

Fiona Ma Featured in New Book

Excerpt from Chapter 7

Fiona Ma was nervous about getting on a train that was about to set a world speed record. Just before Easter 2007 in the countryside outside Paris, she saw the people lining the green and flowered route. The French were flying flags, waving, and cheering. Less reassuring were those of faith who crossed themselves as the new train accelerated past 200 miles per hour. The people blurred into a collage of spring time colors. The train vibrated much as when a jet plane roars down the runway and starts to ascend. Fiona hoped that this train would not leave the tracks.

At three hundred miles per hour, the train was still on the tracks, accelerating. Out the window, only one image was distinct. A plane that was filming the historic event flew along side the train. Surrealistically, Fiona and the eleven other dignitaries could see what was filmed from the plane on a screen inside the train. Another LCD displayed their world record - 357 miles per hour on a train. Everyone cheered. The train slowed over the next few miles. Fiona took a deep breath, exhaled, and smiled; she took part in history.

These days, Fiona Ma, needs to find new courage every day. As California Majority Whip, she takes on the tough issues and is a force in making things better. For every important issue, there are vested interests on all sides whether it is better health care, better transportation, stopping global warming, or keeping California's \$1.7 trillion economy moving forward. Among her many responsibilities, Assemblywoman Ma chairs the Legislative High Speed Rail Caucus.

The California High-Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) believe they just may have the answer — an 800 mile statewide high-speed rail system that would serve at least 32 million passengers per year by 2020 and reduce CO₂ emissions by 12 billion pounds per year. By 2030, the system is forecasted to save 18 billion pounds of CO₂ per year.

If you have ever been stuck in gridlock trying to get to work between Orange County and LA, or between San Jose and San Francisco, you will appreciate that the



high-speed rail would add the equivalent of a 12-lane superhighway. Express high-speed trains will take one hour and fifteen minutes between San Diego and Los Angeles, and a little over two and one-half hours from San Francisco to Los Angeles.

Not only is high speed rail popular, it is safe. High-speed rail systems, using the new grade-separated high speed lines planned for California, have not had one fatality in 41 years. Rail is much safer than automobile and airplane travel.

Save Gas, Save the Planet



Ride Clean. Ride Together. Ride Less.

John Addison

California high-speed rail addresses a number of goals. Current highways cannot support the planned growth to 50 million people. Only the United States and China use more oil than California. Consuming 20 billion gallons of gasoline, diesel, and jet fuel, California could be devastated by a disruption in oil supply, whether caused by terrorists and by soaring prices. Droughts, likely caused by climate change, are already hurting California agriculture and industry. California will be unable to meet its targeted reduction of greenhouse gases without high-speed rail. Especially damaging are the greenhouse gas emissions from short-haul air travel.

By the time that the California High-Speed rail is fully funded, built, and running, it may be 2030. By then it is forecasted to carry 100 million riders per year, both for daily commutes and for distances of hundreds of miles. By comparison, Europe already provides 250 million annual rides, and Japan over 300 million.

Will Californians park their cars and ride the rails? Last year, Los Angeles public transportation carried 64 million riders. In the Bay Area, the BART commuter rail carried 104 million riders. When gasoline prices rocketed in 2008, Amtrak ridership on the Capitol City Corridor was up 16 percent; the San Joaquins jumped 27 percent. Although Californians will not exclusively ride rails and rapid transit, they will ride more and drive less.

High speed rail will integrate with public transportation. All 25 California stations will be multimodal. For example, from my home to the Los Angeles Convention Center, I would take bus to the Transbay Terminal, then high-speed rail to Los Angeles Union Station, and there board the subway with a quick transfer to the LA Metro light rail. Door-to-door the journey would take 3.5 hours, including walking a total of five blocks.



Look Inside

<http://www.savegassavetheplanet.net>