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Association for Public Transportation

*Massachusetts Association
of Railroad Passengers*

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Dear Members and Friends of APT—

This has been another interesting year for transportation advocates. The electorate sent a strong message in November 2010, proving once again that elections have consequences. That message was it's time to get the country's financial house in order. APT appreciates this point because \$ 1.5 trillion annual deficits are simply unsustainable.

Our challenge is to show that investment in rail is not only cost effective, but also in the strategic national interest. Rail advocates lost a good friend when Congressman James Oberstar (D-MN), Chairman of the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee, was defeated in his reelection bid. One could only wonder what the state of infrastructure in America would be right now if President Obama had listened to the Congressman and made the Oberstar Transportation Reauthorization Bill the blueprint for the 2009 stimulus programs. With the Republicans taking control of the House, the T&I Committee now falls to Congressman John Mica (R-FL). But for those of us in the Northeast corridor (NEC), this could actually work to our advantage.

Mica is a strong proponent of "true" high speed rail (>200 mph). Not the medium speed rail (70 to 110 mph or less) that was promoted in far too many high speed rail (HSR) awards in 2010. Furthermore, Mica insists that America needs a working HSR rail corridor as a demonstration project for the taxpaying public. His number one priority is a new NEC HSR corridor – Boston to New York in 85 minutes, New York to Washington in less than 90 minutes.

APT supports this enhanced HSR strategy for the NEC. To help achieve this goal, APT has become a business partner with US High Speed Rail (USHSR www.ushsr.com). Several APT members took advantage of this benefit when they registered for the USHSR conference in NYC last fall at significantly reduced rates. This new relationship with USHSR along with our affiliation with National Association of Railroad Passengers (NARP) last year, puts APT in a strong position to weigh in on the transportation future for the state, region, and nation.

APT continues its committed advocacy in Massachusetts and New England. It is a voting member on the Regional Transportation Advisory Council (RTAC) which advises the Greater Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). APT has also applied for a position on the MBTA Rider's Oversight Committee (ROC). But to continue these activities, we need your generous support. APT's primary funding source is through your membership dues. As a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation, dues payments are tax deductible as a charitable contribution to the fullest extent of the law. Regular dues start at only \$30 (\$15 for students and seniors). If possible, please contribute at the donor level.

Please mail in your 2011 tax-deductible membership dues of \$30 today!!

We look forward to seeing you this **March 26** at the **John Hancock Conference Center** in Boston for a joint **APT & NARP Membership Meeting**. The meeting will feature a special keynote speaker, **Amtrak Vice President of High Speed Rail, Al Engel**. Make your reservation now for this great event, with a special private reception in Mr. Engel's honor for donor members! And stay tuned for the APT Annual Meeting in late spring.

With warmest regards,

Richard J. Arena
Presidents, Association for Public Transportation

Rev. Michael C. Cooper