



This publication is a member service of

**National School  
Transportation Association**

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amounts listed below are authorization levels. The actual appropriated amounts are expected to be lower.

## 2006-07 Board of Directors

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The Trans Group – NY  
(845) 356-2200

**Barry Stock**, President-elect

Durham School Services - US/Canada  
(905) 952-2005

**Donald Fowler**, Secretary/Treasurer

Fowler Bus Company, Inc. - MO  
(816) 776-2548

**Dale Krapf**, Immediate Past President

Krapf Buses - PA (610) 594-2664

**Regional Directors:**

**Region One - Carey Paster**

First Student, Inc. (US/Canada)

**Region Two - Charles Peterson**

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**Region Three - George (Bill) Beck**

Beck Bus (IL)

**Region 4 – Todd Monteferrario**

First Student, Inc. (US/Canada)

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**Kevin Clifford**

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**Magda Dimmendaal**

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**John Elliott**

Durham School Services (US/Canada)

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**Paul Losos**

Sunrise Transportation (IL)

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**Peter Settle**

Petermann, LLC (OH)

**Patrick Vaughan**

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## Negotiations Continue on FY-07 Homeland Security Appropriations Bill

House and Senate Homeland Security Appropriations Conferees have agreed to provide \$34.8 billion in Fiscal Year 2007 funding and agreed to add language that would set regulations for protecting U.S. chemical plants as well as at least some of the provisions from the Port Security Improvement Act of 2006. Negotiations on the inclusion of other provisions continue over other issues such as border security and the re-importation to the U.S. of prescription drugs. A formal Conference meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 25 and lawmakers hope to file and clear a Conference Report by the end of next week, before Congress adjourns for the pre-election recess.

Details of the port security legislation, which authorizes several transit security programs follow. At the moment, it appears if at least an agreement has been reached to include the port security portion, but as negotiations continue, it remains possible that the other provisions in the bill (including rail, transit and over-the-road bus security) will also be added to the appropriations bill. The

**Rail Safety Act of 2006**

- \$5 million to development recommendations to assess and evaluate critical assets and infrastructure;
- \$5 million for a pilot program to study the feasibility of passenger screening;
- \$118 million for improvements to the Northeast Corridor;
- \$63.5 million for system-wide security upgrades;
- \$350 million for freight and passenger rail security upgrades; and
- \$150 million for rail-specific research and development.

**Public Transportation Terrorism Prevention Act of 2006**

- \$2.37 billion for security assistance capital improvement grants;
- \$534 million for security operating assistance grants; and
- \$130 million for research and development grants.

**Improved Motor Coach, Bus and Hazardous Materials Security**

- \$12 million for over-the-road bus security improvement grants for private operators.

The National School Transportation Association (NSTA) was founded in 1964 by school bus contractors to "promote and foster the highest degree of safety in the transportation of school children"





## Transportation Secretary Nominee Has Confirmation Hearing

Mary Peters testified this week in front of the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee during a hearing held to consider her nomination for Secretary of Transportation.

Peters served as Administrator of the Federal Highway Administration from 2001 to 2005 and prior to her tenure with the Administration she worked within the Arizona Department of Transportation as Contract Administrator, Deputy Director for Administration, Deputy Director of the Department, and finally Director in 1998. She's currently the Vice President and National Director for Transportation Policy and Consulting for HDR, Inc.

Questions from the Committee Members involved foreign ownership of airlines, commitment to infrastructure in rural areas, and tolling. Several Senators asked for Peters' commitment to specific local projects within their state. She vowed to work and engage the Senators and all of Congress when addressing several pending issues. She reiterated that she is committed to addressing the Highway Trust Fund dilemma by looking towards innovative solutions in order to improve upon the country's infrastructure needs. Senator Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ) ended his line of questioning asking about her love for motorcycles. Peters did

inform him that she currently owns two.

Senators not in attendance had until 10 a.m. Thursday, September 21, to submit questions, and once they are answered, her nomination will be brought to the Floor at a time that has not been determined to date.



## Congress Unlikely to Vote on the Estate Tax Anytime Soon

With Congress preparing to adjourn September 29 for a pre-election recess, it appears highly unlikely that the estate tax issue will be brought up for consideration again anytime soon. House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Bill Thomas (R-CA) continues to work with Senate Republicans to try to find ways to attract the three more Democrats needed to pass the legislation, but to date those efforts have proven unsuccessful.

## Senate Banking to Focus on SAFETEA-LU Technical Corrections



The Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee, which has jurisdiction over transit, is expected to advance its version of a technical corrections bill to the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users sometime next week, prior to the pre-election recess. It remains unclear at this time, if

the Committee will actually mark-up the legislation or if it will just add its portion to the version passed by the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, which has jurisdiction over highway projects, on September 13. The House passed its version of the bill in July.



## Region 8 Accepting Clean School Bus Grant Applications

EPA's Region 8 has announced their 2006 Clean School Bus grant program. They will accept applications for projects to retrofit or replace school buses with clean fuel technology in the states of Montana, Colorado, Utah, Wyoming, North Dakota, and South Dakota.

The total amount available is \$415,000; EPA anticipates awarding 2-10 grants of from \$25,000 to \$210,000.

As in the other regions' programs, Region 8 will pay for up to 45% of new clean fuel buses, up to 50% of the cost of engine upgrades, and up to 100% of the cost of retrofits (with at least 5% matching contribution from the grantee). Private school bus companies cannot apply on their own, but can apply in partnership with a school district.

To access the request for proposals, go to <http://www.epa.gov/region8/air/Req8CSBRFP2006Rev3.pdf>. The deadline for applications is November 30.



## Celebrate School Bus Safety Week!

This year marks the 40th Anniversary of National School Bus Safety Week and the first year it will be formally recognized by the U.S. Congress!

Use some of these ideas to promote School Bus Safety Week in your community:

### Invite Members of Congress to your school

Invite your local Member of Congress to one of the schools served by your company to showcase the safety of school transportation. Focus on the safety aspects of your buses and the safety statistics of school transportation. Work with the Member's office to inform the media of the event. Be sure to stage your event at your school (rather than a ride-along) due to press coverage and the security concerns of filming children.

- Talk about the some of the significant programs for school bus transportation, including:

*Clean School Bus Funding – There is \$28 million pending in the House in the Energy Appropriations bill for Fiscal Year 2007. The Senate has yet to pass similar legislation.*

### School Bus Watch –

*This is a free security awareness program for school bus drivers and school personnel. Contact NSTA to order a DVD or video tape. Since 2004, this program has received a total of \$45.1 million in Department of Homeland Security grant funding.*

- Don't forget to mention some school bus safety statistics, including:

*480,000 school buses carry 25 million children to and from school every weekday;*

*School buses comprise America's largest mass transportation fleet – 2.5 times larger than transit, intercity buses, commercial airlines and rail combined;*

*Children are eight times safer on the school bus than in their parent's car and is the safest form of ground transportation available; and*

*School buses meet higher construction, equipment and inspection standards than any other vehicle and school bus drivers meet higher qualification, training and testing standards than any other driver.*

Another option is to write a letter to your Member of Congress thanking them for supporting the industry and voting for House Resolution 498, which honors the goals and ideals of School Bus Safety Week. Remind them of the safety features of school bus transportation and ask for their continued support of the industry in the future.

### Work with the Local Media

- Encourage your local newspaper, radio station or TV stations media to do a POSITIVE story about school bus safety
- Public Service Announcements (PSA's) – prepare and distribute public service announcements for both television and radio. (Contact NSTA Headquarters for a sample PSA.)

For more ideas for School Bus Safety Week and for information on promotional and recognition items for your drivers and staff, visit NSTA's Marketplace at [www.yellowbuses.org](http://www.yellowbuses.org)!

Additionally, the National School Bus Safety Week Committee has (free) 11"x17" colored posters for you to use, promoting the 2006 National School Bus Safety Week.

To order your posters, call the NSTA office (800-222-NSTA) and let them know how many you would like sent to you.

NSTA will hold its **Midwinter Meeting** from **January 27<sup>th</sup> to January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2007** in Tucson, Arizona at Loews Ventana Canyon Resort. Room rates for the Meeting are \$219 single or double occupancy.

The discounted rooms are limited and will be available until the block is sold out or until December 29, 2006 – whichever comes sooner. You can make your reservations by calling the resort at (520) 299-2020.

Registration information is available in the Upcoming Events section of the website ([www.yellowbuses.org](http://www.yellowbuses.org))



***This week's Supplier's Corner highlights Zonar Systems!***

Zonar Systems® provides a complete fleet management solution with powerful Telematics products ranging from their electronic inspection system to a new state of the art GPS device. Zonar's inspection product known as EVIR® is considered by many to be the "new best practice". The EVIR system uses a handheld reader and RFID tags located in and around the bus to ensure performance of mandated inspections. Zonar calls this inspection process "verified visual inspections".

[www.yellowbuses.org](http://www.yellowbuses.org)



**Have You Been to NSTA's Members Only Section of the Website?**

NSTA's members' only section of the website has some interesting information on it! Here is just some of the information listed:

- ★ Press Release to Promote School Bus Ridership