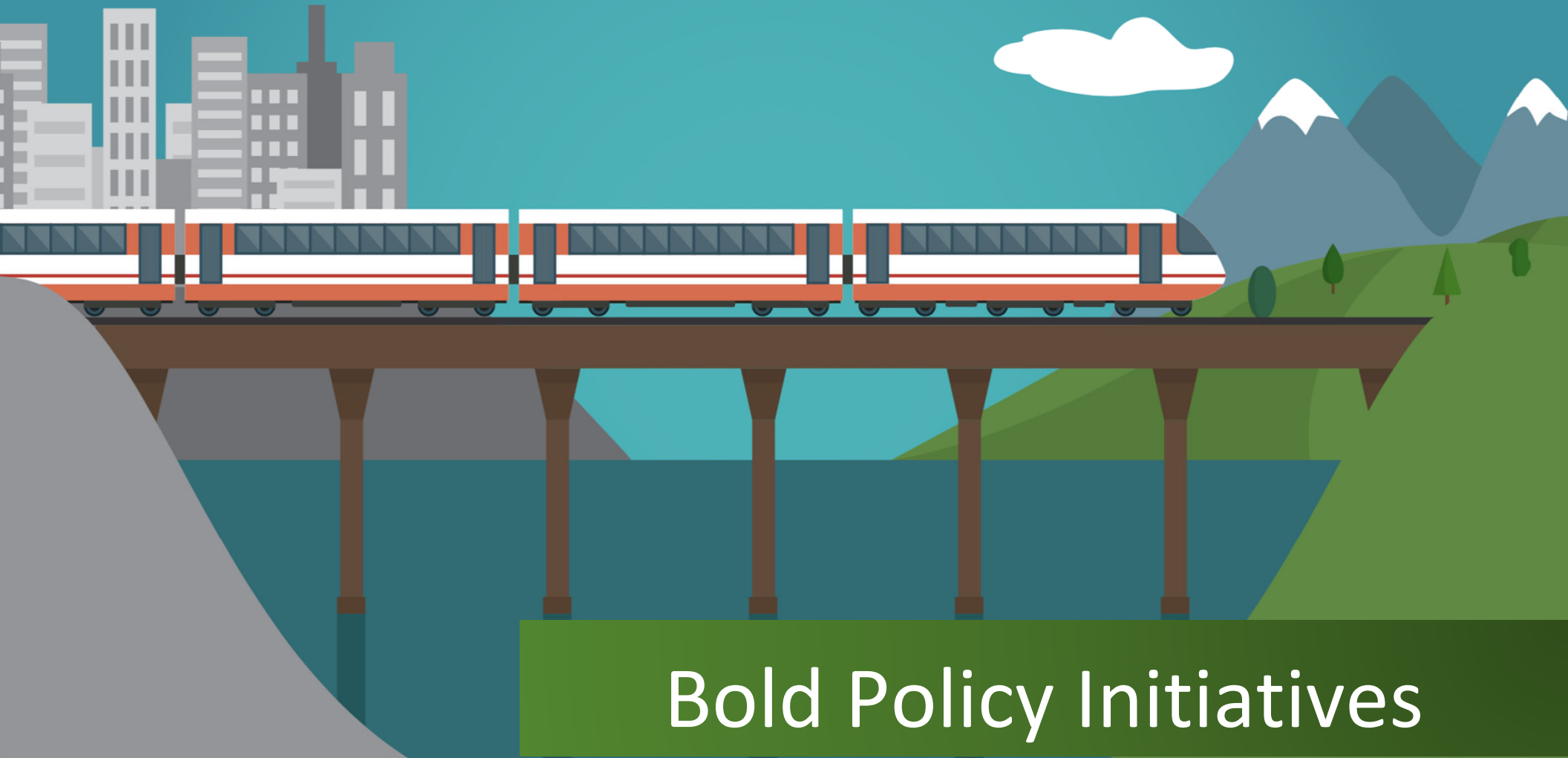




RAILPASSENGERS  
ASSOCIATION



# Bold Policy Initiatives

# It's Time To 'Be Bold'

Creating a "Blueprint for Rail" in the Surface Transportation Reauthorization

# Regional Hybrid Urban-Suburban Rail Model

- Learn from the experience in **Germany (S-Bahn)** and **France (RER)**
- Congress should authorize **waiver of regional jurisdiction** to create and implement integrated **Regional Rail Operating Model (RROM)**
- **Eliminate artificial funding categories** for commuter rail, intercity rail, and transit
- **Encourage through-running** over stub-end, city-center terminals
- **Encourage governance integration** within a single regional agency
- **Operate RROMs as rapid transit**
  - Short dwell times, fully electrified, double-track, and use rapid transit signaling
- **Provide local service, create infill stations**
- **Optimize fare collection and pricing**
- **Optimize transfers**

# Shared Corridor Solutions - Part 1

## Shared-Use Corridor Advisory Committee

- The current financial relationship between Amtrak, the host railroads and the states has failed to deliver the frequency and dependability needed to attract large numbers of travelers. Commercial and political success require that interested parties be incentivized to develop practical solutions. RPA is calling for Congress to establish a charter for a Shared-Use Corridor Advisory Committee (S-CAC).

## Central Dispatching Authorities

- The fluidity of the national rail system is too important to sacrifice for small gains by private firms. Railroad leadership has admitted as much: in a hearing before the Surface Transportation Board regarding poor on-time performance by CSX, then-CEO Hunter Harrison suggested that the optimal solution for Chicago's congested infrastructure would be a central dispatching authority. There is precedent and a relevant model in the federal law authorizing the Federal Aviation Administration's provision of air traffic control services to private sector airlines.
- Congress should direct the FRA to perform a pilot study identifying the benefits of implementing Central Dispatching Authorities.

# Shared Corridor Solutions - Part 2

## **Creation of a Right of Way Acquisition Program**

- As of 2015, outside of the NEC 70% of the host railroad lines that Amtrak uses were single-tracked, meaning that there is latent capacity in most extant rights of way (ROW).
- Congress should create a federal grant program that would allow states and municipalities to purchase abandoned and underutilized corridors from freight railroads.

## **Pilot Program: Increased Rate Per Train Mile**

- In general, Amtrak pays about \$5.00 per train mile to host railroads, paying incentives above the statutory rate for delivering on-time performance. Congress should launch a pilot program with significantly increased per-train-mile payments to understand possible effects on the relationship between Amtrak and host railroads. Revenues would theoretically increase as more passengers ride and pay higher fares for faster and more dependable service, with operating costs reduced by better use of rolling stock and crews.

# Rail Financing

## Passenger Rail Account

- Introduce a predictable, dedicated, and robust Passenger Rail Trust Fund. This Trust Fund should use diverse revenue streams, including:
  - Per Barrel Tax on crude oil;
  - Intercity Railroad Passenger Tax assessed at point of sale;
  - E-Commerce Transportation Tax for online sales;
  - General Sales Tax, similar to those established by the Commonwealth of Virginia to fund rail infrastructure and operations;
  - A broadly-based tax Station Area Value Capture Tax program for NEC and National Network-served train stations;
  - Federal grants for RRIF loans on P3 projects of regional significance, with grants eligible to pay for credit risk premiums and lower or eliminate interest, and loans authorized as a source of state or private matching for federal grants;
  - Transform current FAST Act INFRA program to create a larger Intermodal Freight Fund, establishing a 1% freight user fee, projected to produce \$9 billion a year, for an intermodal fund with no limitation on the percentage committed to rail projects.

## FTA Formula Fund and Grant Flexibility

- Intercity rail connects with and supports transit rail systems across the U.S., and states and municipalities should be able to flex transit funds to intercity rail projects that support local transit systems.

# Bringing Rail Closer to Home

## **Integrate ROW Creation/Preservation and Housing Planning**

- Given the desirability of increasing housing near public transportation corridors, the USDOT should work with the Housing and the US Department of Housing and Urban Development to ensure Right of Way preservation in residential and commercial developments requiring federal oversight and approval. Rail stations should additionally be granted eligibility for HUD's Community Development Block Grant Program.

## **Transit-Oriented Development**

- Congress should create a permanent program that will allow Transit Oriented Development (TOD) commercial development with RRIF/TIFIA financing for projects stipulated by the Secretary of Transportation to have significant value capture to support the ongoing station and passenger operations, creating a coordinated development-transportation plan.

# Getting There On Time

## **Create Private Right of Action to Amtrak**

- Our Association is asking Congress to grant Amtrak a Private Right of Action to enforce dispatching preference as described in Amtrak's Fiscal 2019 Grant Request. Current law requires that enforcement be initiated through civil action by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) before a District Court judge.

## **Designate FRA as Sole Entity for Metrics and Standards**

- In addition to Private Right of Action, Rail Passengers supports legislation that shifts creation of Metrics and Standards—as described in Section 207 of the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 (PRIIA) (Division B of Pub. L. 110-432)—to the Federal Railroad Administration. This will streamline regulatory oversight and reinvigorate meaningful passenger protections as originally envisioned by Congress.



# Renewing the Fleet

## **Buy America Reform and Domestic Manufacturing Incentivization**

- Recognizing the lack of a robust domestic rail equipment manufacturing sector, Congress should create a bridge program that will allow the FRA increased flexibility in granting waiver to Buy America Act requirements for passenger rail equipment to allow for lower the cost of procurement for transit.
- To ensure the development of a domestic rail manufacturing industry, this waiver program should include a 10-year sunset provision and be paired with a US Rail Manufacturing Bureau (USRMB) to encourage co-production agreements between US and international firms.

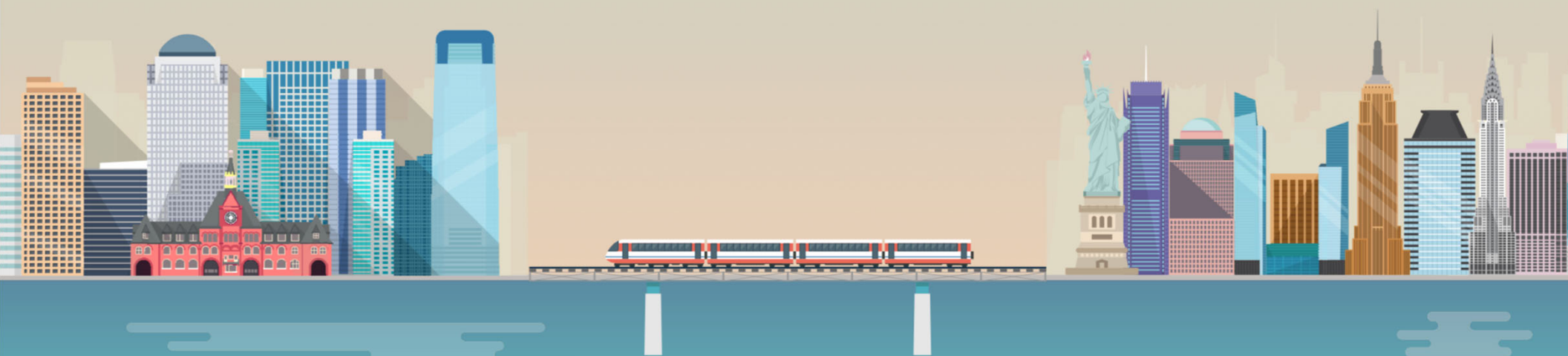
## **Encourage Uniformity Across Equipment and Consist Design**

- The Federal Railroad Administration has written new regulations for passenger trains that will result in lighter, safer, more efficient trains. A new Tier III classification will allow trains designed for 125 mph or more to operate in mixed traffic at less than 90 mph. “Alternate Compliance” will allow operators to take advantage of safety advances from overseas and create a unified market.
- Congress must direct FRA to formalize these new regulations and establish the following uniform design principles:
  - High power-to-weight ratio, allowing them to accelerate quickly and remain stable at very high speeds;
  - Low centers of gravity and sophisticated suspensions that allow faster running through curves.

[www.RailPassengers.org/Blueprint](http://www.RailPassengers.org/Blueprint)



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