



May 7th, 2025

The Honorable Steve Womack
Chair
U.S. House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Transportation, Housing and Urban
Development
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Cindy Hyde-Smith
Chair
U.S. Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Transportation, Housing and Urban
Development
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable James E. Clyburn
Ranking Member
U.S. House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Transportation, Housing and Urban
Development
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kirsten Gillibrand
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Transportation, Housing and Urban
Development
Washington, D.C. 20510

Re: Fiscal Year 2026 Appropriations for Amtrak and Passenger Rail Grant Programs

Dear Chair Womack, Chair Hyde-Smith, Ranking Member Clyburn, and Ranking Member Gillibrand:

As your Committees begin work on the Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26) Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies appropriations bill, the undersigned organizations urge full funding of the National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak), Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail (FSP) Program, and the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Program at congressionally authorized levels.

The federal investments made to Amtrak, FSP, and CRISI are essential to the operations and development of a safe and efficient U.S. transportation system. Our nation's intercity and regional passenger rail network moves tens of millions of Americans every year, offering an alternative to congested highways and crowded airports. These services also offer a safer way for families to travel, with passenger rail 17 times safer than riding in a car on a per passenger mile basis.

State and local governments, Amtrak, and private sector operators and manufacturers are matching federal funds provided by these programs to address state-of-good repair backlog, upgrade existing service, establish new corridors, and build the next generation of intercity rail equipment. Since the passage of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), the U.S. Department of Transportation has invested nearly \$53 billion across 594 rail projects to improve rail safety and expand rail travel in 48 states.

In light of Amtrak's recent decision to remove over 70 of its Horizon rail cars from service in March after routine inspections discovered corrosion, it is worth emphasizing the necessity of continuing to support fleet renewal efforts. The Horizon cars were manufactured between 1988 and 1990, and—like much of Amtrak's fleet—have operated beyond their reasonable service life. Relief is coming, and Amtrak will introduce the first of 28 Alstom NextGen Acela high-speed trains later this year, with 95% of its components made in America, while continuing to roll out new Siemens Venture and Airo trainsets which are also built in America. While Amtrak continues refurbishments of existing long-distance equipment, they are planning to award a contract later this year for the manufacture of the next-generation long-distance trainsets. These manufacturing jobs will provide a safer, modern onboard experience, built, operated, and maintained by American workers. It is essential for the long-term viability of these rail services that Congress continue to support these investments in our domestic supply chain.

Amtrak carried over 32.8 million passengers in Fiscal Year 2024, setting a new ridership record. Demand increased across the nation, with State-supported services hitting new ridership records, including on the Amtrak *Downeaster* in Maine, all four Amtrak Virginia corridors, and the Amtrak *Cascades* service in Washington State.

Amtrak's annual appropriations are essential for operations in both rural and metropolitan communities and cannot be made up by advance appropriations provided by the IIJA. Providing sufficient FY26 funding is necessary to ensure Amtrak workers carry out the day-to-day functions needed to meet these record levels of ridership, perform annual maintenance, and carry out core functions while making high-priority investments for future expansion.

Thank you for your continued support of a resilient U.S. rail system.

Sincerely,

American Train Dispatchers Association
Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen-International Brotherhood of Teamsters
Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employes Division-International Brotherhood of
Teamsters
Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen
Environmental Law & Policy Center
High Speed Rail Alliance
International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers and Transportation
International Brotherhood of Boilermakers
National Conference of Firemen & Oilers, 32BJ / SEIU
Rail Passengers Association
SMART, the International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Workers-
Transportation Division
States for Passenger Rail Coalition
Teamsters Rail Conference
Transport Workers Union of America
Transportation Communications Union
Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO