

ONERAIL COALITION

STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES



Railroads are a critical element of our national transportation system. Public policy must expand passenger train options, critical freight rail network capacity, and intermodal connectivity in our national transportation system. A **OneRail policy supporting both freight and passenger rail objectives is needed to maximize transportation options** that enhance mobility, achieve energy efficiency, address climate change, boost economic growth and improve quality of life for all Americans.

The 2008 National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study Commission report found that our nation must **increase railroad infrastructure investment** to ensure our continued mobility, economic competitiveness, and job creation in the United States to meet the energy and climate challenges of the 21st century. In addition, the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), through a series of studies, has shown that private investment alone will fall short of the levels necessary to invest in freight and passenger rail network capacity to meet needed public policy goals.

A **OneRail policy** recognizes and recommends the following:

The **nation's passenger train network must be strengthened and expanded.**

Expanding intercity and commuter passenger train options for travel between and into the nation's urban centers would substantially reduce vehicle miles traveled, aviation and highway congestion, fuel consumption and related greenhouse gas emissions.

A **sound and balanced transportation policy should encourage the development of passenger train options for the public**, addressing a critical missing link in our nation's surface transportation system. Investments must ensure safety, achieve reasonable service levels, provide enough capacity to protect the operations and future growth of both rail freight and passenger service, and address liability concerns. Going forward, capacity will be a critical factor shaping the freight rail-passenger rail interface. Access to freight infrastructure and rights of way for new passenger service should be achieved on a cooperative, voluntary basis, without infringing on Amtrak's existing rights. To ensure that both freight and passenger service is maximized in high-density corridors, public policy should also envision separate rights of way for freight and passenger operations where separation is warranted.

OneRail **supports state efforts to seek an ongoing, dedicated funding source for intercity passenger rail expansion**, including a federal-state partnership and cost sharing agreements similar to the partnerships that built the nation's federal-aid highways and transit systems. Rail freight capacity must expand to meet projected economic demand and increase the railroad industry's current traffic share. Private investment in the nation's freight rail network has been, and will remain, the primary means of maintaining and expanding freight rail infrastructure.

To ensure that freight rail capacity meets growing demand, **Congress should enact policies and programs that expand public and private investment in rail freight mobility** and assure continued growth in private investment in rail freight capacity.

The **OneRail coalition supports additional investment in the nation's rail infrastructure to create American jobs**, de-congest chokepoints, put more freight and passengers on fuel-efficient trains, and reduce our nation's greenhouse gas emissions.