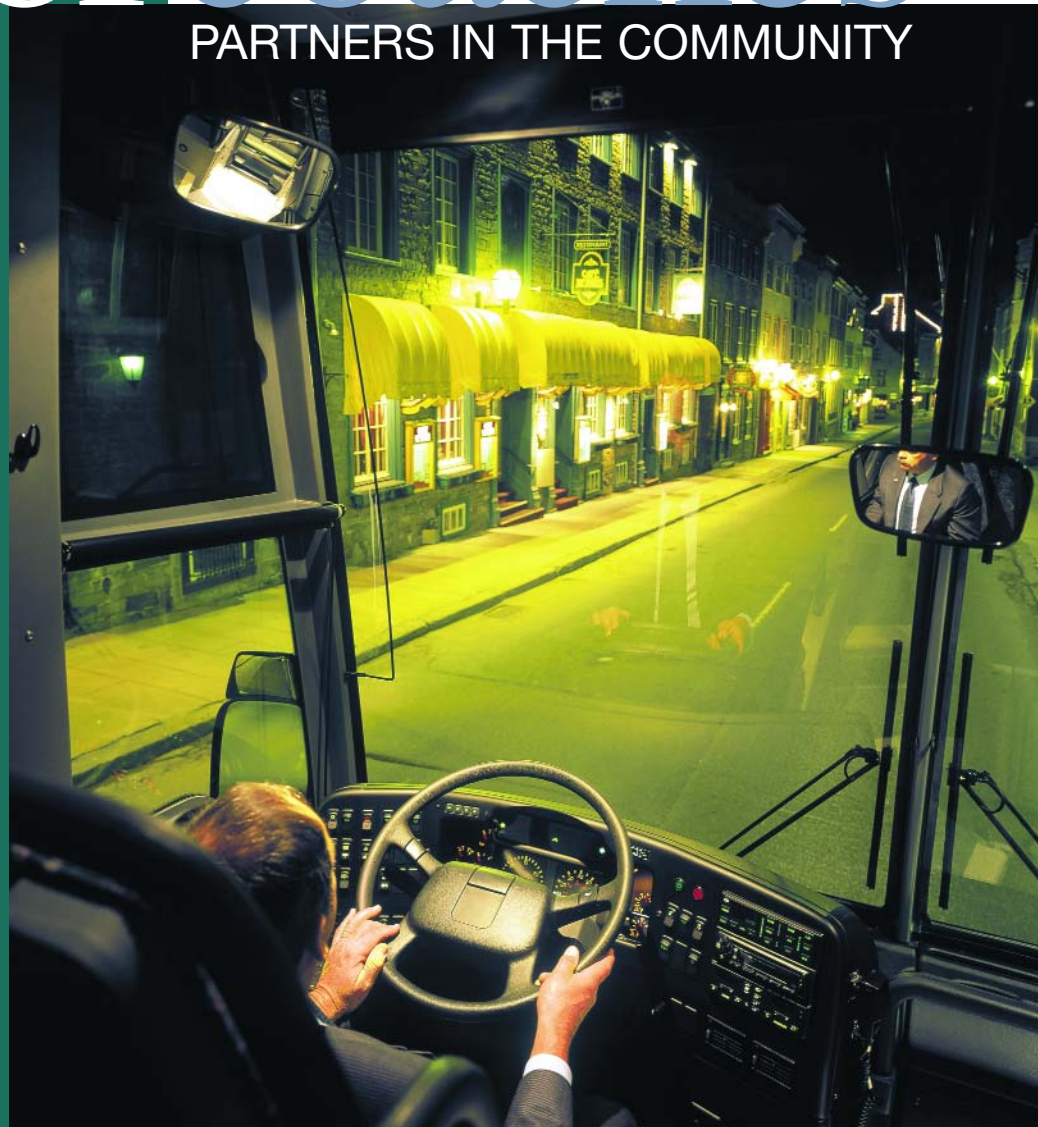


Motorcoaches

PARTNERS IN THE COMMUNITY



Communities

Value

The Industry Today

Safety

Environment and Congestion

Rural Connections



AMERICAN BUS ASSOCIATION

Representing the motorcoach, tour and travel industry

“I commend ABA members for your commitment to public safety and for the positive difference you make in our local communities. Whether visiting family, touring national historic sites, or heading off to work each day, millions of Americans rely on dependable bus service... motorcoaches now service six times more U.S. destinations than airlines and more than seven times more destinations than passenger rail.”

— President George W. Bush, letter to ABA members 8/21/01]

Communities



Motorcoaches serve nearly 5,000 communities nationwide, quietly providing for the mobility needs of millions of consumers. Today, states, provinces, counties, and cities are challenged to choose transportation options which will:

- Ease congestion;
- Promote safety;
- Demand the least energy resources; and
- Work within limited infrastructure and budgets.

In addition, communities must ensure that aging populations, disabled citizens and people of all walks of life have transportation options that enhance opportunity and quality of life. Motorcoaches carry a far higher percentage of passengers from low-income families than any other mode. Nearly 40 percent of intercity bus passengers are from families with incomes that are less than \$20,000 per year. In contrast, fewer than 10 percent of Amtrak and commercial aviation passengers are from low-income families. Providing these services while, at the same time, strengthening the economy of a state, province, county or city's economy is a goal shared by many communities.

Motorcoaches are flexible, able to go anywhere with limited infrastructure needs (we build, operate and maintain most of our terminals and all of our garages) and are able to be expanded at a lower cost to government than air or rail service. Because buses can go wherever roads exist, bus routes can be expanded at a much lower cost and more quickly than other modes of transportation.

Motorcoaches are a community solution



One overnight motorcoach visit is worth
\$5,000–\$11,000 to a local economy

Value

Motorcoaches provide affordable service, at little or no cost to local governments, but provide a big boost to local economies. Motorcoach travel is a flexible mode that can react to changes in routing, traffic and schedules.

And just one overnight motorcoach visit is worth \$5,000 — \$11,000 to a local economy including meals, lodging, retail and local taxes paid by motorcoach passengers. These motorcoach visits support more than 12 million U.S. tourism jobs.

Motorcoach service comes at a very small cost to local governments. The most recent comprehensive net subsidy study comparing U.S. transportation modes¹ shows that the subsidy passenger trip for intercity bus companies was just 8 cents per passenger, while it was \$6.07 for air carriers and a whopping \$57.96 for Amtrak.

¹Net Federal Subsidies to Passenger Transportation Systems and Modes, 1960-2001, Nathan Associates, Inc., April 2003



Today's motorcoach offers comfort, affordability and service

The Industry Today

Today's motorcoach industry is comprised largely of small, often family-owned, entrepreneurial businesses – a network of 4,000 companies, 90 percent of which have fewer than 25 buses and 74 percent of which have fewer than 10 buses.

Motorcoaches provide more than 774 million passenger trips in the U.S., and more than 860 million passenger trips in the U.S. and Canada annually, more than airlines and Amtrak combined. Motorcoaches are the intermodal glue in America's sometimes disjointed transportation system, linking passengers to airports, train stations and seaports, and with their home, work, and tourism destinations. Services include fixed route/scheduled services, charters, tours, airport shuttles, commuter sightseeings and contract services.

Today's modern coach features a wide range of amenities, some come equipped with plush, upholstered seats, individual climate control, audio and video capabilities, laptop computer hookups, and a snack galley.

Some innovative operators provide first-class business service to travelers that include concierge service in their terminals, internet and e-mail connectivity, onboard satellite TV, audio and video systems, and gourmet coffee.

“Last year, only three individuals were killed in motorcoach accidents. These are remarkable statistics – especially considering that motorcoaches log an average of 28 billion passenger miles annually.”

— Carol J. Garmody, Vice Chairman,
National Transportation Safety Board, April 30, 2002

Safety

The safety and security of our passengers and employees is the highest priority for members of the motorcoach industry, and the National Transportation Safety Board, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, and the U.S. Department of Transportation continuously recognize the motorcoach industry as the safest form of commercial passenger transportation.

And motorcoach businesses are safe workplaces, with the lowest fatal occupational injury rate of any intercity transportation mode.

Our industry supports initiatives that will improve our safety record, such as providing enhancements to the commercial drivers license requirements, standardizing certification of those who provide medical examinations certifying a driver's fitness for duty, participating in safety coalitions, and encouraging random inspections. The American Bus Association, the industry's leading trade association, is working with operators to ensure that motorcoaches are also the most secure form of passenger transportation by providing action plans and training materials to operators to keep them up-to-date on the latest security enhancement measures.



**Safety is the highest priority for
members of the motorcoach industry**

Environment and Congestion

Highway congestion costs U.S. taxpayers \$72 billion annually in wasted resources and lost productivity. One motorcoach can displace as many as 57 passenger cars from crowded highways and can help reduce traffic volume by 425 million cars each year. This reduction in vehicular traffic equates to a reduction of pollutants in the form of Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC) and Nitrous Oxide (NOX) by more than 100 tons.

Private bus companies help to reduce congestion with regular route service that brings commuters from suburbs and beyond to central cities. In one example, Eyre Bus Service, Inc. brings 1,500 commuters into Washington, D.C. every day from Columbia, Md., at a ticket price of just \$30 a week. Another operator, Dillon's Bus Service, carries 800 more passengers to Washington, D.C. each day.

Motorcoaches are the most fuel-efficient mode of transportation. They deliver more than 160 passenger miles per gallon of fuel and yield more people-moving efficiency than any other mode, helping reduce traffic congestion and noise pollution associated with individual car travel. According to the American Public Transportation Association, a bus with as few as seven passengers is more fuel-efficient than the average car with one occupant used for commuting. For every 10,000 solo commuters who leave their cars at home and commute on an existing mode of public transportation service for one year, the U.S. reduces fuel consumption by 2.7 million gallons of gasoline.



One motorcoach can displace as many as 57 passenger cars from crowded highways



Nearly 40 percent of rural residents have no public transportation in their communities

Rural Connections

Rural America is underserved by public transportation. According to the U.S. Department of Transportation, nearly 40 percent of rural residents have no public transportation in their communities.

For many rural citizens, intercity bus service is the only form of public transportation available to connect them to other communities and basic human services. This service not only provides essential passenger services, its incidental package express service is the only form of daily, scheduled freight service for many of these small towns.

Motorcoach transportation is becoming even more important, as a decreasing handful of rural communities receive service from the federal Essential Air Service program intended to connect rural U.S. communities to major hub airports, and as airlines cut service to rural communities in cost-saving measures.

States were provided an important resource in TEA-21 under Section 5311F, the rural intercity bus program, to develop and support intercity bus transportation in their rural communities. However, a number of states have chosen to divert those funds to other areas. Motorcoaches can only fill that gap with this necessary assistance.

How Can I Promote Use of Motorcoaches in My Community?

Buses are a safe, affordable and flexible transportation option often representing the only link for areas where other travel options are unavailable. Buses are an environmental and congestion mitigation tool, and deliver significant economic benefits to communities. *So how can you foster an environment in your community that attracts and facilitates motorcoach travel?*

Follow the charter rules and allow private operators to thrive. In 1987, the Federal Transit Administration issued charter service rules to prevent public intrusion into private markets. Violation of those rules encroaches on the largest source of revenue for motorcoach operators – charter service and drains the lifeblood out of companies that are forced to compete with publicly subsidized transit agencies. To learn more about the charter rules, visit www.fta.dot.gov/library/charterservice.

Provide bus parking opportunities. In most cities, motorcoach operators face limited options for parking vehicles and are either penalized for idling or forced to circulate city streets while waiting for their groups. Designate bus parking convenient to retail and attractions that draw passengers to your destination – the economic benefits will become apparent. Provide adequate time for idling – motorcoaches require idling time to prepare their systems for safe and comfortable operation (air brakes, wheelchair lifts, climate controls).

Provide access to funding pools. In the U.S. intercity buses are eligible for several federal transportation funding programs that can be made available through working with states and localities and Metropolitan Planning Organizations including: Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds, National Highway System (NHS) funds, 5311(f) intercity bus program funds, and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Funds (CMAQ). Unfortunately, some communities are diverting funds targeted for intercity bus projects. Fully consider intercity bus needs in

your community and allocate funds to promote motorcoach travel.

Include motorcoach operators in the planning process. Historically, state, provincial, and local transportation planning agencies have rarely included intercity bus service or bus intermodal facilities in their funding plans. Private operators can assist in identifying opportunities for intermodal connectivity, promoting mobility for disabled passengers, and creating opportunities for improved access to the system overall. Visit www.buses.org to learn which operators serve your area and invite them to be part of the planning process.

Build and promote access to intermodal transportation centers and destinations. Developing a connected transportation system takes cooperation from state, local and national leaders. States and cities can take advantage of available funding for intermodal transportation projects in rural and urban areas alike that bring rail, bus, transit and even aviation together. In addition to TEA-21 funding, localities and states are: securing funding earmarks from state legislatures and Congress; using local bond measures to generate funds; and using a variety of creative financing methods to provide funds for these important projects. Don't hinder motorcoach travel by charging restrictive fees for access to airports, parks and other key tourist destinations or by prohibiting motorcoach travel in passing or express lanes.

Find an operator on www.buses.org. The American Bus Association (ABA) web site, www.buses.org, is a great resource to learn more about the motorcoach industry and offers a list of motorcoach operator members and suggestions for selecting a quality operator. Or, contact your state bus association for information on local operators. Visit www.buses.org/reauthorization to learn about ABA's public policy ideas for improving motorcoach travel opportunities.

“Privately operated intercity bus transportation is an important part of our nation's overall surface transportation network, particularly in smaller communities and rural areas. Intercity buses provide linkages among smaller communities within a region and to larger urban areas that offer services and opportunities not available in less populated areas.”



The American Bus Association is the trade association of the intercity bus industry representing more than 1,000 motorcoach and tour operators in the United States and Canada. Its members operate charter, tour, regular route, airport express, special operations and some contract services (commuter, school, transit). Another 2,300 member organizations represent the travel and tourism industry and suppliers of bus products and services that work in partnership with the North American Motorcoach industry.

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