

**DRAFT TRANSPORT (WALES) BILL: COMMENTS BY TRANSPORT 2000**

1. Transport 2000 is an environmental campaign and research group which works for more sustainable transport policies. We bring together a wide range of organisations including environmental and other non-governmental groups, trade unions and transport operators. We have a number of Welsh affiliates and representatives, some of whom will be making separate comments.
2. Transport 2000 broadly welcomes this bill. We support greater devolution of transport powers and greater local control over rail services, and we also support the creation of joint transport authorities. We have explored the case for both of these in some detail, and the New Local Government Network is shortly to publish a paper by Transport 2000's Director on "New Localism and Transport" which makes the case for devolution of transport powers and for sub-regional partnerships of local authorities. We also support the bill's requirement for the Assembly to produce a Wales Transport Strategy. We have however two concerns about the bill.
3. The bill makes no mention of sustainable development, or of the need for transport policies and strategies to safeguard and enhance the environment. These are important omissions. Transport operations and infrastructure have a significant impact on the local and global environment, in terms of pollution, land take, biodiversity, landscape and townscape, and also in terms of community severance. "Sustainable development" balances economic development with social and environmental considerations; many transport policies and strategies in the past have paid too little attention to this, and have disadvantaged many groups, especially those with limited access to cars.
4. We would therefore like to see amendments to section 1 of the bill to take these concerns into account. One way of doing this would be to add "environmentally sustainable" after "efficient" in line 5 and to add after "Wales" in line 6 "so as to promote and contribute to sustainable development". Other forms of drafting may achieve the same end.
5. Our second concern about the bill is section 11, which allows for financial assistance to air services in Wales. We are concerned about the environmental impact of the growth in aviation, which is likely to make a significant contribution to climate change; we also believe that subsidies for aviation will tend to benefit the rich. We are also unclear whether such subsidies are legal under European law, even with the sub-clauses (2) and (3), given recent decisions against local government funding for Charleroi airport in Belgium. We believe that Assembly funding would be better spent on other transport and economic development causes in Wales and would like to see this whole section deleted.

15.06.04