Assembly Adopts Bill to Solve Special School Bus Costs

Legislation, which would provide a division of costs for special school bus service between students who use it and the Oakland school system, has been approved by the Assembly in Sacramento.

The bill was introduced to help prevent the loss of school bus service in the Oakland hill area. If approved by the Senate and signed by the Governor, it can become a law in time for the start of service this fall.

The measure relieves school districts from part of the financial burden in furnishing school bus service and provides, instead, for an equitable distribution of costs between parents of students involved and school taxpayers.

It was introduced by Assemblyman Nicholas C. Petris of Oakland at the request of hill area residents whose children face the loss of bus service next fall. The bill was combined with a similar one by Assemblyman Edwin L. Z'berg of Sacramento and was approved first by the Assembly Education Committee.

The bill would allow AC Transit to operate the service, collecting a regular fare from students and meeting any excess costs from a minimum guaranteed by the Oakland Board of Education.

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New Bill to Divert Bridge Tolls Opposed By East Bay Leaders

Another attempt to divert Bay Bridge tolls for Marin County and peninsula commuters has been met with renewed opposition in San Francisco and the East Bay this month.

AC Transit and area leaders joined in new protests after a second bill was introduced in the State Legislature to divert Bay Bridge revenue for reconstruction of the Transbay Transit Terminal in San Francisco for benefit of buses which do not pay any tolls.

An earlier bill brought before the State Senate aroused such protest that proponents agreed not to push it before the Senate Transportation Committee.

The new bill, introduced by Senator Eugene McAteer of San Francisco, contains the same provisions as the first measure, with the additional authorization for construction of a heliport on the terminal roof.

If the bill is approved, bus services which pay no Bay Bridge tolls would be getting the benefit of facilities paid for largely by East Bay commuters, Transit Director Robert K. Barber pointed out. The resultant crowding also would seriously hamper district plans for increasing transbay service, he said.

The directors unanimously voted to oppose the latest bill and again to seek support of area groups.
Veteran Transit Director Resigns

Paul E. Deadrich, a veteran member of the AC Transit board of directors, announced his resignation this month.

Deadrich said he plans to move his home from Hayward to Tuolumne County at the end of the school year where he will operate a law and real estate office in the Sonora-Twain Harte area.

Representative of Ward V, including the area of Hayward, Castro Valley, San Lorenzo and portions of San Leandro, Deadrich was elected to the first board in what progress the district has made.

Chicago Transit Shows Decrease in Revenue

CHICAGO—Passenger revenue of the Chicago Transit Authority amounted to $11,073,470 for the month of March, a decrease of $634,922 or 5.42 per cent as compared with March, 1960.

The amount was adequate to cover operation and maintenance expenses, debt service requirements, but left a deficiency of $479,201 in the $896,918 monthly provision for depreciation reserve.

What the Editors Are Saying About Transit

Oakland Tribune:

Caught in the Middle

THE PARENTS of a considerable number of Oakland school pupils are now caught in the middle of what presently appears to be a squabble between the Oakland Board of Education and the new AC Transit District.

The fight is over payment for bus service provided Oakland pupils attending schools located well off regular AC bus runs.

At present no real battle lines have been drawn between these two organizations—nor should there be. Yet from such differences grow unpleasant feelings in which both sides entrench themselves behind untenable positions that only work to the detriment of the public.

What seems to be needed now as a means of extricating both sides from the dilemma are frank three-way talks between the board, the parents' groups and the AC Transit District.

At least such discussions would serve to keep the situation from further deteriorating into a rock-throwing contest between two public bodies. And the presence of parents—who are also voters—may help greatly in both organizations reaching some equitable compromise.

The problem involved is simply this: The Oakland Board of Education has not budgeted any funds during the next school year for bus transportation to out-of-the-way schools such as the new hill area high school.

The school board says it can't afford to budget any monies because state law requires that if it pays any portion of the cost it must pay it all.
Transit Trails

Try Nicholl Park in Richmond for Outing

By Virginia Dennison

There might be prettier parks with hill and dale, but for a day of togetherness (like the book says) it would be hard to beat Nicholl Park in Richmond.

It has everything—from kids to kids—for everyone in the family. The one kind of kids are included in the miniature farm. With the park on Macdonald Ave, the obvious name for the animal collection, of course, would be "Old MacDonald's Farm." Bring your own eet-eet-o's.

Your own kids will find ducks, peacocks, pheasants and other birds, along with the barnyard bunch. They'll also find, and probably sooner, a big play area, exceptional in that it seems to have enough slides (five!) and other equipment for everybody.

While the youngsters play, Papa can watch the ballgame on one of three diamonds; practice his shots on a putting green or try to figure out the intent of intense lawn bowlers, away from it all behind a thick hedge.

For the teenagers, there's tennis and a soon-to-be completed football field. Mama can enjoy the serenity and conversation of other mothers, watching from benches—if she isn't busy getting the lunch ready at the barbecue and picnic area near the miniature railroad. The train, which runs on week-ends when the weather permits and from 10 a.m. to 7 or 8 at night during vacation times, is an actual scale model of an S.P. streamliner.

If you need more atmosphere, actual trains add frequent background toots, while they busy themselves about the Richmond yards.

Although it covers some 22 acres, the park has the added family advantage of being all together, as far as most of its attractions are concerned.

Located at 30th and Macdonald, it also has the advantage of being convenient. You can reach it easily by bus, the L and the 72M give direct service. There's little walking involved and it makes for a simple, old-fashioned kind of a day—uncomplicated, inexpensive, fun together under the sun.

For further data, including a "tour package" of schedules and a route map, call Transit Information, OL 3-3335.
Cut in Fare Asked for Elderly Riders

A request by senior citizens for a reduction in fares for elderly riders with limited incomes has been taken under study by the district's Projects Development Committee.

The plea for lower fares was made to the board of directors this month by Mrs. Alexander Van Frank of Berkeley, president of the Coordinating Council of East Bay Senior Citizen Groups. The council, which represents 41 groups in the area served by the district, stressed that a fare reduction would mean release from a restricted life to thousands of elderly persons living on low incomes.

No specific fare was suggested by the council, but Mrs. Van Frank pointed out that the Los Angeles Metropolitan Transit Authority and the Detroit Railway Co. have adopted lower fares during non-peak hours for men 65 and over and women 62 and over, with limited incomes.

In Los Angeles, fares have been reduced from the normal 25 cents to 15 cents during off-peak hours for senior citizens in the low income category. The reduction, set-up on a four months trial basis, will mean a saving for approximately 150,000 people.

The lower rates apply to elderly people who earn no more than $1200 a year. Processing of applications and issuance of cards to qualified citizens was handled by the Los Angeles Senior Citizens Service Center and other volunteer groups, without cost to MTA. The special rates are in effect for certain hours only.

IN MEMORIAM

Louis E. Reid, 55, of 22223 Queen St., Hayward, an instructor at Division 2, died May 5 of leukemia, after a short illness.

Mr. Reid came to work for Key System as a driver in 1944 and later became a dispatcher and receiver, working at the different divisions. He was appointed an instructor in December, 1951.

A "green thumb" gardener, Mr. Reid also was interested in fishing and in traveling. He is survived by his wife, Evelyn; two daughters, Mrs. Patricia Mary Smith of Pleasant Hill and Mrs. Marilynne Mendonca of Castro Valley; and five grandchildren.

Bill Holds Answer To School Bus Costs

(Continued from Page 1)

Under present interpretation of the State Education Code, the schools must pay all the costs of school bus service if they pay any part of it.

The Oakland board already has given notice it will end special school bus contracts the end of this school year. Parents, fearing their children may be stranded in hill areas, have announced they are willing to pay a fair share of the costs.

AC Transit directors maintain the district cannot provide the special service at a loss.

According to William J. Bettencourt, board president, it would be unfair for transit taxpayers in Alameda or San Leandro, for example, to have to subsidize special school service in Oakland.

"No other school district within the transit district is asking this," he said.

The legislation, which provides a sharing solution and removes the taxpayer from paying the entire bill, has the approval of the American Federation of Teachers and the California School Boards Association.

Iron Horses of Bus Transportation
Sold to Oakland Dealer for $60,000

Sale of 159 gasoline-powered buses for $60,000 has been approved by the board of directors, the final coup de grace for the pungent old iron horses of bus transportation.

The motor coaches, retired from service by AC Transit as new equipment arrived, were sold to the Sam Clar Co. and Associates, of Oakland, auctioneers and liquidators.

The gas buses have been in retirement pasture at the East Oakland and Richmond division yards since the board declared them surplus earlier this year.

Once the pride and joy of the Key System in the lush and lucrative days of World War II travel, the coaches—many of them pre-war—were the work horses of Bay area transit—even if they did leave a trail of gasoline fumes to mark their passing.

They are expected to roll again, in smaller communities and under different uses, but still hardy and dependable.

The retired fleet includes the last 23 of the pre-war 800 series, along with 95 of the 900 series and 75 of the 1000's, the end of the White line, with a "pancake" engine under the floorboards and a gasoline consumption that made them high cost compared to diesel models.

With most of the old buses out of service, the district now is primarily diesel-propelled, with new equipment handling basic service on most of the local lines, on transbay runs and on new express routes.

When the first of the Whites went into service in 1941, they were considered very plush and especially reliable. And the fumes were taken for granted.

During the war years, the buses hauled full load of passengers, but gradually they lost a financial race to the more inexpensively operated diesel coaches.

"NOT IN SERVICE"—Veterans of East Bay bus transportation, the "old Whites" share retirement pasture at East Oakland division yards before rolling again into new transit careers.
'Red Trains' Rolled Just 50 Years Ago

It was 50 years ago this month that the Southern Pacific "Red Trains" of nostalgic memory rolled smoothly through Alameda, setting off their own special era of "owl-eyed" transportation. And strangely, while other early forms of transit have rolled into oblivion, the "Red Cars" served out their half of a century.

The last old S.P. "Red Train" left Los Angeles on its final trip to Long Beach last month, after providing electrified service in the southland for 20 years. Same old coaches, too.

To East Bay residents, particularly, the "Red Trains" had a certain charm—they weren't very comfortable, but they were a little cheaper than the competing Key System and, in Alameda particularly, they provided a brand of service dear to the hearts of early commuters.

For one thing, it was in Alameda that the S.P. tried out its first electric train, running from the Alameda Pier at the mouth of the estuary out Encinal Ave. to the depot at High St. and Encinal, using the tracks of the old South Pacific Coast line.

The rival Key System had already been stringing wire for years, but once the Southern Pacific awoke to the gold mine of interurban transportation, they moved steadily ahead, expanding into a vast interurban system that spread through-out the state and into Oregon, until they had the world's largest suburban electric transportation system.

The first revenue train ran on the Alameda trackage on June 8, 1911, replacing the steam trains during off-peak hours.

The experiment immediately proved to be a success and by August 1, the "Fernside" or "Cohen" loop was built to link the system along Encinal with the tracks along Pacific and Lincoln Avenues, built years earlier by A. A. Cohen.

After "blanketing" Alameda, the S.P. spread out to electrify its other commute lines. In Berkeley they switched from steam to volts on the Shattuck Ave. line on Dec. 23, 1911; on the Ellsworth St. line, Dec. 28, 1911; the California St. line, Jan. 1, 1912; and the 9th St. line, Feb. 1, 1912.

Things moved briskly along on the pioneer 7th St. line in Oakland, also; and it was electrified as far as 55th Ave. by April, 1912; to Hillsdale on Dec. 29, 1912; and to Dutton Ave. in San Leandro on Oct. 1, 1913.

For three decades, the red cars would be a familiar part of the commuter's daily toil and the ferry steamers they met at Oakland and Alameda piers would take a vivid place in history.

Along with the Key System, the Southern Pacific ran its trains over the bridge in 1939, sending the ferry boats to final moorage. But the automobile and the bus defeated the "Red Trains" and in 1941, after 30 years, the S.P. left the field to the Key System.

Many of the cars were saved by the advent of World War II and found a new home on the Pacific Electric in Los Angeles, also an S.P. property. Tired, but faithful, they held down the last electric service west of Chicago, by serving for another 20 years on the run between Los Angeles and Long Beach.
Final Price

Board Approves Key System Settlement

A final net purchase price of $7,480,000 for Key System Transit Lines has been approved by the AC Transit board of directors after months of detailed calculations by engineering and accounting consultants.

The settlement, which is some $20,000 less than originally offered by the district, has been agreed to by Key officials and will now go before the Key System Transit Line board of directors for final approval.

The transit board authorized coincidently with reaching final settlement of the purchase agreement the acquisition from Key System of two parcels of land valued at $32,000 for purposes of bus turn-arounds. One is located at Carlston Blvd. and Pinedale Ct. in Hayward.

The final price represents a figure reached by the consultants after they went over the Key System facilities in careful detail following the district's acquisition of the transit lines last Oct. 1.

Reductions in the purchase price were attained following a physical inventory and audit performed by engineering and accounting consultants retained jointly by AC Transit and Key System. Current status of such accounts as material and supplies entered into the final purchase figure.

Employment Director Finds There's Silver (Maybe) in Them Thar Hills

Once you've picked a nugget out of a stream or, more prosaically, hauled ore out of a tunnel, you're supposed to have a certain aura of expectation riding on your shoulder.

And it's there, burning brightly at the moment, on Martin L. Reite, who does his prospecting at AC Transit's main office as supervisor of employment. But at a certain group of mines high in the Pinion range of Nevada, the search concerns paydirt of another kind, a long sought Mother Lode of silver.

If you take it by years, it would be hard to decide whether Reite is more of a veteran of transit or of mining. Both have come in for considerable activity.

Mining and medical studies are something of a Reite family tradition, perhaps kicked off by an aunt and uncle who migrated to Natal in Africa during a long ago gold strike.

His father, the late John B. Reite, came to San Francisco in the 1880's to earn a reputation as a noted general contractor, with mining as a sideline. He was among prominent San Franciscans included in a syndicate which operated mines in the silver-rich Railroad Mining District 30 miles south of Elko, Nev.

The mines shipped copper, silver and lead and Reite—known as "JB" on Montgomery St.—started explorations for the main ore body when his death in 1916 terminated operations.

Martin, after three years of medical studies, gave up that career to carry on the family interests—and to foster some of his own at the Eastman Gulch gold mine in Trinity County.

In between, Martin has tallied years of experience in transportation, serving as terminal agent for the Santa Fe when it opened its new terminal in San Francisco in 1940.

He went to work for Key System in 1944, serving as a supervisor, assistant superintendent in charge of shipyard railroads and director of employment, a post he kept with AC Transit.

Upholding medical honors for the family is his son, Dr. Martin L. Reite, who graduated cum laude from Yale and is now interning in psychiatry at UCLA. Dr. Reite's aunt is Dr. Eleanor Nelson, noted East Bay surgeon.

As for the Nevada property—now the Sweepstakes Mines Inc.—a long low level tunnel has been extended to where extensive drill holes indicate the main silver ore body is located and the fabulous dreams of the 1870's may be nearing fulfillment.

Car Parking Lot Replaces Station

The Piedmont Avenue train and bus station of fond memory has bowed to the wreckers' boom, making way for a new parking lot.

As result, passengers for Lines C—San Francisco, 59—Broadway Terrace and 76—Montclair are now boarding their buses across the street from the station, at the northwest intersection of 41st St. and Piedmont Ave.

The station, owned by Key System Transit Lines, was sold to the City of Oakland for the off-street parking facility. The station, one of the last remnants of the train era, was erected in 1937.
At an adjourned regular meeting April 20, 1961, the Board of Directors:

- Referred to the General Manager for study a proposal by Peerless Stages that its operations in southern Alameda County between Hayward and the county line be taken over by the transit district, on motion of Director Barber.

- Approved extension of Line 68—Barrett Ave. from El Cerrito Shopping Plaza to intersection of Fairmount and San Pablo Avenues, on motion of Vice President Copeland.

- Approved contract with State Personnel Board for job classification and salary study at a cost not to exceed $2950, on motion of Director Barber.

- Directed State Personnel Board to use prevailing wages and salaries for comparable work in the Bay area and, where necessary, elsewhere in the State as the guide in its salary study, on motion of Director Barber.

- Awarded contract for 2,000,000 new transit tokens to Walter W. Cribbins Company, the lowest of two bidders, at a cost of $25,640, on motion of Director Barber.

At a regular meeting May 3, 1961, the Board of Directors:

- Accepted with regret the resignation from the board of Director Paul E. Deadrich, on motion of Director Barber.

- Authorized the sale of 189 gasoline powered White buses for total price of $60,000, on motion of Director McDonnell.

- Directed the Oakland Board of Education be notified the transit district will cooperate in operating special school bus service providing parents and the school board share operation costs, on motion of Director Copeland.

- Approved change in lease of bus storage property adjoining East Oakland division terminal at Seminary Ave. and San Leandro St., on motion of Director Barber.