



RAIL PASSENGERS
ASSOCIATION

RailNation:DC

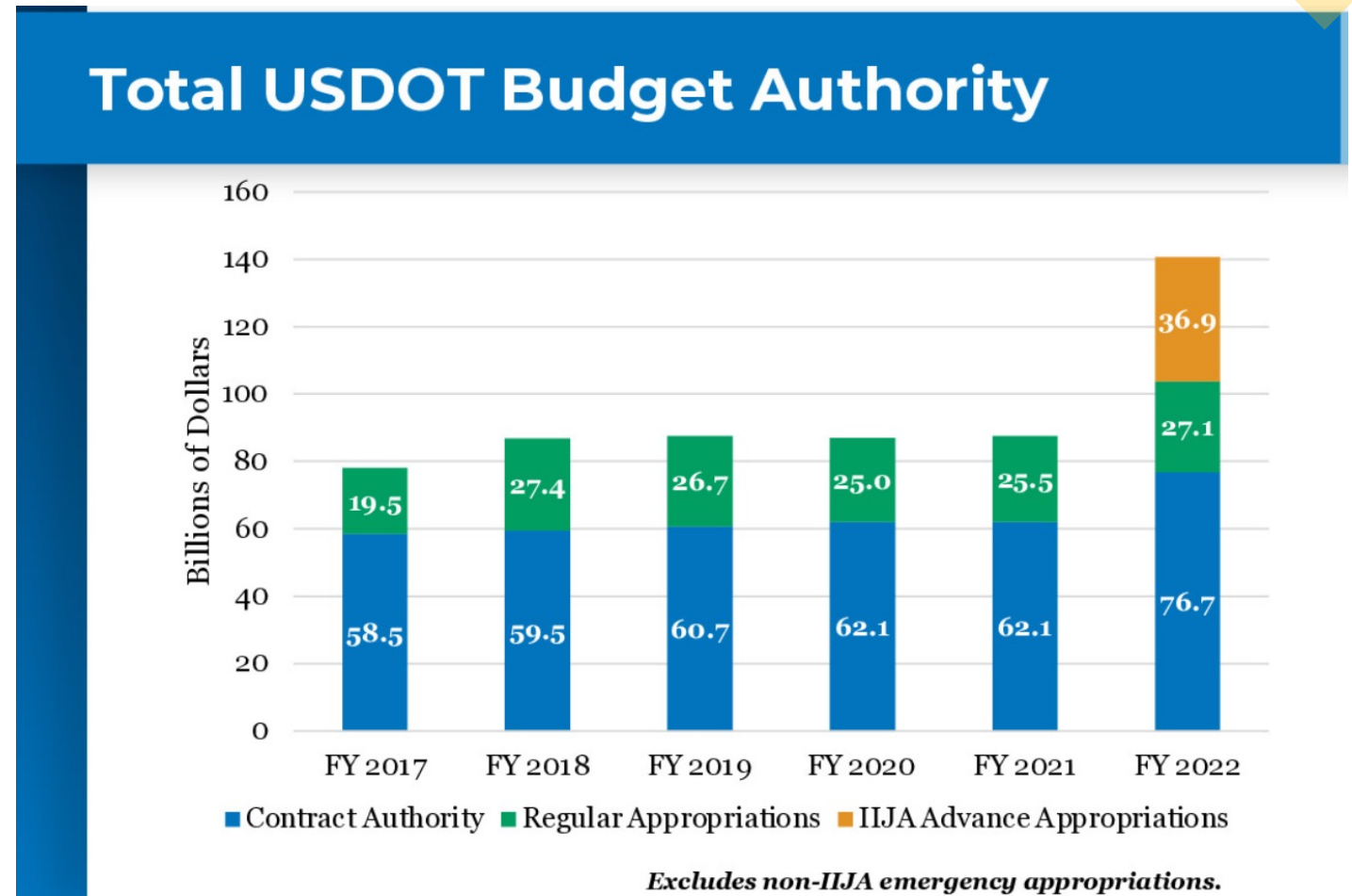
Federal Briefing + Day on the Hill Prep

March 28, 2022

Sean Jeans-Gail | VP of Gov't Affairs
Rail Passengers Association

Congressional State of Play

- Congress passed the FY22 government funding bill two weeks ago... over 5 months late!
- **Good news:** appropriators spent +504m out of their own regular budget beyond IIJA's \$13.2 billion on FRA.
 - +\$332ml for Amtrak ops.
- **Bad news:** ~\$4 billion less than authorized by BIL.



Graph via Eno Transportation



Congressional State of Play

- Congressionally directed funding requests (earmarks) returned:
 - **\$8 million – Georgia Department of Transportation:** Environmental Impact Statement for the Atlanta to Savannah Passenger Rail project.
 - **\$5 million – Maryland Transit Administration:** Baltimore Penn Station Facility Improvements.
 - **\$10 million – San Diego Association of Governments:** COASTER Commuter Rail Corridor Stabilization project. (Transit Infra. Grants)
- Leadership hasn't issued clear directions on the interface between IIJA funds and FY23 earmarks yet.
- Tremendous opportunity to accelerate development.



Congressional State of Play

▶▶▶ Potential red flags ▶▶▶

- Rising housing costs expected to eat up large share of the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development (THUD) year-over-year increase in funding.
- Of the \$6.4 billion increase to THUD in FY22:
 - \$4.7 billion to HUD
 - \$1.6 billion to DOT



Congressional State of Play

▶▶▶ Potential red flags ▶▶▶

- Backlash to IIIA among cadre of House Republicans.
- Returning Amtrak to Economic Sustainability (RATES) Act
 - Sample clause: waters down Amtrak Mission by replacing “providing... high quality service” with “ensuring route profitability proportional to the Federal share of investment.”
- “If the federal government is allocating billions of dollars to a company that disproportionately serves coastal, metropolitan populations over rural America, at the very least we should require Amtrak to attempt to be economically sustainable.” - Rep. Rick Crawford [R-AR], Ranking Member of T&I Rail Subcommittee



Congress - Looking Ahead

- One upshot of late FY22 passage: FY23 calendar is already scrambled.
- President's Budget Request released today (two months late), sounding the starting gun for the budgeting process:
 - \$17.9 billion for rail (\$15 billion increase over 2021)
 - \$13.2 billion already provided by BIL
 - \$4.7 billion in additional funding on top of the
- Amtrak's Leg. & Grant Request 1-2 weeks after President's
- House appropriations hearings likely in April, Senate to follow



Congress - Looking Ahead

- Upcoming DOT deadlines (180 days after IIJA signed):
 - Establishment of Corridor Identification and Development Program
 - USDOT Report on Direct Grants to Amtrak
 - Establishment of Food & Beverage Service Working Group
- **Midterms are coming!**
 - Wave of retirements
 - Redistricting
 - Wave election?



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Preparing for Rail Passengers Week on the Hill

Maintaining Momentum in 2022

Maintaining Momentum

Staff had hundreds of meetings across reauthorization cycle, backed by 13,000+ messages from *Rail Passengers* supporters.

Responded to dozens of inquiries by incoming White House and USDOT.

Builds on work done by NARP/RPA across multiple reauthorization cycles of work.

Maintaining Momentum

“Victory has a thousand fathers, but defeat is an orphan.”

We need to get out and help shape the implementation.

Successful organizations able to harness energy to advance mission.

FY23 Leg. + Grant



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1200 G St. NW, Suite 240
Washington, DC 20005

202-408-8362

Rail Passengers Association Fiscal Year 2023 Legislative Grant Request

The passage of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law has launched a new era for America's rail passengers. The Investment in Infrastructure and Jobs Act (IIJA) establishes several important new passenger rail programs and, for the first time, provides ambitious, multi-year federal funding for the upgrade and expansion of the national intercity passenger rail network.

There will be challenges in implementing the BIL's rail title, as well as restoring passenger rail service to pre-pandemic levels. Importantly, the funding that the BIL provides to Amtrak is reserved for specific uses, so achieving that restoration will require robust annual grant funding for the company's Northeast Corridor and the National Network accounts. The Rail Passengers Association is committed to working with Congress to provide effective oversight of new and expanded passenger rail programs and ensure that appropriators fully fund rail programs at the authorized levels established by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

Fiscal Year 2023 Funding (Millions)		
National Network Funding \$9.315 Billion	Multipurpose Funding (Could benefit NN, NEC and/or neither) \$4.02 Billion	Northeast Corridor Funding \$6.215 Billion
Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety (CRISI) Grants		
Amtrak National Network Grant	Dedicated \$1,000	Amtrak Northeast Corridor
Dedicated \$3,200	Authorized \$1,000	Dedicated \$1,200
Authorized \$2,200	Total \$2,000	Authorized \$1,100
Total \$5,400		Total \$2,300
Railroad Crossing Elimination Grants		
	Dedicated \$600	
	Authorized \$500	
	Total \$1,100	
Fed State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail	Fed State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail	Fed State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail
Dedicated \$3,240	Dedicated \$720	Dedicated \$3,240
Authorized \$675	Authorized \$150	Authorized \$675
Total \$3,915	Total \$870	Total \$3,915
	Restoration & Enhancement Grants	
	Authorized \$50	
Direct Grant to Amtrak	FRA Discretionary Grant	

Congressional Oversight of the USDOT and Amtrak

Restoration of Levels of Service on Amtrak Routes: Amtrak announced early this year that, due to labor shortages and the Omicron surge, it would be temporarily reducing service. Standard service levels were originally scheduled to resume March 28, but delays have been extended indefinitely. The disruption to Amtrak service will affect hundreds of (primarily rural)



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1200 G St. NW, Suite 240
Washington, DC 20005

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communities. Congressional intent on the need to continue service at existing levels—at the *minimum*—has been clearly established in the IIJA and in federal budgets and pandemic aid bills. Rail Passengers requests that Congress use its oversight powers to ensure Amtrak publicly issues a plan and clear timeline for the full restoration of State-supported and Long-Distance service.

Amtrak Board of Directors: There are currently two vacancies and six expired seats on Amtrak's Board of Directors. We ask the Congress to work with the Biden Administration to nominate a new slate of Directors that—as required by Congress in the IIJA—provide balanced regional representation, speaking for both rural and urban passengers.

National Fleet Renewal: Amtrak has launched the procurement process for next generation equipment, beginning with the new Northeast Corridor fleet (ACELA 2021); safer, more energy-efficient next-generation diesel locomotives to replace the aging National Network locomotive fleet; and the award of a contract for new single-level equipment to Siemens to replace Amfleet I cars on the Northeast Corridor and neighboring State-Supported services. However, there is still a long way to go towards fleet modernization. Rail Passengers is asking Congress to fully fund BIL at the FY2023 authorized levels to assist in the purchase of new equipment for the National Network and the NEC.

Speed Project Delivery: It is imperative that the IIJA deliver tangible benefits to America's passengers in the near term. There are several corridors where the USDOT could speed delivery of funds by endorsing previously released capital investment plans. We ask Congress to push the USDOT to use these pre-existing blueprints to award IIJA funds, and to publish the Northeast Corridor Inventory as soon as possible to advance critical NEC projects.

Legislative Policy Proposals

The IIJA included several passenger rail policy reforms. However, there are still key policy provisions that need to be enacted to allow for the effective and efficient implementation of the bipartisan infrastructure law:

On-Time Performance and Fairness for Passengers: Given the dramatic rise in host railroad interference and passenger delays, Rail Passengers is asking Congress to grant preference enforcement. This would give Amtrak the ability to bring an action in U.S. District Court when its statutory right of preference is violated, protecting American passengers' right to be on time by ensuring they aren't stranded illegally for hours behind slow-moving freight trains. Rail Passengers supports passage of the Payne/Durbin Rail Passenger Fairness Act [H.R. 2937/S. 1500].

Passenger Rail Trust Fund: Rail Passengers supports passage of the Davis/Blumenthal Intercity Passenger Rail Trust Fund Act [H.R. 2769/S. 899] to provide predictable, dedicated funding for passenger rail. While the Highway and Transit programs provide federal formula funding to states, the intercity passenger rail program depends on time-consuming and uncertain discretionary grant programs which prevent efficient planning and delay the start of projects. With advance appropriations for passenger rail grants, Amtrak and states can more effectively plan multi-year capital programs and manage large projects.

Update and clarify the procedure for Amtrak to access host railroad infrastructure to ensure a fair process for determining the amount of capital investment needed to ensure any additional Amtrak trains do not unreasonably impair the host railroads.





Amtrak Direct Grants

National Network Funding	
Amtrak National Network Grant	
Dedicated	\$3,200
Authorized	\$2,000
Total	\$5,400

Northeast Corridor Funding	
Amtrak Northeast Corridor	
Dedicated	\$1,200
Authorized	\$1,100
Total	\$2,300

[Millions of Dollars]

- Dedicated, multi-year capital funding will allow Amtrak
- All operating funding falls within “Authorized” — which is all discretionary.



Fed-State Partnership

National Network Funding		Multipurpose Funding (Could benefit NN, NEC and/or neither)		Northeast Corridor Funding	
Dedicated	\$3,240	Dedicated	\$720	Dedicated	\$3,240
Authorized	\$675	Authorized	\$150	Authorized	\$675
<i>Total</i>	<i>\$3,915</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>\$870</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>\$3,915</i>

Total FY23 Fed-State	
Dedicated	\$7,200
<i>Authorized</i>	<i>\$1,500</i>

[Millions of Dollars]



FRA Discretionary Grants

Multipurpose Funding (Could benefit NN, NEC and/or neither)	
Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety (CRISI) Grants	
Dedicated	\$1,000
Authorized	\$1,000
<i>Total</i>	<i>\$2,000</i>

Railroad Crossing Elimination Grants	
Dedicated	\$600
Authorized	\$500
<i>Total</i>	<i>\$1,100</i>

Restoration & Enhancement Grants	
Authorized	\$50

[Millions of Dollars]



FY23 Leg. + Grant Policy Requests

- **Restoration of Levels of Service on Amtrak Routes:** requests that Congress use its oversight powers to ensure Amtrak publicly issues a plan and clear timeline for the full restoration of State-supported and Long-Distance service.

Will depend on authorized operating funding.

FY23 Leg. + Grant Policy Requests

– **Amtrak Board of Directors:** request that Congress work with the Biden Administration to nominate a new slate of Directors that—as required by Congress in the IJA—provide balanced regional representation, speaking for both rural and urban passengers.

<u>Member</u>	<u>Tenure</u>	<u>Former Nominee</u>
Pete Buttigieg	<i>Ex officio</i> as Secretary of Transportation	
Stephen Gardner	<i>Ex officio</i> as Amtrak President (non-voting)	
Christopher Beall (R)	Term expired Jan. 2018	
Yvonne Braithwaite Burke (D)	Term expired Jan. 2018	Nominee: Sarah Feinberg (D)
Thomas C. Carper (D)	Term expired Aug. 2018	Nominee: Chris Koos (D)
Anthony Coscia (D)	Term expires Dec. 2020	
Albert DiClemente (D)	Term expired Sept. 2017	Nominee: Joseph Gruters (R)
Jeffrey Moreland (R)	Term expired June 2015	Nominee: Rick Dearborn (R)
vacancy (was Derek Kan (R))	Term expires Jan. 2021.	
vacancy (never filled)		Nominee: Lynn Westmoreland (R)



FY23 Leg. + Grant Policy Requests

- **National Fleet Renewal:** fully fund BIL at the FY2023 authorized levels to assist in the purchase of new equipment for the National Network and the NEC.
- **Speed Project Delivery:** ask Congress to push the USDOT to use pre-existing blueprints to award IJA funds, and to publish the Northeast Corridor Inventory as soon as possible to advance critical NEC projects.



Legislative Proposals

- Payne/Durbin Rail Passenger Fairness Act [H.R. 2937/S. 1500]
- Davis/Blumenthal Intercity Passenger Rail Trust Fund Act [H.R. 2769/S. 899]
- Update and clarify the procedure for Amtrak to access host railroad infrastructure to ensure a fair process for determining the amount of capital investment needed to ensure any additional Amtrak trains do not unreasonably impair the host railroads.



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Educational One-Pagers

Rail Passengers Legislative Ask

Rail Passengers Day on the Hill



Rail Passengers 2022 Issue One-Pagers are live:

Economic Benefits	Environmental Benefits	High-Speed Rail
National Network & Rural Links	Northeast Corridor	On-Time Performance

RailPassengers.org/Leg.Resources*

*Link included at bottom of each one-pager.



Passenger Trains: Economic Engines

Providing Resilience for American Families

The U.S. transportation status quo is broken—the average household spends 16 cents of every dollar on transportation, with 93% of transportation costs going to the purchase, maintenance, and operation of cars, the largest expenditure after housing (Source: APTA). If a household were able to live with one less car by utilizing public transit, it could save nearly \$10,000. And the cost isn't just in dollars; the average commuter spends 54 hours per year stuck in traffic.

These figures have only been highlighted by recent developments in the international energy market. In 2020, petroleum products accounted for about 90% of the total U.S. transportation sector energy use (Source: EIA). Any effective national policy for energy independence will require diversifying our transportation network and investing in energy-efficient, electrified passenger rail.

Economic Engines for Growth

A Connected America is not only good for passengers but good for America's cities and towns, where rail is a proven economic engine in the communities it serves. Every Amtrak long-distance route creates a return on equity for the communities that have invested in it over the past few decades. And thanks to rigorous economic-benefits modeling *Rail Passengers* has developed over the past three years, we have been able to quantify that return in a way that hadn't been done previously. *Rail Passengers'* modeling suggests that Amtrak's interconnected services in the Northeast Corridor, the long-distance National Network and the dozens of State-supported Amtrak routes together return between \$7 billion and \$8 billion each year to our Nation's GDP – four times what we typically invest in the service. These long-distance routes below are just examples of the benefits long-distance trains can generate.

Selected Economic Benefits Assessments (FY 2019)						
	City Of New Orleans	Empire Builder	Silver Services	Southwest Chief	Texas Eagle	Crescent
Cities Served	20	46	36	38	44	33
States Served	5	8	11	8	7	13
Ridership	235,670	433,372	743,461	338,180	321,694	295,180
Annual Federal Investment	\$17.9m	\$57.5m	\$76.2m	\$47.0m	\$25.4m	\$33.7m
Annual Economic Return	\$133.8m	\$595.2m	\$381.8m	\$484.8m	\$555.3m	\$232.8m
Return on Taxpayers' Equity	7.47X	10.35X	5.01X	10.31X	21.86X	6.91X

Source: Rail Passengers Association modeling estimate

*Indirect effects include community-level effects such as sales taxes, real-estate, local employment and other similar factors

Investing in American Manufacturing + Jobs

- An investment of \$1 billion in public transportation supports and creates 36,000 jobs (USDOT)



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- Two out of three jobs created by public transportation investment replace lost blue-collar jobs with "green jobs" in the public transit sector (APTA)
- \$74.2 billion: Total contribution of the railway supply industry to U.S. GDP in 2017 (RSI)
- 650,000 jobs supported by the rail supply industry in 2017 (RSI)

Rail Service = Rural Mobility, Equity, Opportunity + Economic Justice

The National Network provides economic opportunities to less affluent and less well-educated communities, many of which fall below the national median income. Taxpayers support Amtrak's National Network in part because we want these towns to thrive and their citizens to have access to jobs and mobility. We all need the economy to grow and be strong.

- Just 2 of the 19 stations served by the *City of New Orleans* route enjoy a Median Household Income above the national average, while the entire route serves working class cities and towns with relatively modest incomes.
- The *Crescent* serves 17 communities off Amtrak's Northeast Corridor, 15 of which have incomes below the national median income.
- Some 13% of the communities on Amtrak's *Silver* services fall below the Federal poverty line.
- If the 2018 plan to break up the *Southwest Chief* with a bus-bridge had gone through, 32 universities would have lost train service, 47 hospitals would have lost train service, and 130,000 auto trips would've been added on to roads four times more dangerous than the national average—for a stretch of rural and small communities in Kansas, Colorado and New Mexico with the lowest median income across the entire corridor.
- A study done by Transportation for America and the Southern Rail Commission found that restoring passenger rail between Mobile and New Orleans would produce \$216 million in annual economic benefits for Mississippi, Louisiana and Alabama, despite costing the three states only about \$7 million each year.
- A Rail Passengers' economic analysis found that a second Amtrak train between Chicago and Minneapolis/St. Paul would generate \$47 million in annual benefits to Minnesota, Wisconsin and Illinois—a return on investment of better than seven-to-one.
- The impact is even greater for smaller communities. In 2018, the *Empire Builder* carried 2,400 passengers to Cut Bank, Montana (pop. 3,002), bringing \$378,725 in value to the community.

Virginia: A Case Study for A Decade of Growth + Prosperity

By investing in a 31 percent boost to Amtrak service, Virginia has produced a 101% ridership increase since 2003 and removed 600 million vehicle-travel miles from the Commonwealth's highways. The results speak for themselves:

- \$1.4 billion in annual economic returns to Virginia versus \$64 million in Federal support
- Created or sustained 1,400+ jobs each year
- \$390 million in new tourist spending

For more information, please visit RailPassengers.org/Leg.Resources

Refining Our Message



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Preparing to rebut the anti-rail arguments:

- “Passenger rail only makes sense on the East Coast.”
- “The deficit is out of control; we can’t afford to spend money on passenger rail.”
- “We need to focus on *traditional* infrastructure like roads and bridges.”
- “High-speed rail doesn’t work in America. Just look at California.”
- *Others?*



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Preparing for a Hybrid Hill Meetings

Rail Passengers Week on the Hill



This Week's Calls

- **Organize Within Your Region:** identify pre-existing interactions with this office, share political intelligence, and identify local projects and issues that you would like addressed during the meeting.
- **Study Up On Corridors and Projects:** Establish yourself as a trusted resource for accurate and timely local information.



This Week's Calls

- **Designate a Meeting Leader:** this person will dictate the tempo of the meeting, open the call with our organization's mission statement, and hand off the baton to other members of the meeting.
- **Script Out Your Talking Points:** with so little of the Hill staffer's time and attention, we need to ensure we're staying on topic during these meetings.
- **Make Time to Ask Questions:** these offices will have valuable intelligence for our efforts.



This Week's Calls

- **Work Within Your Tech Comfort Zone:** the most important thing is to go with a service you feel comfortable. Only use a service that you've had a chance to use before.
- **What's in Frame?** Even if you're doing an online meeting, dress like you're physically traveling to a Congressional office. Think about your background and the camera angle.
- **Deliver Materials to Staffers Ahead of Time:** everything you need to send to offices is located at RailPassengers.org/Leg.Resources.



This Week's Calls

- **Ask for Help:** remember that Joe, Madi, and I are here to help you out with any problems. Don't hesitate to reach out with questions or comments.
- **Say 'Thank You':** a little appreciation can go a long way in cementing your relationship with an office.



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Thank you!

Questions?

Sean Jeans-Gail | VP of Gov't Affairs + Policy

sjeansgail@narprail.org