TRANSIT LEADER SHIRLEY DELIBERO RECEIVES 2008 SHARON D. BANKS AWARD

Long-time public transportation leader Shirley A. DeLibero is the 2008 recipient of the Sharon D. Banks Award for Innovative Leadership in Transportation. This Transportation Research Board (TRB) award, which may be conferred biennially, was established in memory of Sharon Banks, who was the General Manager of AC Transit, Oakland, California, from 1991 until her death in 1999. She served as the Chairwoman of the TRB Executive Committee in 1998. DeLibero will receive the award on January 16, 2008, during the Chairman’s Luncheon at the TRB 87th Annual Meeting in Washington, D.C.

The Sharon D. Banks Award recognizes sustained leadership accomplishments and innovations, over an extended period of time, that exemplify Sharon Banks’ caring nature and depth of character in areas such as the education, training, and mentoring of transportation professionals; community-sensitive facilities and services; or comparable people-oriented initiatives. Contributors to the award included the Research and Special Programs Administration (now the Research and Innovative Technology Administration) and the Maritime Administration of the U.S. Department of Transportation, AC Transit, the American Public Transportation Association, the California Transit Association, the Conference of Minority Transportation Officials, and TRB. Recipients are chosen by a selection committee appointed by
the Chairman of the TRB Executive Committee.

Over the past 30 years, DeLibero has worked in major public transit systems in Boston; Washington, D.C.; Dallas; New Jersey; and Houston. She began her transportation career in her native city of Boston at the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority as a project manager rehabilitating old streetcars; she later became Superintendent of the Green Line. At the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, she served as Director of Bus Services and Assistant General Manager. She then served as Deputy Executive Director for the Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) system in Dallas, Texas. In 1990 she was named Executive Director of New Jersey Transit Corporation, the nation’s third largest multimodal public transit system. In 1999 she moved to Houston, Texas, to become President and CEO of Houston’s Metro, presiding over the construction of that city’s first light rail system, which opened in January 2004 under budget and ahead of schedule (the operations building has been named in her honor). She retired later that year and now runs her own firm, DeLibero Transportation Strategies LLC.

The Banks Award recognizes DeLibero for her ability to lead and motivate people, her commitment to valuing and empowering employees, and her mentoring of a significant group of transit managers. Her commitment to the people in transportation—riders, employees, and stakeholders—was evidenced in her frank and compassionate dealings with them, her initiation of employee ambassador programs and advisory committees, the establishment of “transit villages” and other outreach to surrounding communities, and her strong emphasis on mentoring young men and women in the industry.

DeLibero has held leadership roles for the American Public Transportation Association (APTA), the Women’s Transportation Seminar, and the Conference of Minority Transportation Officials (COMTO). She served as Chair of APTA in 1998-1999 and is current National Chair of COMTO. She also served on the Transit Cooperative Research Program’s Oversight and Project Selection Committee. Among her many honors, she was named APTA’s Outstanding Public Transportation Manager in 1996, and in 2006 she was inducted into the APTA Hall of Fame.

More than 10,000 policy makers, administrators, practitioners, researchers, and representatives of government, industry, and academic institutions are expected to attend the Transportation Research Board (TRB) 87th Annual Meeting, in Washington, DC, January 13-17, 2008. The meeting, held at the Marriott Wardman Park, Omni Shoreham, and Hilton Washington hotels, includes more than 3,000 presentations in 600 sessions, 85 workshops, and 400 TRB committee meetings covering all aspects of transportation.

The mission of the Transportation Research Board is to provide leadership in transportation innovation and progress through research and information exchange, conducted within a setting that is objective, interdisciplinary, and multimodal. A major focal point of TRB’s activities, the Annual Meeting provides an opportunity for transportation professionals from all over the world to exchange information of common interest.

Organized in 1920, TRB is a division of the National Academies, which include the National Academy of Sciences, National Academy of Engineering, Institute of Medicine, and National Research Council. The nation turns to the National Academies for independent, objective advice on issues that affect people's lives worldwide.