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# Rail Passengers 2020 Policy + Campaign Briefing: Representing Passenger Interests in the Reauthorization and Beyond

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

Rail Passengers Association

Washington, DC



# Winning Hearts + Minds

- *Rail Passengers Association* is making the most aggressive **credible** case for return on taxpayers' equity...and **Congress is listening**
  - Rail Passengers' study on Southwest Chief: \$180m annual benefit to KS, CO, NM
  - Rail Passengers' study on 'Baby Builder' between CHI and MSP: \$47m+ annual benefit
  - Rail Passengers' study on Empire Builder end-to-end: \$327m annual benefit
  - Mississippi, Louisiana and Alabama took a huge step this month towards launching new Mobile-New Orleans service that will return least **\$170.7 million** to the local economies every year for a roughly \$5 million - \$7 million annual operating investment



# Winning Hearts + Minds

- Trains ***deliver value to served communities*** six, seven or more times the dollars invested in the service
  - The “profit” goes to the communities and the U.S., not necessarily Amtrak
- Important to set the stage for **reauthorization** of the five-year Surface Transportation bill
- Also important as bipartisan consensus emerges on the need for a **large infrastructure bill**



# White House FY2021 Budget Proposal

- White House has targeted severe cuts to Amtrak's budget as part of FY2021 budget proposal:
  - National Network funding cut by \$689 million as part of a plan to eliminate long-distance train routes
    - \$550 million in National Network "transformational grants" which would draw down to zero over five years
  - Northeast Corridor funding cut by \$375 million
- The response from Rail Passengers' members has been fantastic!
  - Over 2,800 messages to 96 U.S. Senators and 423 Representatives in a week
  - Go to [www.RailPassengers.org/Action](http://www.RailPassengers.org/Action) to take part in our campaign



# Amtrak FY2021 Grant + Legislative Request

## **FY2021 Amtrak Highlights:**

- National Network Grants: \$1.326 billion
  - *Southwest Chief* track improvements: \$4.9 million
- Northeast Corridor Grants: \$714 million
- Corridor Development Program: \$300 million

**Total: \$2.34 billion**

## **Fleet Plan Updates:**

- Amtrak plans on spending \$2.633 billion on equipment in FY2021 (including \$1.009 billion for NN)
- Additional Identified Equipment Needs
  - Superliner and Amfleet II Replacement: \$2.000B
  - Diesel Locomotive Replacement (base order plus options): Approx. \$1.500B
  - Additional Fleet for New Corridors (for FY21-FY25 routes): \$510M



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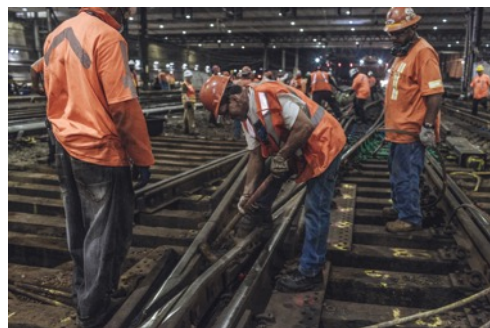
# Amtrak FY2021 Grant + Leg. Request

Amtrak has learned a lesson from two years of PR blunders.

**Has it learned the right lesson? We'll find out later this year.**

# Federal Infrastructure Outlook:

## In D.C., It's Always 'Infrastructure Week'



- Broad bipartisan agreement exists in Washington that an infrastructure plan is needed
  - **House Democrats unveiled five-year, \$760 billion infrastructure framework**
    - **\$55 billion for rail**
    - **\$105 billion for public transit**
  - Senate Environment/Public Works released a highway reauthorization with a 27% increase over current spending levels
    - Transit and rail proposals coming this spring
  - All the leading Democratic Party presidential primary candidates have proposed infrastructure plans worth at least \$1 trillion



THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

# The 'FAST' Act And What Comes Next: The Clock Is Ticking!



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Window for legislative action is short due to election, with a long to-do list for Congress:

- Feb. 28 – Appropriations Deadlines for Member Offices
- March 3 - Super Tuesday
- March – House T&I Rail Title Hearing
- July 13 + Aug. 24 – Party Conventions
- Sept. 30 – FAST Act + FY2020 Budget Act expires
- Oct. 13 – Election recess begins



Two “Must-Pass” bills by October 1

- FY21 budget or Continuing Resolution (CR) – to avoid a government shutdown
- Replacement or short-term extension of Surface Transportation authorization – to avoid losing gas-tax revenue for highways and transit

***If the past predicts the future...:***

- Congress will close shop by June to focus on elections
- Expect short-term extensions



THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

# The FAST Act And What Comes Next: Reauthorization Sets Long-Term Policy



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**2020 program tied to the  
surface-transportation  
reauthorization process**

- ***There is a good chance that this bill will not achieve final passage in 2020***
- However, passenger advocates need to articulate a clear set of principles and policies for the rail and transit titles and be able to incorporate them into our messaging around the must-pass FY 2021 Appropriations bill
- Whatever drafts are produced by the House and Senate will heavily influence the final product

THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

# The 'FAST' Act And What Comes Next: Rail Passengers' *Blueprint* Proposals

**Rail Passengers' Reauthorization  
*Blueprint* proposes initiatives in  
three broad areas**



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## Sustainable Service on National Network

- Legally Enshrine Importance of National Network to U.S. transportation + Rural America
- As Amtrak loses credibility on service questions with Congress, Rail Passengers can move to fill the void
- Work with Amtrak to add state-supported service



## Fix Host/Operator Relationship

- On-Time Performance and Fairness for Passengers
- Shared-Use Corridor Advisory Committee
- Creation of a Right of Way Acquisition Program
- Advance Right of Way Acquisition Authority



## Rebuilding the Fleet

- Fund New Equipment through FY2020 appropriations
- Establish a stable funding mechanism to allow for critical investments in equipment
- Domestic Rail Equipment Manufacturing Incentivization



Visit [www.railpassengers.org/blueprint](http://www.railpassengers.org/blueprint) for proposal details and ways to get involved

THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

# The 'FAST' Act And What Comes Next: Passenger Rail Account Funding Levels



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	<i>Passenger Rail Funding (in millions)</i>				
	<i>FY2021</i>	<i>FY2022</i>	<i>FY2023</i>	<i>FY2024</i>	<i>FY2025</i>
<i>Program</i>					
<i>Amtrak - National Network</i>	\$1,280.6	\$1,344.6	\$1,411.8	\$1,482.4	\$1,556.6
<i>Amtrak - NEC</i>	\$715.0	\$786.5	\$865.2	\$951.7	\$1,046.8
<i>Consolidated Rail Infrastructure &amp; Safety Grants</i>	\$1,968.0	\$2,187.0	\$2,430.0	\$2,700.0	\$3,000.0
<i>Federal State Partnership for State of Good Repair</i>	\$1,312.2	\$1,458.0	\$1,620.0	\$1,800.0	\$2,000.0
<i>Restoration &amp; Enhancement Grants</i>	\$262.4	\$291.6	\$324.0	\$360.0	\$400.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5,538.2</b>	<b>\$6,067.7</b>	<b>\$6,651.0</b>	<b>\$7,294.1</b>	<b>\$8,003.4</b>

We can't let calls for future transformation distract from need for significant, immediate increase in passenger rail investment

WHAT COMES NEXT?

# Reaching out to Your Members of Congress NOW to Ensure a Beneficial 2020 for Passengers



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## 1. Securing Near-Term Funding for Amtrak + Passenger Rail

- Ask your Representative to sign-on to the **FY2021 House Appropriations Transportation Subcommittee “Dear Colleague” letter led by Rep. Seth Moulton (D-MA)**, which calls for full funding of Amtrak and passenger rail grant programs
- Reach out to your Rep. to identify any key passenger rail or transit projects which would benefit from Amtrak or rail grant funding (Deadline: Feb. 28)

## 2. Share Our Briefing Documents

- Find these at [RailPassengers.org/RailNation2020](https://RailPassengers.org/RailNation2020)

## 3. Schedule a Meeting for RailNation:DC 2020

- There is only SIX WEEKS until our Passenger Rail Day on the Hill, so the time to begin scheduling is NOW!
- You can schedule these meetings in D.C. or in your state; in-person or as a phone call.
- Find out more about how to schedule these meetings—and share them with Rail Passengers staff—at [RailPassengers.org/RailNation2020](https://RailPassengers.org/RailNation2020)





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## QUESTIONS

- More questions? Reach out to [sjeansgail@narprail.org](mailto:sjeansgail@narprail.org)
- 202-408-8362
- [www.railpassengers.org](http://www.railpassengers.org)