

## ***Dedicated Funding for Intermodal Transportation Facilities***

### **ISSUE**

Federal funding is needed to create a network of intermodal passenger facilities that will provide seamless passenger transfers for intercity, commuter and local public transportation. This would facilitate tour bus access to urban destinations, rural to urban intercity and commuter travel, coordinated transportation and increased roadway capacity utilization. Intercity bus projects need to be included in public intermodal facilities to integrate intercity bus service into the intermodal chain.

### **BACKGROUND**

The nation's surface public transportation system comprises a variety of modes; intercity and commuter bus, intercity and light rail, transit, rural and medical services. To be truly effective alternatives to the private automobile, these modes must be linked to each other and to airports. The linkage at intermodal transfer facilities and through travel information portals needs to deliver seamless transportation to the traveling public.

With increasing pressure on existing road capacity, it is critical to make connections between local transit, commuter, and intercity services including airports. Customer expectations and taxpayer accountability require broad access to publicly funded stations and facilities. The return on the public investment is increased when the roadway and passenger services maximize their capacity utilization through coordinated service and access to facilities. This is true whether it is buses picking up charter or tour group arriving by plane or rail, suburban commuters or rural connectors meeting local transit or van services. A network of facilities that provides access to a spectrum of services increases the value of each of those investments. Suburban areas need park and ride facilities for convenient access to public transportation including commuter bus and rail. Urban areas need central facilities that can co-locate service for local, regional and national travel.

Two provisions of SAFETEA-LU increased the eligibility of intercity bus as part of intermodal facilities developed with Federal Transit Administration (FTA) capital funding. The first provision, contained in Section 3004 defines capital projects eligible for FTA funding to include intercity bus terminals that are related physically or functionally to public transportation facilities. The second provision contained in Section 3011 sets aside \$35 million annually from the FTA Capital Investment Grants bus discretionary program.

### **ABA POSITION**

SAFETEA-LU provisions increase federal funding eligibility for intercity bus projects as part of intermodal facilities and should be fully implemented in accordance with Congressional intention and direction. The \$35 million set-aside in SAFETEA-LU, has not been tracked separately. Intermodal facilities funded through joint development agreements and FTA Capital Investment program are not clearly identified. The discretionary program has been earmarked without reference to intercity passenger needs. FTA should require that federally funded intermodal terminal projects include intercity buses to the maximum extent possible and track access of buses to terminal projects.

