

ROLL CALL

K Street FILES

Wednesday, October 17, 2007

Page 12

Busing Penguins. Spurred by a comprehensive energy bill that could pass as early as this year, the American Bus Association has launched a campaign to make sure any eventual legislation still includes its partial exemption on the diesel fuel tax.

To do so, the trade group, which represents “motorcoaches,” the intercity vehicles the ABA says are the most fuel-efficient way to travel, has launched an ad campaign that features — the penguin.

“Save a Penguin. Take a Motorcoach.” reads one print advertisement. And if the cause and effect is not perfectly clear, the ABA provides some helpful guidance on the subject:

“By supporting motorcoach transportation, which gets 184 passenger miles per gallon and is the most fuel-efficient way to travel, you might just help save an ice cap or two,” according to the ad, which features a long line of Photoshopped penguins queuing up on the front lawn of the Capitol waiting to board an intercity bus.

The Bus Association represents about a quarter of the country’s bus operators, most of whom are small businesses with 10 or fewer coaches. Bus operators now pay 7.3 cents per gallon in diesel fuel taxes; a 17 cents per gallon exemption from the standard 24.3 cent-tax, says spokesman Eron Shosteck.