



SAFETEA-LU Status

Federal funding for high-speed maglev development has not been available for several years. The current six year Transportation Bill – SAFETEA-LU- was passed in 2005, however, it required a technical correction for release of funds. This legislation includes \$90 million for maglev development, \$45 million for Las Vegas and \$45 million for projects east of the Mississippi. Until recently action on the bill has been slow.

Thursday, April 17, the U.S. Senate passed the technical correction bill for the SAFETEA-LU transportation legislation by a vote of 88 to 2. However, amendments were added to the bill that now forces the bill to go back to the House of Representatives for consideration of the amendments. These amendments do not impact any funds for maglev. It is not known when the House will take up the bill, but it is not expected to be any extended period of time.

Getting the bill through the Senate has been a major barrier that has now been overcome. The bill is not expected to have any difficulty getting through the House, however, if the House has difficulties with the Senate amendments or adds other amendments, the bill will then need to go to conference. Again, the delays for this process are not expected to be of any significant length. After the bill has cleared both the House and Senate, it must go to the President for signature. The President is expected to sign.

There are several steps that yet must be followed in the political process and several more months before funds can be made available for advancing the Pennsylvania High-Speed Maglev Project, but getting the bill through the Senate has been the major hurdle that has now been overcome.

This is great news for high-speed maglev in Pennsylvania. Final passage of the technical corrections bill will assist in advancing the project a significant way toward construction.