bike Coalition
- San Joaquin Council of Governments
- The Riding Sun Center for Opportunity
- Butte County Association of Governments
- Transportation Agency for Monterey County
- Active San Gabriel Valley
- Coast Rail Coordinating Council (CRCC)
- Breath California Sacramento Region

OPPOSITION

- California Bus Association
- Amador Stage Lines
- Discovery Charters
- Greyhound
- H&L Charter Co.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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² Central Valley Rail Working Group Member Agencies are: Sacramento Regional Transit District, Sacramento Area Council of Governments, City of Sacramento, City of Elk Grove, City of Galt, County of Sacramento, San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission, San Joaquin Council of Governments, San Joaquin Regional Transit District, City of Stockton, City of Manteca, City of Lodi, County of San Joaquin, Stanislaus Council of Governments, City of Turlock, City of Modesto, County of Stanislaus, Merced County Association of Governments, City of Merced, and County of Merced.