

Letters to the editor: 9/11/05

Sunday, September 11, 2005

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Shifting federal money to public transit did not delay state highway construction

Once again, the state's highway construction industry has distorted Gov. Ed Rendell's emergency steps this year to prevent the Port Authority of Allegheny County and other transit agencies in 24 counties from facing ruinous fare increases and service cuts.

Contrary to what Robert Latham of Associated Pennsylvania Constructors told Post-Gazette Harrisburg reporter Tom Barnes on Sept. 8 (["Taxing Matter"](#)), not one highway and bridge project on the current 12-year program was cut or delayed because of the transfer of federal highway dollars to transit. The governor tapped additional federal funds that Pennsylvania received.

Mass transit systems in cities across the state cover an area of nearly 9 million people, roughly 75 percent of the state's population. And the emergency transit aid was not confined to Pittsburgh and the five-county Philadelphia region. Transit agencies in 18 other counties also are in line for help to make ends meet.

In the meantime, the governor created a Transportation Funding and Reform Commission, which will review the entire transportation funding landscape and make recommendations by 2006 for dealing with the funding crisis.

ALLEN D. BIEHLER

Secretary

Pennsylvania Department of Transportation

Harrisburg

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