



April 29, 2015

United States House of Representatives

Dear Members of the Committee on Appropriations:

As you consider Fiscal Year 2016 Appropriations for Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies, the OneRail Coalition urges you to support investments in rail infrastructure and operations. These investments will create and maintain good domestic jobs, enhance productivity, spur economic growth, relieve road and air congestion, and protect the environment.

The OneRail Coalition urges the maximum possible funding be allocated to the following accounts:

- Amtrak capital and operating support, which is used to maintain existing equipment and infrastructure, invest in improvements that support faster, more frequent and more reliable service, replace the aging fleet of locomotives and passenger rail cars, fund safety and security projects, improve station accessibility under requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and support the continued operation of the national intercity long distance passenger rail network and the state-supported short distance routes. Amtrak continues to set ridership records on both its highly visible Northeast Corridor and across the country on their state-supported services and long distance trains, and its improved performance now enables it to meet 93% of its operating costs. However, the Amtrak owned system is in decay, infrastructure is deteriorating, and Congress must increase its investment in Amtrak so that passenger rail can continue to contribute to our national economy. Amtrak's total grant request for FY16 is \$2.0b.
- Capital assistance to the States for intercity passenger rail service, which will be used by States to accelerate ongoing projects and to advance other projects for which planning and environmental work is nearing completion. The Passenger Rail Reform and Investment Act of 2015 (PRRIA), which passed the House by a vote of 316-101 on March 4, 2015 and is awaiting action in the Senate, would authorize \$300m for similar "National Infrastructure Investments" which would go through the U.S. DOT Secretary's office to the States through Title 49 Chapter 244 (Intercity Passenger Rail Service Corridor Capital Assistance) and Title 49 Section 20154 (Capital Grants for Rail Line Relocation Projects).
- Competitive, merit-based, TIGER Grants, which enable States and local governments to build innovative multi-modal and multi-jurisdictional projects, frequently in partnership with significant private contributions. These types of projects are very difficult to fund through traditional programs. Since 2009, the TIGER program has provided nearly \$4.1 billion to 342

projects in all 50 states – including 117 projects to support rural and tribal communities. Demand for the program has been overwhelming with more than 6,000 applications requesting more than \$124 billion for transportation projects across the country.

- Federal Transit Administration formula funds, which support the capital investment needs of hundreds of transit agencies across the country through grant programs such as the rail modernization program. As noted in the USDOT's most recent Conditions & Performance Report, all levels of government are investing about \$14b annually into transit, while the amount needed to achieve a state of good repair and accommodate future ridership increases is approximately \$24.5b annually, which demonstrates the urgent need for funding this account.
- New Starts/Small Starts Capital Investment Grants, which are used throughout the country to leverage local investments to build and expand commuter rail, light rail, and heavy rail systems. There is tremendous demand for these rail systems – in the most recently reported year, passenger trips grew to 4.8 billion trips year and passenger miles grew by 5.6% to 31.2 billion, or more than 85 million passenger miles every single day. 9 projects are already in the existing New Starts Full Funding Grant Agreement (FFGA) process, 6 are in the New Starts Engineering phase, and a full 40 additional projects are in the Project Development phase. \$2.881b for FY2016 would be required just to fund the Existing and Recommended New Starts, Small Starts, and Core Capacity projects.

The OneRail Coalition believes that rail is a crucial component of an efficient transportation network that allows people and goods to move quickly and safely to their destinations, enhancing productivity, creating jobs, and allowing America to remain the largest and best functioning economy in the world. A smooth logistics system with intermodal connectivity and without major chokepoints also strengthens our exporters' ability to compete in the global economy.

The nation's privately owned freight railroads are investing billions in their own infrastructure and equipment – over \$29 billion planned in 2015 and more than \$575 billion total since 1980. While this will continue, public investments in rail transportation infrastructure are also critical to spur economic growth and encourage new business development, which will add new jobs and expand employment opportunities throughout the nation. The record is clear that rail is safe, productive, efficient, and environmentally sustainable, and that rail promotes energy independence and contributes positively to public health and well-being.

The OneRail Coalition thanks you for considering our thoughts. We would be pleased to discuss the benefits of rail investments in greater detail with you.

Sincerely,

Anne Canby  
Director, OneRail Coalition

**About the OneRail Coalition:**

OneRail is a diverse group of rail stakeholders who have come together to educate America about the benefits of a strong freight and passenger rail system. Our members include the American Association of Private Railroad Car Owners (**AAPRCO**), American Public Transportation Association (**APTA**), American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association (**ASLRRRA**), **Amtrak**, Association of American Railroads (**AAR**), Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen (**BLET**), Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees (**BMWE**), Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen (**BRS**), International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail, and Transportation Workers – United Transportation Union (**SMART-UTU**), National Association of Railroad Passengers (**NARP**), National Railroad Construction and Maintenance Association (**NRC**), Railway Supply Institute (**RSI**), States for Passenger Rail Coalition (**S4PRC**), Surface Transportation Policy Partnership (**STPP**), Sheet Metal Workers International Association (**SMWIA**), and the Transportation Communications International Union/International Association of Machinists (**TCU/IAM**).

Our Associate Supporters include **AECOM**, **Alstom**, **Caterpillar**, **General Electric**, **HNTB**, **Parsons**, and **Parsons Brinckerhoff**. These global companies represent the engineering and manufacturing sectors that are an essential component of private sector job creation in the transportation industry in the United States.