

SURVEY OF CANDIDATES' PASSENGER RAIL OPINIONS

In late September and early October, the ProRail Nebraska (PRN) Directors conducted a survey of select candidates running for the November elections in Nebraska on their opinions related to passenger rail service issues. The candidates are those running for representatives in the U. S. Senate and House of Representatives, the Nebraska Public Service Commission and the Nebraska Legislature.

The candidates were asked to register their support and/or comments on seven priority passenger rail issues that PRN feels are essential to create a balanced and comprehensive transportation system in Nebraska and the Nation. The seven issues are listed inside this mailing.

Sixty candidates were surveyed. Seventeen returned the surveys by the October 14, 2008 deadline. The responses of these seventeen candidates are displayed in the table inside this mailing. The forty-three candidates who did not return the survey are listed.

The seventeen candidates who returned surveys were very supportive of most of the seven PRN priority issues. Their exceptions were related to fiscal concerns or the need for more information. PRN thanks these seventeen candidates for responding.

For further information on the survey and results please contact Bob Kuzelka at 402-475-0221.

PRN PRIORITY PASSENGER RAIL ISSUES

The following issues have been adopted by the PRN Directors and are based upon a survey of PRN members in 2007.

PRN Mission Statement (PRN): PRN exists to advocate for improved passenger rail transportation serving Nebraska through informing the citizens of Nebraska about the benefits of railroads and by promoting balanced, efficient transportation - both freight and passenger - in Nebraska and the Nation. It is an affiliate of the National Association of Railroad Passengers (NARP) which advocates passenger rail service on a national basis.

California Zephyr Service (CZ): The California Zephyr, which connects Chicago with Oakland, CA (San Francisco), is the only passenger train currently serving Nebraska. PRN works with AMTRAK, the train's operator, to improve its service to Nebraska and to find means of promoting ridership and utilization.

Increased Chicago-Omaha-Lincoln-Denver Train Service (COLD): The California Zephyr operates only once a day in each direction and passes through Nebraska only at night. PRN advocates a second train connecting Lincoln, Omaha and Chicago possibly with service extending to Denver to increase rail service and options.

Omaha-Lincoln Commuter Service (OL): The Omaha-Lincoln corridor contains and is anchored by the largest and fastest growing population centers in Nebraska. Currently there is no scheduled commuter-oriented public transportation in this corridor. PRN advocates state supported commuter services –train and bus-in this corridor.

Omaha-Kansas City Trains (OKC): Omaha and Kansas City have limited public transportation connections to each other with no scheduled airline connections. In the states south of Nebraska (Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas), there are growing advocacies and actions to restore passenger rail service in this north/south corridor. PRN advocates joining these efforts to include having at least two trains a day in each direction that would connect Omaha and Kansas City and serve Nebraska communities and the Kansas City airport in the Missouri valley.

Midwest Interstate Passenger Rail Compact (MIPRC): MIPRC is an association of Governor-appointed representatives from Midwestern states. Its purpose is to coordinate the development of passenger rail service in the Midwest. Nebraska's MIPRC representatives are State Senators Abbie Cornet (District 45) and Arnie Stuthman (District 22), John Craig from the Nebraska Department of Roads, and Ray Lineweber from the Nebraska United Transportation Union. Nebraska has not taken a very active a role in this organization. PRN supports the MIPRC purpose and the strengthening of Nebraska's role in it.

Nebraska Department of Surface Transportation (NSURF): Currently Nebraska is the only state in the union with a Department of Roads, rather than a comprehensive, multi-modal transportation department. PRN advocates establishing a Department of Surface Transportation in Nebraska state government.

CANDIDATES RETURNING SURVEY

Office	Candidate	PRN	CZ	COLD	OL	OKC	MIPRC	NSURF
U S Sen	Larrick	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
NE PSC	Boyle	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	McCollister	NA	NA	Y\$	Y	YQ	Y	Y
Nebraska	Legislative	Districts						
1	Joy	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
3	Kopplin	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
13	Cook	Y	Y	YI	Y	Y\$ & YI	YQ	Y
	Geschwender	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
17	Garwood	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	I
21	Haar	Y	Y	Y	Y\$	Y	Y	Y
25	Campbell	Y	Y	Y	Y\$	Y	Y	YQ
	Wagner	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
27	Coash	Y	Y	Y	Y\$	Y	Y	I
33	Shoemaker	Y	Y\$	Y\$	Y\$	Y\$	Y\$	Y\$
35	Gloor	Y	Y	Y	?	?	Y	?
39	Moats	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
47	Fehringer	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	I
	Schilz	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

Abbreviations used in table: Y - Yes, Y\$ - Yes with cost concerns, YI - Yes but needs more information, YQ - Yes but qualified, I - needs more information, ? - Issue unclear, NA - No answer.

CANDIDATES NOT RETURNING SURVEY

U S Senate (U S Sen) - Johanns, Kleeb, Rosberg; U S House of Representatives by District: 1 - Fortenberry, Yashirin; 2 - Terry, Esch; 3 - Smith, Stoddard; NE Public Service Commission (NE PSC) - Paterson; NE Legislature by District: 1 - Heidemann; 3 - Price; 5 - Mello, Barrientos-Patlan; 7 - Nordquist, Moles; 9 - Howard; 11 - Womack, Council; 15 - Janssen, Register; 17 - Giese; 18 - Lautenbaugh, Lorenzen; 19 - Flood, Truman Barrows; 21 - Jeffers; 23 - Langemeier; 27 - Marvin; 29 - Fulton, Scott; 31 - Pahls; 33 - Utter; 35 - Neuhaus; 37 Hadley, George; 39 - McCoy; 41 - Sullivan, Eureka; 43 - Fischer; 45 - Cornett; 49 - Loudon, Jacoson.