



# WASHINGTON RAIL NEWS

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2010

www.AllAboardWashington.org

Publication of All Aboard Washington  
A Not-for-profit Consumer Organization  
*"Moving forward... On Rail!"*

## Pacific Northwest Rail Corridor receives \$598 million federal high speed rail grants

On January 28, President Barack Obama and Vice President Joe Biden formally announced the distribution of \$8 billion in federal ARRA (stimulus) high speed rail grants at a town hall meeting in Florida. The state of Washington received \$590 million. The state had requested \$1.3 billion. Considering that USDOT received requests totaling over \$54 billion for an \$8 billion pot of money, Washington did well. Oregon received only \$8 million, mostly for repairs to Portland Union Station.

Political leaders like governors and senators were notified of the grants before President Obama's state of the union address on Wednesday evening January 27. The public learned of the grants when the information was posted to the White House website

cient for commuters, make shipping faster for businesses, and will have clear environmental and energy benefits. Anybody who travels the I-5 corridor in our state knows that we need to find new, efficient options to get commuters and commerce moving. And anybody interested in boosting our state's economy knows that now is a great time to take action. Thankfully, Washington state and Oregon have already been working since the early 1990s to study and build faster rail service along the Cascade Corridor. This funding is the opportunity we've been waiting for to help make these improvements a reality."

Governor Chris Gregoire (D) held a news conference Thursday morning January 28, attended by All Aboard Washington President Loren Herrigstad. The governor said, "These funds will offer great returns: We will put people to work and improve a transit service on which more and more Washingtonians rely. Thanks to these investments, we will move more people, move them more efficiently and move them more reliably. This work represents a big step in building our 21<sup>st</sup> century train system."

Many of the projects that will be built with the federal funding are ready or nearly ready to start construction. "The grant announcement is great news. With these investments, we will greatly improve our on-time reliability and travel choice for passengers between Seattle and Portland," said WSDOT Secretary Paula Hammond. "Our team is ready to get to work building these projects that will have real economic benefits by supporting and creating (See **HSR**, page 5)

## WSDOT Secretary Hammond addresses AAWA meeting

WSDOT Secretary Paula Hammond spoke at the December 5 All Aboard Washington meeting and auction, held at Olympia-Lacey's Centennial Station. Hammond was introduced by Lloyd Flem, who noted the good relationship All Aboard Washington has had with DOT for well over two decades.

Hammond thanked Flem, saying, "Lloyd has been a steadfast pusher and praiser of the DOT." She stated that Governor Chris Gregoire is a strong supporter of high speed rail. Hammond was the only state DOT leader at a December 3 jobs summit at the White House. She said she pushed the president to finish the selection of the high speed rail projects (see adjacent article). WSDOT wants to add two more Seattle-Portland *Cascades* roundtrips once the needed infrastructure improvements are completed and we need the federal partnership to do that.

She laid out the long fight to get the second train extended from Bellingham to Vancouver, BC. First, it was getting a commitment from the British Columbia and Canadian governments to fund the requires track improvements north of the border. Then, once that finally happened, the Canadian Border Services Agency suddenly appeared to demand \$1500 a day to provide immigration and customs service for the train. This despite the fact that an analysis showed the two daily roundtrips would have a \$48 million a year positive economic impact on Vancouver and British Columbia. CBSA relented and said it would service the trains without the fee through the Vancouver Olympics and, if ridership was strong enough, would consider permanently dropping the fee. We are above the ridership threshold so everyone hopes CBSA will live up to its promise.

The Amtrak *Cascades* are an import- (See **Hammond**, page 5)



Amtrak *Cascades* train 501 arrives Centralia on Jan. 18, 2009. Two additional Seattle-Portland *Cascades* roundtrips are planned once additional infrastructure improvements are made with the federal grant money. *Photo by Jim Hamre*

during the president's speech. Thanks to NARP's Ross Capon forwarding out the information to the NARP council of representatives, All Aboard Washington was among the first to break the news publicly in our state.

"This is a big win for Washington on a number of levels," said Senator Patty Murray (D), chairwoman of the Senate Transportation Appropriations subcommittee. "It's going to help us to create new jobs, make travel more effi-



*From the desk of  
the Executive  
Director  
by  
Lloyd H. Flem*

**CELEBRATION!; Transportation Advocacy Day In Olympia**

The evening of Wednesday January 27 I first learned, from this newsletter's editor, that our Washington had received \$590 million in grants from the Obama Administration's \$8 billion ARRA ("stimulus") monies for High(er) Speed Rail Corridors, which is over 7% of the national total! This was verified just hours later and I joined in celebration as our state, which as much or more than any other, fulfilled the criteria for qualifying for and deserved to receive these grants.

I fretted a lot these last months that political clout and big media popularity would totally trump merit when grants were made. Of course politics were involved in the final decisions, but so was merit. Washington, Wisconsin and North Carolina, in my view deserving states, were well represented in the grant totals.

Some others ... let's say they were either electoral giants or large swing states ... got big chunks, too. As one who has followed politics since 1948 (age nine; I was a Stassen man), I recognize reality where public policy and funds are involved. Illinois had the ultimate political clout but also had made good preparations and had made prior large state investments. They were very well represented, unsurprisingly.

**Now let us celebrate!**

The WSDOT Rail Office carefully built and administered for over fifteen years a small but effective and nationally-respected rail program. Plans for the future and applications for the ARRA grants made this last year were, again, precise and followed the FRA criteria to the letter. I believe the exemplary partnership of WSDOT, Amtrak, BNSF, Talgo, rail labor, many of the served communities, and others had to be considered by the Federal decision makers.

Our Congressional Delegation, in informing the Administration and USDOT of Washington's qualifications for ARRA rail monies was also instrumental. Special thanks to Senator Patty Murray (D), who we understand talked with USDOT

Secretary Ray LaHood about four times on the high speed rail ARRA funding, and also to several of our House members as well.

Our Legislature, Transportation Commission and successive governors have supported and invested in our trains. Growing numbers of passengers, by the very act of buying tickets and increasingly choosing the Amtrak Cascades for intercity transportation in our Northwest Corridor, justified these investments.

And yes, we, Washington's also nationally-respected rail advocate community, can justly take a bit of credit, too. Some of you contacted our US senators and representatives. Some of you wrote letters to newspapers praising our state's

**...our Washington received \$590 million in grants from the Obama Administration's \$8 billion ARRA ("stimulus") monies for High(er) Speed Rail Corridors ... Now let us celebrate!**

rail program. Former Secretary of State Ralph Munro, who was instrumental in working with Spain to get our original Talgo trains here, Bruce Agnew of Cascadia, and your Executive Director traveled to DeeCee last fall and met personally with all but one of our delegation, carrying the message that our Washington, based on merit, should receive a significant piece of ARRA rail funding. As late as early Wednesday morning Mr. Munro and I each phoned Senator Murray. Oh yes, and immediately after hearing of our \$590 million, I phoned thanks to her people. Let us celebrate!



AAWA was again involved as a sponsor of the annual Transportation Advocacy Day in Olympia, this year on January 28, just hours after the announcement of our \$590 million ARRA rail grant. While cooperating with the other transportation advocacy groups, we have always remained somewhat independent on TAD, as we alone among the participants are primarily concerned with intercity rather than intracity transportation. I had to literally burn the midnight lights rewriting my presentation (did two "breakout sessions" on intercity rail at TAD) and the written materials for the fifteen AAWA members who met with their legislators during the day.

My presentation and that suggested for our AAWA participants went from a "Let's ask our Federal delegation to push hard for our share of ARRA rail money"

to "We did well!" The final statement of my ideas to say to legislators (of course, folks were free to customize what they said) was as follows: "All Aboard Washington recognizes funds are limited and this year we are not asking for new state dollars. Your (the legislature's) past commitments to our rail program just paid off with \$590 million in Federal ARRA funds with no state match required! Thank you and let us celebrate!"



An apology to any of you who have paid dues to All Aboard Washington, but have inadvertently received notices that your membership dues are still due. All who handle these issues are deeply committed to AAWA and to total accuracy in our record keeping, but a glitch in attributing your payment has occurred in a couple of cases.. If such is the case, write, email or phone me (contact information on page 5). I'll straighten it out! Thank you. We always appreciate your support in whatever form it takes.

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**Cusick**, from page 3 services, the *Surliners*, the Capitol Corridor and the *San Joaquins*.

Enough equipment to have spares, so no originating train is delayed by its complementary arrival train running late, or needing equipment repairs (e.g. trains 7 and 8 in Seattle).

One thing to keep in mind when designing the new cars: **DO NOT GIVE UP LEGROOM!**

Since the new Leavenworth stop is so popular, maybe they deserve a beer car shuttling between Spokane and Seattle.

If the *North Coast Hiawatha* service is returned using Stampede Pass, then Ellensburg would need its own Whiskey and Sarsaparilla car!

We're still spending a lot less of our tax money than we do on Airports and Highways.

See how easy it is to dream big?



On Dec. 19, Photographers crowd the platform as the first

Central Link train pulls into the new Sea-Tac Airport station after the dedication ceremony. (Photo by Jim Hamre)



## The View Down the Tracks

=====  
with Jim Cusick

### The Marlboro Train

A long time ago, in a land ... not so far away, Phillip Morris dreamt big. Yes, that Phillip Morris: the tobacco company.

They thought only of their customer's well being. They planned a sweepstakes for smokers, where 2,000 smokers would get a 5 day/5 night trip on a 20 car train. Along with sleeping accommodations with a western motif, that train came complete with cars containing gambling rooms, hot tubs and massage rooms.

It would have toured the West with side trips to see the sights. An energetic smoker could do some hot air ballooning, horseback riding, fishing or mountain biking.

Heck, I might have choked on a few coffin nails for a free trip with such amenities and the chance to whoop it up.

At first, they were not going to be constrained by government budgets or voter approval. This was their chance to advertise! They were to go to paint the train in the classic Marlboro cigarette pack scheme (complete with Surgeon General's warning).

The problem was, it cost too much to build that train. After spending \$44 million on a train to be used for only one year, they had to pull the plug on the project.

They had even planned dance halls and pool table rooms (which they were talked out of).

However, there is a certain entertainment value to witnessing the process of thinking big about trains. Start by checking out this website – [www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=Project\\_Thunder](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=Project_Thunder).

### The Wine Train

My thoughts for commuter rail along the East side of Lake Washington won't be as big, and for now, I'm letting the Puget Sound Regional Council's and Sound Transit's plans speak bigger than mine, since commuter rail as described in their report is on the level of the South Sounder service, BUT...

Service can start small; there is nothing wrong with that.

I'll repeat the quick figures I've talked about before: the approximately \$60 million in track upgrades to get the service up to 45 mph, and the average cost of a

Tukwila style station of \$350,000. Oh, let's fancy it up a bit and build \$500,000 stations.

So, where shall we start?

Snohomish, of course! Why Snohomish? Are there that many people up there?

There are certainly many of them coming down SR 522, SR 9 and SR 527 from Monroe, Lake Stevens and, well, Snohomish. So let's intercept them at the headwaters.

Where in Snohomish should the station go? I would have it go over the bridge on the north side of the Snohomish River. I've thought that the area near Harvey Field would be good for a park & ride, but there is property north of my proposed site between Pearl and

## **My thoughts for commuter rail along the East side of Lake Washington won't be as big... Service can start small; there is nothing wrong with that.**

First Streets to make that location function as well.

Next, we move farther south. Now there isn't really much down that way; the land is still pretty rural. Development is happening, but maybe Cathcart would be good for another park & ride style station, right there between Railroad Avenue and the tracks.

Personally, I think Maltby should have its own station, designed to look like the buildings where the Maltby Café is. The station could be where the current siding exists at Paradise Lake Road and 212<sup>th</sup> Street SE alongside Yew Way.

Next stop, Woodinville. The area around the Post Office is the most logical. Good ridership potential. Woodinville works as a destination stop as well as a beginning point for commuters especially if you have a shuttle train to and from Redmond, with a stop right at REI in Redmond Town Center.

For access to health care, Totem Lake would be next. The station would be between the intersection of NE 124<sup>th</sup> Street and 124<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE and I-405. If you think that would hinder traffic at that intersection, you obviously haven't driven through there recently. That intersection fails without the train. How could it be impacted any worse? In fact, working in a redesign of that intersection could fit well with the station plans.

As for Kirkland, the alignment doesn't go close enough to downtown, but putting the station on 5<sup>th</sup> Place S, around 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue S would be the best compro-

mise. Bring some of the buses headed downtown by the station to provide an easy shuttle service. Free ride zone, maybe?

Bellevue is easy. Anywhere where Sound Transit's East Link light rail crosses the Woodinville Subdivision right-of-way.

Should the final stop before Tukwila be Renton?

Regardless of their opinions concerning this rail line, and their fight against it, I think that the area around the Kennydale Neighborhood deserves one, but only if they want it.

Renton already has its station, so that's settled.

Let's see, how much have I spent? Ten stations at \$500k equals \$5 million.

Now let's add in the equipment.

Hmmm, hot tubs, massage rooms ... Okay, maybe not enough time on this commute for those pleasantries, although I don't think a bar car such as the ones the New Haven Railroad used to have is out of the question. Why, it would be a great place to enjoy a glass of fine Washington wine.

We lost out on the cheaper alternative of used equipment since Utah Transit Authority's FrontRunner bought up New Jersey Transit's old cars, so we'll have to buy new.

Let's copy the current Sounder North configuration. Ten cars at \$2 million apiece equals \$20 million, and four locomotives at, let's say, a bit under \$4 million apiece equals \$15 million,

So adding together \$60 million for track upgrades, \$5 million for stations, and \$35 million for equipment, I've spend a mere \$100 million dollars. Easy!

### Amtrak Trains

I don't have to dream big, Joe Boardman is doing that for me! From Railway Age magazine's reporting on Boardman's plans for the Amtrak fleet - *Amtrak's equipment plan is expected to include, "purchase of several hundred single-level and bi-level long-distance passenger rail-cars and more than a hundred locomotives."*

What could we use here?

Hot tub cars! ... Oookay, I guess not.

Getting higher speeds and greater frequency on our Cascades service would work quite well in the Seattle to Portland segment, so a few more Talgo trainsets would fill that bill nicely.

However, California cars would work just as well with Seattle-Vancouver, BC service. Those are what the State of California currently runs on their corridor (See **Cusick**, page 2)

## As recession took hold, Amtrak ridership dips in 2009

Amtrak carried nearly 27.2 million passengers in fiscal year 2009 (ending Sept. 30). This was the second highest ridership in the carrier's history, dipping 5.3% from 2008's all time ridership record of 28.7 million but still 5.1% above the 2007 total. Of course, 2008 saw gas prices surge above \$4 a gallon, partially accounting for the huge ridership spike. Nationally, on-time performance topped 80% in 2009, up from 71% in 2008.

In the Northwest, *Cascades* ridership totaled 761,610 for calendar year 2009, down just 1.6% from the record setting 774,531 passengers carried in 2008. In the last three months of 2009, ridership totals were higher than the same months in 2008, indicating that people are starting to again feel more comfortable spending money on travel. Last year was still by far the second highest ridership in the *Cascades'* history.

For the most part, the long distance national network trains saw larger declines in ridership that did the corridors. One major exception was the *Coast Starlight*. Its FY 2009 ridership of 432,565 was a whopping 22.3% ahead of 2008. Much of this increase is because of the 15 week shutdown of service in 2008 caused by the massive landslide Union Pacific suffered in the Oregon Cascades. However, the re-launch of the *Starlight*, with improved service and equipment, and on-time performance going from nearly zero to over 80% also played key roles in rebuilding ridership on a train that had suffered for many years.

The *Empire Builder* saw 515,444 passenger boardings in FY 2009, down 7.0% from 2008. However, America's premier national network train continues to have the highest ridership among its fellow long distance counterparts. And the *Builder* is poised to gain a fourth sleeper this summer. (The *Starlight* has now become the second most popular train in the country, surpassing the *Silver Star*.)

Amtrak set a new Thanksgiving weekend ridership record last November, both nationally and in the Pacific Northwest. For the November 24-30 period, the *Cascades* (including the ten extra trips Amtrak operated) carried 22,147 passengers.

Ridership on the extension of *Cascades* 513 and 516 from Bellingham to Vancouver, BC is growing slowly but

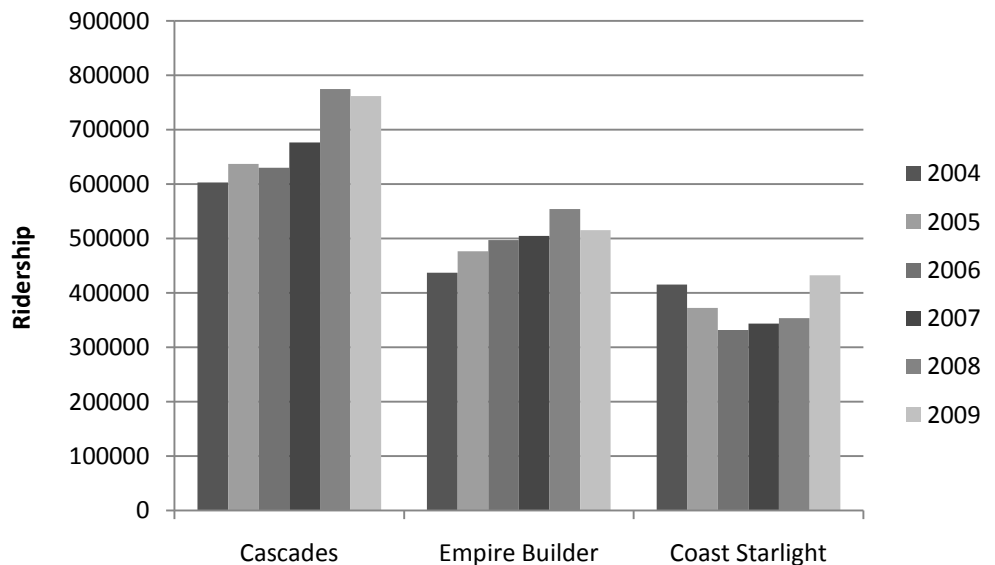
Amtrak Station Data							
Six-Year Washington State On & Off Totals (calendar year)							
Station	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	'09-'08 % Change
<b>Bellingham</b>	55,033	56,087	52,356	51,315	70,990	72,033	1.5%
<b>Bingen-White Salmon</b>	1,460	1,938	1,924	2,307	2,959	2,835	-4.2%
<b>Centralia</b>	19,771	19,089	18,816	21,060	23,663	24,279	2.6%
<b>Edmonds</b>	25,415	28,404	27,320	27,543	31,204	30,770	-1.4%
<b>Ephrata</b>	2,773	2,985	3,469	3,923	4,365	4,020	-7.9%
<b>Everett</b>	37,339	39,532	40,047	41,567	48,420	46,785	-3.4%
<b>Kelso-Longview</b>	20,573	20,956	21,411	23,519	28,330	27,406	-3.3%
<b>Leavenworth</b>						3,370	
<b>Mt. Vernon</b>	17,186	21,172	20,206	19,328	24,280	24,935	2.7%
<b>Olympia-Lacey</b>	41,613	42,404	44,205	49,659	58,133	59,884	3.0%
<b>Pasco</b>	18,710	22,056	27,147	28,072	29,202	24,765	-15.2%
<b>Seattle</b>	628,836	650,061	609,104	634,193	668,037	648,774	-2.9%
<b>Spokane</b>	40,106	42,491	46,096	48,484	59,001	47,670	-19.2%
<b>Stanwood</b>						818	
<b>Tacoma</b>	106,180	102,255	102,703	110,869	124,351	122,763	-1.3%
<b>Tukwila</b>	11,470	14,214	16,082	18,887	22,292	22,265	-0.1%
<b>Vancouver</b>	71,487	72,266	74,907	84,766	97,554	97,889	0.3%
<b>Wenatchee</b>	15,094	18,157	19,992	19,085	20,945	19,301	-7.8%
<b>Wishram</b>	1,154	2,446	1,403	1,683	1,814	1,330	-26.7%
<b>TOTALS</b>	1,114,200	1,156,513	1,089,235	1,186,260	1,315,540	1,281,892	-2.6%

Station totals include Thruway bus ridership numbers.  
Leavenworth service started Sept. 26; Stanwood service started Nov. 21.

## Trains Serving Washington State

### Six Year Totals

(calendar year for Cascades, federal fiscal year for Builder and Starlight)



seems to be exceeding the threshold set by Canadian Border Services Agency to allow the trains to continue running without imposition of CBSA's \$1500 a day fee (to do the work the taxpayers of Canada are already paying for). According to an early January release by Amtrak,

space on the trains to Vancouver, BC during the Olympics is filling up fast.

As can be seen above, ridership at Leavenworth has really taken off since the Sept. 26 station opening. Stanwood is off to a slower start but should continue to grow during the next year.

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All are evening numbers, except Lloyd's, which is available 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. daily.

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 Hotline for leaving messages: 800 562-6000  
 Amtrak Reservations/Information: 800 872-7245  
 All Aboard Washington: AllAboardWashington.org  
 NARP: www.narprail.org  
 NARP Hotline: www.narprail.org/cms/index.php/hotline/  
 Amtrak: www.amtrak.com  
 Amtrak Cascades: www.amtrakcascades.com  
 Sound Transit: www.soundtransit.org

**HSR**, from page 1

jobs, reducing rail line congestion, improving access to our ports and upgrading railroad crossings."

The White House press release provides a summary of the plans for the improvements in the Northwest Corridor "to provide rail passengers in the Pacific Northwest with faster, more reliable and more frequent service."

**Seattle - Portland:** Two additional daily round trips will be added between Seattle and Portland, for a total six; travel time will be reduced by at least 5 percent; and on-time performance will increase substantially, from 62 to 88 percent. Major construction projects include building bypass tracks to allow for increased train frequency and multiple upgrades to existing track and signal systems. Several safety-related projects will also be funded, including grade separations, positive train control, and seismic retrofits to Seattle's historic King Street Station.

**Portland - Eugene:** Investments include upgrading Portland's Union Station, and engineering and environmental work for track and signaling projects that will increase service reliability and reduce congestion.

Scott Witt, director of the DOT rail office, noted the agency was more than pleased with the amount of the federal grant. "The \$590 million is a good start," said Witt. "This is a marathon, not a sprint. As the president said, this is a down payment."

The state is already working on an application for the next round of funding. The 2010 federal transportation budget includes another \$2.5 billion in high speed rail grants. The goal is to get to speeds of up to 110 mph by 2017. However, this first round of funding will not immediately get us to that goal. But the improvements should increase reliability

and push on-time performance to 90%.

According to Andrew Wood, deputy director of DOT's rail office, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) has the final say on which projects are being funded. Since our state received about half of our initial request Wood said DOT does not yet know which projects will initially go forward. FRA is setting up meetings throughout February with all the states that received grants. A date for our state has not yet been set. DOT will then know the projects that will move forward to construction.

To see the White House press release on the \$8 billion in high speed rail grants go to [www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-and-releases](http://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-and-releases) and scroll through the pages to January 28.

To view the list of projects funded by state go to [www.whitehouse.gov/files/documents/100128\\_1400-HSRAwards-Summary\\_FRA%20Revisions.pdf](http://www.whitehouse.gov/files/documents/100128_1400-HSRAwards-Summary_FRA%20Revisions.pdf).

WSDOT's requests for the federal grants is at [www.wsdot.wa.gov/Funding/stimulus/passengerrail.htm](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/Funding/stimulus/passengerrail.htm).

**Hammond**, from page 1

ant part of the state's transportation network, Hammond said. And there are a lot of legislators to thank over the years who kept the Cascades operating and growing without the federal partnership we had been hoping for. She noted that Senator Mary Margaret Haugen (D-Camano Island) is one of the greatest advocates the rail program has in the Legislature.

But now that the strong federal partnership has arrived "we cannot rest on our laurels." There needs to be a constant reminder that the state of Washington had done it's part to build a passenger rail system in the Northwest Corridor and we need to be appropriately rewarded.

Hammond did have the opportunity to



All Aboard Washington President Loren Herrigstad ask WSDOT Secretary Paula Hammond a question at our December 3 meeting. Photo by Warren Yee

talk directly with USDOT Secretary Ray LaHood when she was in Washington, DC on December 3. She said we have made the federal government very aware of the long-term incremental passenger rail investments we have made in our state to lay the groundwork to eventually raise speeds up to 110 mph.

On another topic, Hammond said the states of Washington and Oregon and Amtrak continually work with BNSF and Union Pacific on the on-time issue. Poor on-time performance has a direct negative impact on ridership and customer satisfaction; it must be overcome.

Paula Hammond is the fourth consecutive WSDOT secretary to speak to rail advocates in our state. We hope the longstanding cordial relationship between WSDOT and AAWA continues well into the future as our state prepares to take the next leap forward with passenger rail service.

Senator Ron Wyden sent a letter to President Obama on January 21, 2010 urging him to fill the last remaining seat on the Amtrak Board of Directors with a person from the West. The entire half of country west of Illinois and Texas is unrepresented on the board. In addition to Wyden, the letter was signed by nine other western senators, including Senator Maria Cantwell (D-WA).

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## All Aboard News

**March 13:** Annual joint spring rail conference with Northwest NARP and the Assoc. of Oregon Rail and Transit Advocates in **Seattle** at the Red Lion Hotel on Fifth Avenue. Our theme is High Speed Rail for the Northwest. Speakers include Antonio Perez of Talgo, Jonathan Hutchison of Amtrak and George Chilson of NARP. Registration flyers were mailed to all members earlier. A flyer can also be downloaded from the AAWA website. Contact Jim Hamre for more information (see page 5).

**May 8:** Amtrak's Third Annual **National Train Day**. All Aboard Washington will participate in events at several stations in our state. If you would like to be involved in an event at your station please contact Lloyd Flem (see page 5) for information or assistance.

All Aboard Washington welcomed the following new members in December and January: David Morse, Seattle; and Charles Hamilton, Seattle.

All Aboard Washington members contributing to this newsletter include

Harvey Bowen, Lloyd Flem, Jim Cusick, Mark Meyer, Rob Eaton, C.B. Hall, Warren Yee and Zack Willhoite.

All Aboard Washington has tentatively set it's 2010 meeting schedule. More details will be provided as dates approach.

- April 10 – Board meeting
- May 8 – National Train Day events around the state
- June 12 – Membership meeting in the North Sound
- July 10 – Membership meeting in Seattle
- July 17 – Board meeting
- August 14 – Picnic meeting in Puyallup
- September 11 – Membership meeting in Spokane
- October 9 – Board meeting
- November 13 – Official Annual Membership meeting in Tacoma
- December 11 – Holiday meeting at Centennial Station in Lacey

If you haven't already done so, it's not too late to respond to All Aboard Washington's December fund raising letter. Contributions can be sent to our mailing address or be made through PayPal (see link on our website).

### State Freight Rail Plan updated

The Washington State Department of Transportation Rail and Marine Office has completed the Washington State 2010-2030 Freight Rail Plan. The plan update will qualify the state for new federal grants authorized through the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 (PRIIA). The due date for completion of this plan was December 31, 2009. Links to the plan and its appendices is at [www.wsdot.wa.gov/Freight/Rail/Plan.htm](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/Freight/Rail/Plan.htm).

If you have questions or would like to provide feedback on the state Freight Rail Plan, please send your comments to: [grahamt@wsdot.wa.gov](mailto:grahamt@wsdot.wa.gov) or you can call Teresa Graham at 360-705-7901.

Lloyd Flem served as All Aboard Washington's representative on the Advisory Committee.

A critique of Amtrak's *North Coast Hiawatha* route restoration plan was scheduled to be in this newsletter. Due to the late breaking news on the distribution of the high speed rail grants this article has been moved to the April/May newsletter.