

LET'S SPEND MORE, NOT LESS, ON AMTRAK'S INFRASTRUCTURE

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*By Richard Rudolph, Chair
and Andrew Albert, Vice-Chair
Rail Users' Network*

As everyone knows, Amtrak train #188 derailed recently in Northeast Philadelphia, killing eight people, and injuring many others. It goes without saying that it is imperative that the reasons for this tragedy must be found and Amtrak must make its customers feel safe when riding the railroad. It also goes without saying that rail travel is arguably the safest method of transport ever devised by man. As rail advocates, we must also be about passenger safety and security.

While Amtrak's budget is never reliable, and much relies on the vicissitudes of Congress,

it has made an effort to install Positive Train Control. While the nation's freight railroads are scrambling to put positive train control in place by the end of 2015, Amtrak has used a collision avoidance system on parts of the Northeast Corridor since 1999.

Amtrak put the first segment of its Advanced Civil Speed Enforcement System (ACSES) into operation along the Boston-to-New Haven segment when it electrified that part of the line. The stretch of track near Frankford Junction in Philadelphia, where the derailment took place, has cab signals and automatic speed control on all tracks—but circuitry to enforce the civil (curve) speed only exists on the westbound tracks, not on the

eastbound tracks! So, this system couldn't have slowed Train 188 as it accelerated to more than 100 miles an hour, barreling into a curve designated for just 50 miles-per-hour. According to Amtrak officials, the full ACSES system was installed, but is still being tested before becoming fully operational.

We must also ask why it took Joe Boardman, Amtrak's President, four days to issue a statement about the derailment. Shouldn't he have gone to the scene of the tragedy and demanded answers and reassured Amtrak's customers that "everything that can be done will be done to find out the cause of this tragedy and make sure it never happens again?"

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HIGH COURT RULES AMTRAK IS "GOVERNMENTAL ENTITY," BUT COURT CHALLENGES WILL CONTINUE

By David Peter Alan

The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled in the dispute over Amtrak's status, holding that Amtrak is an instrumentality of the government and can participate in regulatory rule-making. At first glance, this looked like a victory for Amtrak, which would keep the nation's long-distance trains on the rails and on time, for the foreseeable future. Nobody on the Court had issued a dissenting opinion; at least they did not call it by that name.

The dispute started with Section 207 of the Passenger Rail

Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 (PRIIA), which authorized Amtrak and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) jointly to issue "metrics and standards" for freight-carrying "host" railroads when Amtrak trains operate on their lines. Their trade association, the Association of American Railroads (AAR), challenged the validity of the rules that were promulgated through the process. The District Court for the District of Columbia upheld the rules. The Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit reversed, holding that Amtrak is a private corporation, and not a

governmental entity. That meant that it was improper for Congress to have delegated such rule-making authority to Amtrak in the first place.

Before the D.C. Circuit Court ruling, on-time-performance on Amtrak's long-distance trains had improved, compared to the period before the PRIIA legislation took effect. After the ruling, it plummeted. Meanwhile, the U.S. Department of Transportation, of which the FRA is a component agency, petitioned the Supreme Court to review the case (Supreme Court Docket No. 13-1080).

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TWO NEW APPOINTMENTS PORTEND GOOD THINGS FOR RAIL IN ILLINOIS

By *F.K. Plous*

On the map, as well as in the timetable, Illinois appears to be among the leaders in state-supported Amtrak corridor trains.

The legislators in Springfield support three “Chicago Hub” routes—the 284-mile Chicago-St. Louis *Lincoln Service* corridor over the former Chicago & Alton Railroad, the 258-mile Chicago-Galesburg-Quincy *Illinois Zephyr* corridor over the BNSF Railway’s former Burlington Route main line, and a 309-mile corridor serving the important college towns of Champaign and Carbondale over the former Illinois Central Railroad.

Illinois also contributes 25 percent of the subsidies supporting the seven daily Chicago-Milwaukee Hiawatha frequencies. Since September 2006, the three Illinois intrastate routes all have had at least two daily round trips, and the Lincoln Service has had four.

Sounds like a busy network, and it is, but it’s incomplete. There’s still no service connecting Chicago with the state’s second biggest metro area, the one known as the “Quad Cities” at the confluence of the Rock and Mississippi rivers in the northwest corner of the state. At 400,000 population, the Quad Cities would be Illinois’ second-biggest city *if* they lay entirely within Illinois. But only Moline and Rock Island do. Davenport and Bettendorf lie across the Mississippi in Iowa.

The last train connecting Chicago with the Quad Cities ran Dec. 31, 1978, over the historic, but also bankrupt and rickety, Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad, which was liquidated two years later. Too poor to pay the up-front fee to have its trains taken over by Amtrak in 1971, the Rock soldiered on for another seven years running its own trains until deferred track maintenance stretched what once had been an under-three-hour trip into four hours

and 30 minutes. Between the lengthening, unreliable schedule and the deteriorating track, daily ridership fell from an average of 143 passengers in 1974 to 26 in 1977. On some days, there were no passengers at all.

But the dream of restoring passenger service to the Quad Cities never died, and after 2006 it quickly transitioned from a dream to a full-scale planning process, with a feasibility study, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and a budget. The date is significant: In 2006 the Illinois General Assembly voted to double the state’s budget for passenger-train service, enabling Amtrak to double the frequency on all three lines serving Downstate. As the advocates had claimed, ridership began to skyrocket while costs per passenger skidded, and passenger trains acquired a legitimacy they had never enjoyed before. Suddenly, restoring passenger service to the Quad Cities looked real again.

Re-launching the service, however, proved problematic, because in the 31 years between 1975 and 2006 the deteriorating infrastructure that had killed off the Rock Island’s passenger service had never been brought up to modern standards. The 163 miles between Chicago and Rock Island

The dream of restoring passenger service to the Quad Cities never died, and after 2006 it quickly transitioned from a dream to a full-scale planning process.

were still in place, but under new owners. Chicago’s Metra commuter-rail system owned the first 38 miles from Chicago to Joliet and maintained it well, but the 54

miles owned by CSX between Joliet and the lucrative silica mines centered around Ottawa were maintained only for speeds of about 40 miles per hour, and the 83 miles between Ottawa and Moline owned by the Iowa Interstate Railroad were similar to CSX’s pike. Everything west of Joliet was dark railroad, because during the Rock Island liquidation thieves had made off with all of the copper wire connecting the carrier’s Automatic Block Signals, and neither of the two freight operators had enough traffic to warrant its re-installation.

What to do? For once, a bunch of state transportation bureaucrats made a sound decision. Instead of rebuilding the entire 137 miles of the old Rock Island between Joliet and the river, they decided to use the old CB&Q main line for the 111 miles between Chicago and the tiny village of Wyanet, where the CB&Q crosses the old Rock Island alignment on a high fill. There had never been a physical connection between the Rock and the Q at Wyanet, but IDOT decided to build one—literally in the middle of the cornfields—with a set of crossovers on the BNSF elevation and a long, curving ramp carrying trains down to a remote-controlled turnout on the Iowa Interstate. The state budgeted \$5.6 million to build the connection. In addition to saving the cost of rebuilding the entire Joliet-Quad Cities route of the Rock Island, the new routing is more direct—154 miles vs. the Rock’s 163.

From the bottom of the ramp it’s another 48 miles to Rock Island, so IDOT’s budget included \$3.6 million to replace Iowa Interstate’s joined rail with welded rail, plus \$1.1 million for 15,000 new crossties, \$400,000 to support 25 miles of surfacing, \$1 million for bridge and drainage work, \$1 million to retime the grade-crossing circuits for faster trains, and \$7.5 million

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A PLAN TO DEAL WITH SUBWAY DELAYS

By *Andrew Albert*

Subway ridership is continuing its strong growth, and is at its highest level since 1948. This growth is happening at all times of the day and night, as well as on weekends. Concurrent with this strong ridership are increasing delays of various kinds, including overcrowding (holding doors), police actions, sick customers, planned or unplanned work on the rails, track fires, broken rails, signal problems, water main breaks, etc. While these interruptions in service may be short, they can frequently affect many trains, even after the cause of the delay has been rectified. In fact, NYC Transit gave an example of how a delay to an E train at the 50th Street station on 8th Avenue, which took place at approximately 6:08 p.m., and lasted for 10 minutes, affected 72 trains, and hundreds of thousands of riders! As more riders crowd onto the trains, complaints of delays and poor service have mushroomed, so transit officials have come up with several ways to address these delays.

First, I should point out that 15 of 20 lines in the NYC Transit System are running at peak capacity, including 10 lines which are already at both track and train capacity. Of course, installation of C.B.T.C. (Communications-Based Train Control) is pending on several lines, which will allow increased capacity, but some of these are relying on the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's

next five-year Capital Program, and that is currently not yet funded by the State of New York. NYC Transit continues work on virtually all of the lines in order to keep up maintenance, and make much-needed infrastructure improvements. This work can and does also affect the ability to keep trains running on time. Making sure that workers are safe while performing this much-needed work also slows trains down as they proceed through work zones, thus adding to delays.

In New York's subway system, even spacing of trains is the key to reducing delays. Most New Yorkers know how long they have to wait for a train, but don't know if they are actually getting a 7:52 train or a 7:56 train. So, wait assessment is the indication of whether trains are spaced correctly, and service is even. If gaps between trains are not evenly spaced, some trains will be overcrowded, and others will have empty seats. In an effort to make sure trains are evenly spaced, so no one experiences too long of a gap between trains, some trains may be held in stations for a short period of time. Some train operators may be told to skip certain stations. Platform crowding will be monitored, to make sure no dangerous overcrowding is occurring. Additional platform controllers will be utilized, both on platforms and mezzanines, to let conductors know they must close the doors and have

the trains leave. Three lines will be targeted for improvements, as they are the three lines whose wait assessment statistics have deteriorated over the past year: the #6, #7, and F lines. These lines will receive special treatment, including reduction in dwell times, a partnership with the N.Y.P.D. to assist with dangerous platform overcrowding, and installation of continuous welded rail, which will help to reduce the broken rail problems that are plaguing several lines. There will be an accelerated response to incidents along the Lexington Avenue corridor, as well as a targeting of the highest incident-prone locations on all three lines.

It is hoped that these measures—along with improved communications between all personnel during disruptions—will help to bring more even and reliable service to riders on these three lines. If successful, these measures will be expanded to all lines. New Yorkers have come to rely in ever-greater numbers on their subway system—with six million daily riders the norm now, NOT the exception! Getting these crowds to and from their destinations on time, and with a minimum of disruptions, is the goal of NYC Transit management, and one it appears, they take very seriously.

Andrew Albert is Vice-Chairman of RUN, the Chair of the NYC Transit Riders Council, and Riders' Representative on the MTA Board.

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RAIL AND TRANSIT AGENCIES USE TWITTER TO INTERACT WITH RIDERS LIKE NEVER BEFORE

By *Andy Sharpe*

Imagine you're on a subway train and you see someone has made a mess on the seats in front of you. There are no conductors on the train. It's not a safety issue, so you definitely don't want to press the emergency call button. You're on a noisy train, so you figure a call to Customer Service would be inaudible. So, what would you do? Now, with the proliferation of social media, especially Twitter, the best solution could quite possibly be to Tweet the agency. Perhaps you might even want to include a picture of the mess.

The scenario above plays out all across rail and transit systems in the U.S. and Canada every day. I specifically recall a situation on PATCO running between Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey where a woman Tweeted about a mess on a train. The folks who handle PATCO's social media took notice, and followed up with questions to pinpoint the exact location and nature. Later that day, she happened to board the very same train car. She was encouraged to notice not a single remnant of the mess she had Tweeted about earlier.

PATCO is just one of many mass transit agencies that have recently decided to take full advantage of the crowdsourcing power of Twitter. PATCO social media staff is available @ridepatco weekdays from 6 AM to 4 PM to answer travel information questions, receive complaints about operators having a bad day, respond to cleanliness issues, and generally give South Jersey commuters the chance to take out their frustrations. PATCO ties their social media closely with their call center and e-mail Customer Service functions, rather than simply with their marketing.



While PATCO's social media is noteworthy, some agencies actually take Twitter initiatives a step further. Amtrak (@amtrak), SEPTA (@SEPTA_Social) and MBTA (@MBTA) all have staff responding to social media inquiries seven days a week. They recognize that transit and rail service doesn't take a break on Sundays (or even Saturdays), and neither should their social media efforts. Of these agencies, SEPTA seems to have the most in-depth social media strategy. SEPTA makes sure its Customer Service agents use their initials to identify who is Tweeting, and sign in and out on Twitter at the beginning and end of the day. It should be noted that this writer is a SEPTA employee.

Another interesting development with Twitter is that many agencies have created multiple accounts to handle different facets of operations. On the West Coast, the Los Angeles Metro has at least three different Twitter feeds, with @MetroLosAngeles responding to customers, @MetroLaAlerts giving service advisories, and @MetroLaElevators giving elevator advisories. In New York City, the MTA has at least four different Twitter feeds, which are @MTA for general information, @NYCTSubway, @LIRR, and @MetroNorth.

In Canada, VIA Rail (@VIA_Rail) makes very impressive use of Twitter. They also respond to Tweets seven days a week, and Tweet in English and French. They also seem to be eager to re-Tweet, especially when it comes to beautiful views aboard the Canadian rails. Similar to SEPTA they're also good at identifying Tweeters by their initials. They don't seem to respond to quite as many Tweets a day as Amtrak, which could be because they have half the Twitter followers.

Unfortunately, some rail and transit agencies are not quite as good at being responsive on Twitter as others. In fact, there are a number of agencies that prefer only to Tweet out alerts and not respond to their riders. Agencies with this mindset include WMATA (@WMATA), Miami-Dade Transit (@IRideMDT), and with a few exceptions Las Vegas' RTC (@RTCASN). In the case of Miami-Dade, it's also a little surprising that they don't Tweet in Spanish. In the case of the RTC, it's worth noting that their role is a little different in that they are also the Metropolitan Planning Organization for Southern Nevada.

While it might be hard to comprehend for the many of us who weren't raised on social media, or even the Internet or computers, Twitter is becoming an increasingly powerful tool for rail and transit agencies across the U.S. and Canada. For many agencies, it has taken the place of more traditional travel information and/or customer service channels. While not every agency has chosen to be as interactive on Twitter, it looks like more and more are moving in that direction. Keep that in mind next time you see that pile of Cheetos spilled on the floor.

Andy Sharpe is customer service agent at Southeast Pennsylvania Transportation Authority.

BIG CHANGES COMING TO AMTRAK'S SILVER SERVICE

By Bill Engel

The only route in the Amtrak long-distance system with more than one daily departure is New York City to Miami served by the *Silver Meteor* and the *Silver Star*. While both trains serve many common stations, the *Silver Star* diverges from the *Silver Meteor* route to serve Raleigh, NC and Columbia, SC and again in Florida to serve Tampa. At present both trains have nearly identical consists including coaches, sleeping cars, a Café/Lounge car, and a full-service dining car.

On July 1, this will change. On April 13 Amtrak announced a "Sleeping Car Fare and Food Service Test" using the *Silver Star* (Trains 91 & 92). All meal service on that train will be provided in a Café/Lounge car only. Sleeping car passengers will be obliged to buy their food rather than have it included in their sleeping car accommodation charge. Also, sleeping car fares will be lowered on that train. Other sleeping car amenities, such as complimentary coffee and juice, turn-down service, and use of ClubAcela or Metropolitan

Lounge at stations so equipped, will remain in place.

Amtrak's press release stated that the fare reductions during this test would be around 25% to 28%. To check them, out I checked fares for three different dates between September and December 2015 for travel between Washington, DC and Ft. Lauderdale, a trip my wife and I make at least once year. The lowest Roomette fare I found was \$442 on Train 91 compared to \$565 on Train 97. Two days before Thanksgiving the Roomette fare on Train 91 increased to \$472. Two days before Christmas the Roomette on Train 91 was still at \$472 but only four were left. The Roomette on Train 97 had jumped to \$663!

At first glance, the \$123 saving for a Roomette on Train 91 versus Train 97 appears attractive. But how much would two people spend in the Café/Lounge car for food? Figuring they would want to eat at least three times during the 26 hour trip, two people could easily spend \$75 or more including tips. The \$123 saving would drop to \$50 or less. There would also be the inconvenience of

standing in line and the need to carry the purchase back to their room.

In the press release announcing the test, Mark Murphy, Amtrak Senior Vice-President and General Manager for long distance trains, was quoted, "Customers have been clear they want more options. From this summer through early next year, passengers will be able to opt for different service between our two daily trains to Orlando and Miami."

Mr. Murphy did not respond to my e-mail request for more information about this test. Passenger rail advocates will have to decide for themselves if this test has any deeper meaning for the future of full dining car service on Amtrak's overnight trains. Does it have anything to do with the age of the single level dining cars needed on this route to be able to serve New York's Pennsylvania Station? How will the data developed during the test be used to determine the next steps? This writer would be deeply saddened if dining cars were to be discontinued.

Bill Engel is a RUN Board member based in Clinton, OH.

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It means your dues are past due!
Please remit **immediately** to continue receiving the RUN Newsletter!

LOOKING BEYOND SAVING THE SW CHIEF

By *J.W. Madison*

I was all set to whip up a short report on the latest developments in the *SW Chief* saga, but NARP got there ahead of me, and I think did it well. Consult their April 2015 Newsletter, page 3.

As Jim Souby points out in that article, media reports announcing the Salvation Of The *Chief* have been premature at best and are not helping us much. But I think it's time to get ahead of ourselves:

Let's fantasize briefly that the *Chief* has been saved for good, and that it's running daily, smoothly, safely, and full of happy passengers. But what else is part of this fantasy? The Kansas and Colorado parts of the recently endangered track segment see few freight trains. The New Mexico part sees none at all. There is no regional or commuter service on any of these parts. This means that the *Chief* is pretty much all by its lonesome between Newton, KS and Lamy, NM. Which wouldn't much bother me, except for this:

A long track with only two trains a day is high-grade catnip for our opponents.

How long will it be before some "leader" in Washington, or much closer to home, looks at those tracks again and starts righteously screaming, "Hey! There's only two trains a day running on those tracks! Let's rip the damn things up and run some buses!" Et cetera. Problem is, this Esteemed Opponent might almost have a point: Two trains a day?!?

I suggest that nationwide, the busier of the routes hosting Amtrak long-distance trains are in little danger of being abandoned or scrapped. But the less busy segments, like Newton-Lamy, are very much in danger of both of these.

I further suggest we start thinking about how to make these more lonesome tracks busy and even profitable (either from taxes or user fees, depending on ownership). Rails Inc has come up with these uses, with our own region in mind:

- Local and regional passenger trains, like the Rail Runner or the Front Runner;

- Short-and intermediate-distance freight and express, or even mixed passenger-freight consists;
- Testing of new and modified equipment and components under real-track conditions;
- The restoration of old long-distance routes, like El Paso-Albuquerque-Denver-points north;
- Excursion trains; vintage, modern and futuristic (Futuristic? Go to <http://www.nmrails.org> Type "Tomorrow Train" in the Search box).

Our plan (or dream) of choice to achieve all this permanently is

1. to build and rebuild enough trackage to meet all our rail needs;
2. for this network to be publicly owned, like our roads, airports and waterways;
3. for the moving parts to be both public and private—with room for healthy competition (see my Not Very Modest Proposal in Vol. 11, issue 3).

But whatever form of ownership our future rail network takes, we can't afford under-used trackage any more than over-used.

J.W. Madison is president of Rails Inc, based in Albuquerque, NM.

STUDY OF AMTRAK SERVICE TO COACHELLA MOVES FORWARD

By *Dana Gabbard*

By inclination, I am a skeptic. Whenever I hear about a proposed rail project I evaluate it as to whether it is practical and advisable taking into account how much support it is drawing. These are the elements that provide at least a possibility that it may be viable, not simply a pipe dream.

For some years, I have been aware of a proposal to operate rail passenger service to the Coachella Valley, the area east of Los Angeles that is best known for the famed music festival and Palm Springs. The current rail passenger service for the area is only provided by the tri-weekly *Sunset Limited* in the wee hours to a Palm Spring station in an inconvenient location.

The chief champion of providing service to the Coachella Valley that is more convenient is Bob Manning of the Southwest Rail Passenger Association and Executive Vice President of the Rail Passenger Association of California. For years, he has tirelessly organized meetings, sought endorsements by key stakeholders, etc. for the service.

The Riverside County Transportation Commission in partnership with the California Department of Transportation Division of Rail and Coachella Valley Association of Governments has undertaken an alternatives analysis and environmental review of possible rail passenger service. This received a huge boost in April when it was announced the Federal Railroad Administration was awarding a \$2.98-million grant to support the rail passenger service planning effort.

The timeline for completing the process is approximately seven years. Union Pacific and BNSF indicate they are monitoring the study as they both have trackage along possible alignments for the service.

In early May, I spent a weekend working a booth at Fullerton Railroad Days, an annual community celebration in Orange County. Flyers about the Coachella Valley proposal drew a positive response from attendees, many of whom stated they would ride such a route when it began. Even a skeptic like me is convinced that this idea is viable and looks like it may really happen.

More about the study can be seen at its website: www.cvrailproject.info.

Dana Gabbard is a RUN Board member and executive secretary of Southern California Transit Advocates.

RUN'S LOS ANGELES CONFERENCE

CHARTS TRANSITION FROM ROADS TO RAIL

By Gary Prophet

The Rail Users' Network (RUN) 10th Annual Conference, named "Making the Transition from Roads to Rail" took place in Los Angeles on Friday, March 27, 2015, with transit related tours occurring on Saturday, March 28. The following is a summary of some of the speakers, as the speakers and various panels provided rail presentations and discussion from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

It began with Hasan Ikhata, of SCAG, who discussed how L.A. had no rail from 1962 until 1990, except for a few intercity Amtrak trains, and that the building of light rail and heavy rail and expansion of the various Amtrak corridors within the state of California, has resulted in an incredible amount of progress over the past 20 years. The "last mile" always has been, and likely always will be, the biggest challenge in transit.

Denny Zane, the Executive Director of MoveLA, presented the issues of raising money for transit projects, which often have large up-front costs. The 0.5% sales tax for transit has been very successful in raising funds for transit projects. Also, building coalitions of business, labor, and environmental organizations is very important when attempting to gain acceptance of investing public dollars into specific transit projects. Providing shuttle systems (bus or van) and areas for bicycles at rail stations, helps to improve access to transit systems. If there existed high speed rail from L.A.'s Union Station to Ontario Airport, the boost to the economy would be fantastic.

Then, RUN Chair Richard Rudolph gave a presentation on "Expanding Passenger Rail in Maine." The recent, successful restoration of rail service to Brunswick, by extending the Boston-to-Portland service,

has been beneficial to the Brunswick area with more retail, a visitor's center, and a 52-room hotel at the train station. If service is extended further north to the Augusta area, East Augusta could be great for a rail terminal with easy access from Interstate 95 and with plenty of parking, as parking would be limited in downtown Augusta. Maine rail service could also be expanded to the Lewiston and Auburn area.

The Amtrak presenter was Mark Murphy, who is the General Manager of Amtrak's long distance services. He discussed the success of the Auto-Train, where an additional coach has been added during peak travel days, resulting in \$1.25 million of additional revenue and how this was made possible by installing LED lights on the Superliner equipment used on the Auto-Train, to reduce the load powered by HEP, so that the extra coach could be added without any additional energy usage by the train. The testing of a second sleeper on the *Cardinal* was successful and a second sleeper will be used on the *Cardinal* during peak travel periods.

Mark also discussed that May through Labor Day and late December was the peak travel period on most long-distance trains and that January through mid-March was the slowest travel period. He mentioned little of other long distance trains, except for mentioning that ways to increase revenue was being reviewed, including changing a train's mix of coaches and sleepers, offering Thruway bus connections in some markets, and signing some contracts for package delivery once the new baggage cars have entered service.

The keynote speaker, Christopher Coes, Managing Director of LOCUS, discussed how millennials demand walkable urban places and how land usage needs to be proper and appropriate for a given location (city or town), and should usually

include residential, office, and retail space. Walkable distance is considered to be 1,500 to 3,000 feet. He also stated that Transit Oriented Development (TOD) should be included in Infrastructure Financing. He cautioned that real estate interests should not replace future transit options, as was done in Denver where railroad tracks at the downtown rail station were removed so that real estate development could be greater. The capacity for expansion of rail stations in the future should not be compromised by short-term real estate interests.

Dana Gabbard and his panel of speakers discussed how transformative projects have never been easy and used the Golden Gate Bridge as an example, since its design was ridiculed and it faced over 2,000 lawsuits, but it was finally built and is a vitally important part of the highway system today. Los Angeles to San Francisco is the busiest short haul market in the United States with more daily air passengers than any other city pair in the country. Nearly 20% of flights from LAX fly to the San Francisco area. Trains are on-time when the infrastructure and proper equipment allow rail to operate on-time. A high speed rail connection between Las Vegas and Palmdale was reviewed, as well as the California High Speed Rail plans.

James Repass then discussed the fact that it cost \$2.7 billion to electrify from New Haven to Boston on the Northeast Corridor. Also discussed was the idea of a "value capture tax" for transit improvements, which would raise funds for transit by taxing the increase in value that those improvements will cause in the local real estate market, especially around rail stations. In addition to working with local politicians, it is vital to work with Chambers of Commerce to gain support for specific transit projects.

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RUN's L.A. CONFERENCE: FROM ROADS TO RAIL

(Continued from page 7)

Don Sepulveda, Executive Officer for Regional Rail for the L.A. area, presented many exciting opportunities, including that LA Metro has about \$30 billion in transit projects and regional rail has \$842 million. The idea of running four tracks out of L.A. Union Station to provide run-through rail service was discussed, as that would allow a one seat ride from Ventura to Orange County. Regarding access to rail stations, one half mile is considered walking distance and three miles is considered bicycling distance. Challenges include that transit must be affordable, locating funding sources can be difficult, and providing the "last mile" access is key to attracting passengers to transit.

Arthur Leahy, outgoing CEO of the L.A. County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, received an Award from RUN for providing great customer service.

In various afternoon panels, the following were discussed:

- Some new apartment buildings provide

a free transit pass, for as long as the tenant lives there.

- Some funding sources for transit include: gas tax, congestion tax, property tax, car registration fees, and sales tax. Sales tax was approved, as much of the sales tax is paid by visitors to the L.A. area and not just residents.

- Santa Monica service will be a game changer, providing great benefits.

- Develop projects first to sell/show/lobby the public and government officials and then get/beg/lobby for state and federal funds.

- Ventura County does not have the sales tax for transit; all other counties in the L.A. area do.

- A diverse set of projects (to appeal to lots of different people) is better than doing all of one project, when attempting to attract funding.

- Funding is usually about 75% capital and 25% operational, for transit in California.

- Do not underestimate the value of marketing and promotion.

- About 50% of oil is used for gas for cars and light trucks.

- Jim Souby stated that the Ski Train from

Denver had 450 passengers for each of two trips and both trips sold out very quickly and that it took only 15 minutes to load and unload passengers at the Winter Park Ski Resort, which is not located at a station.

The third panel of the day focused on "Best Practices for More Effective Advocacy," moderated by RUN Vice-Chair Andrew Albert. Panelists Lynda Bybee, formerly of Los Angeles METRO, Jaime de la Vega, former Deputy Mayor for Transportation under former Mayor Villaraigosa, and Darrell Clarke, who helped get the Expo line started, gave their views on how advocacy played an important role in starting new services and expanding existing services.

The effort to save the route of the *Southwest Chief* was discussed, along with various optional routing and the net result being that the existing route makes the most sense, but requires funding track repairs where the tracks are only used by Amtrak's *Southwest Chief*.

Gary Prophet is RUN Treasurer and Vice President of the Empire State Passengers Association.

RUN CONFERENCE ATTENDEES SAMPLE TRANSIT IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

By David Peter Alan

After the RUN conference in Los Angeles, attendees had an opportunity to ride transit in the city, visit two major transit facilities, and take an excursion to San Diego and ride local transit there. Transit is coming back in the City of Angels and elsewhere in Southern California, as the tours demonstrated.

The main tour took place on Saturday, March 28. It began at Union Station, which opened in 1939; the last of the grandiose train stations built in the United States. It originally served 33 trains per day. Today, it hosts only three long-distance trains, but many other trains now stop there. They

include Amtrak's Pacific Surfliner Corridor to San Diego and Santa Barbara, most of the trains on the Metrolink commuter-rail system, and the Gold Line light rail. At the other end of the passageway under the elevated tracks is the Patsouris Transit Center, which hosts the Red Line subway and many buses operated by the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transit Authority (Metro). Metro now owns the station and has plans to develop parts of the station that have not been used since the 1960s.

Our guide for the station tour was Ken Pratt, a former real estate developer who had spent 42 years in the field, and is now Station Director. Pratt said that the City of Los Angeles had pushed for the station,

and that the case concerning it had gone all the way to the Supreme Court. The site of the station had previously been the city's Chinatown, which was demolished and relocated to make room for the station. Pratt said that the station is now busier than ever, with 880 trains per day, including local transit on Metro. Counting bus and rail riders, 75,000 riders pass through the station each weekday.

From Union Station, we took a Metrolink train to Norwalk, on the Orange County Line. Bus service in Norwalk was slow and inefficient; as buses had previously been everywhere in the region. The municipality of Norwalk did not want

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RUN CONFERENCE ATTENDEES SAMPLE TRANSIT IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

(Continued from page 8)

Metro's Green Line light rail to go to the Metrolink station, so we had to take a Norwalk Transit bus to the end of the Green Line, about two miles away. The normal wait for the bus would have been 30 minutes, because the bus schedule was not timed to connect with Metrolink, but we waited for more than 50 minutes because of an accident on the route. We eventually reached Metro's Green Line and took it to Willowbrook Station, where it connects with the Blue Line light rail, which runs between downtown Los Angeles and Long Beach.

Metro's Rail Operations Center, our next destination, is also located at Willowbrook. Supervisor Andreas Azziti gave us some background about Metro Rail and the operations center. Amador Silva, another supervisor, showed us the observation room, where operators monitor the images sent by security cameras at stations. Then he showed us the control room, where controllers give the orders that move the light-rail vehicles and subway trains. The crew at the control room had just faced a difficult situation; about 90 minutes before our visit, a motor vehicle had turned to cross the tracks of the Expo Line, just as a light-rail vehicle was coming. The resulting collision caused a number of injuries, but no fatalities. Still, both Expo Line tracks were blocked, and

controllers had to keep service going as best they could, ordering a "bus bridge" to take riders around the affected area.

After the tour, we took the Blue Line toward downtown Los Angeles, and changed at 7th Street–Metro Center, for a Red Line subway train to Union Station. Most of the rail transit in Los Angeles is relatively new, so there is little variety in equipment. Although we rode only a few segments on transit, everybody experienced each transit mode that serves the area.

A few members of our group stayed downtown for a brief walking tour, which this writer led. It included a look at the Old Pueblo, where the town got its start in 1781, and which is a popular attraction for tourists and "locals" today. We walked on Spring Street past City Hall, and over one block to Broadway. There we saw the famous Bradbury Building, a unique edifice (built in 1893) which is both Victorian and futuristic at the same time. The tour concluded with a further look at Broadway and the downtown revitalization going on there, and a visit to the Grand Central Market (opened in 1917) for a bite to eat.

On Sunday, a small group took an excursion to San Diego to ride the transit there. The trip began on a Metrolink Orange County Line train to Oceanside, which connected with the Coaster, a local

train to San Diego, a trip that took over three hours on both lines. We saw the historic Santa Fe station, built in 1930, which is still the main train station in the city, and then rode a San Diego Trolley. At Old Town, it was time for a mid-day meal. Dana Gabbard, Secretary of the Southern California Transit Advocates and a RUN Board member, suggested La Piñata, a local Mexican restaurant. We caught the Coaster train at old Town and changed at Oceanside for a Metrolink train. The first train went to San Bernardino instead of Los Angeles Union Station, so we stopped over in Orange and had a drink at the restaurant that now occupies the station premises before returning to Los Angeles.

Both tours were enjoyable and informative experiences. Southern California does not boast a large variety of rail transit, but as recently as 25 years ago, it had none. That, alone, is substantial progress. From the ridership on every segment we rode, it appears that transit is catching on, in Los Angeles, in San Diego, and in between. The City of Los Angeles and its residents are better off for it, and so are the people who live in San Diego and elsewhere in Southern California.

David Peter Alan is a member of the RUN Board of Directors, who is based in New Jersey and was a member of the committee who planned the conference and the tours.

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PASSENGER RAIL ADVOCACY IN MAINE



Service on Amtrak's Downeaster service was extended to Brunswick, ME with great success.

**By Richard Rudolph
Chair., Rail Users' Network**

Much has happened in Maine regarding the state of rail advocacy since the earlier article which appeared in the 2013-2014 winter issue of the *RUN Newsletter*. Since then, City Councils in Augusta and Waterville have adopted resolutions calling for a study to determine the potential for the return of passenger rail service to the state capital and beyond.

The effort to restore passenger rail to the twin cities, Lewiston-Auburn, is also moving forward. A bill that funds a \$500,000 study and plan for bringing passenger rail service to Lewiston-Auburn has unanimously passed the House and Senate. The legislation calls for a one-time appropriation from the state's highway fund to provide money to the Maine Department of Transportation to cooperate with the Northern New England Passenger Rail Authority and the

cities of Lewiston and Auburn to plan for the return of passenger service to these cities and Portland, ME.

Residents in Bangor have also expressed interest in extending rail service to that northern city. Legislation has been introduced calling for the allocation of \$300,000 for MDOT to study the feasibility of returning passenger train service. The study would focus on the conditions of the tracks, how much it would cost to maintain them in the long run, and the possibility that excursion trains could operate seasonally beyond Bangor. Meanwhile, Trainriders Northeast is focused on extending passenger rail service from Portland via Worcester, MA to Penn Station in New York.

While the successful extension of Amtrak's *Downeaster* service to Brunswick has sparked new interest in passenger rail in Maine, it remains to be seen what will happen in the near term. Republican Governor LePage may simply veto most if not all of these proposals. Meanwhile, the Maine Rail Group is helping to

promote rail service to Augusta and Waterville without prejudice to other interests, for each focuses on a different market region. Each concept, it believes, should proceed according to the merits and justifications, but with joint consideration of common concerns such as specific routes, schedules, fares, type and use of rolling stock, station design, last mile connection issues, financing for planning, capital requirements, and ongoing operating costs.

With this in mind, the Maine Rail Group will work with state legislators to introduce a bill in the next session of the legislature which would direct Maine DOT to conduct a comprehensive study of plausible future passenger rail route extensions in Maine. The study goal would be to conceptualize the system at its full build out, including its management and operational and financial structure(s), and to recommend priorities for partial build outs to achieve safe, reliable interconnected passenger rail service in Maine. So far, two state legislators are interested in sponsoring such a bill.

MRG members are also working to establish a stakeholder group to build public support for such a study as well as the return of passenger rail service to Augusta and Waterville. This group will work to first build public support for such a study by identifying key players who have a stake in the matter; brief local leaders, and obtain more resolutions from towns and cities along the proposed line. It will seek endorsements from the media, elected officials, colleges, businesses, real estate developers, churches, labor and other professional organizations. It will also work with city and state officials to obtain state or federal funding to do the preliminary planning.

The goal is to determine ridership projections, station locations, schedules, fares, track, crossings and bridge upgrades required for passenger service, and definition of type, quantity and cost of incremental rolling stock needed. At some point this group may also work in conjunction with MRG, Amtrak, NNEPRA and other organizations to sponsor a demonstration train trip from Brunswick to Augusta and beyond.

SPEND MORE, NOT LESS, ON AMTRAK INFRASTRUCTURE

(Continued from page 1)

Mayor Michael Nutter of Philadelphia was on the scene shortly after the derailment, helping to get injured passengers to hospitals, and ensuring the safety of all those still on the train.

And the Amtrak-haters couldn't wait for the dead to be buried before they were editorializing—both in the Congress, and all over the print media—that Amtrak was a waste of money, and their budget should be cut further than even the sequester dictates. Now, Amtrak is far from perfect. It's made many mistakes, and we can quarrel about whether it is the best solution, or a better one exists to run rail service in the United States. But rail service is an important component of a national transportation network, and nowhere is it more important than the densely populated Northeast Corridor.

It didn't take the airlines long to jack up their one-way fares from NYC to Washington, from the usual \$225 to over \$700, once they realized the Corridor was "split" due to the derailment. Clearly, rail service has an important role to play, so let's stop debating over whether Amtrak should exist or not, and make our rail service the best and safest it can be. Let's stop playing politics with people's lives.

While the U.S rail safety record is second to none, there is a need for more capital funds to keep up with corridor maintenance and to begin addressing state-of-good repair backlogs such as the replacement of the Susquehanna River Bridge, which, at three-quarters of a mile, is the longest moveable structure on the NEC. The two-track bridge restricts train speeds to 90 mph in an otherwise 120-mph territory. Other NEC bridges are scheduled for near-term replacement

While the U.S rail safety record is second to none, there is a need for more capital funds to keep up with corridor maintenance and to begin addressing state-of-good repair backlogs.

as well. Amtrak and New Jersey Transit, for example, have completed design for a new Portal Bridge over the Hackensack River between Kearny and Secaucus, NJ. The two-track, movable swing

bridge, built in 1910, is a source of delays and high maintenance costs, and needs to be opened frequently for marine traffic. In Baltimore, trains pass through a 1.4-mile tunnel built in 1873—one so narrow, decrepit and leak-prone that speeds are limited to 30 mph. According to the International Transport Forum of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, "the United States invested less than 0.1 percent of its gross domestic product in rail systems in 2013, a quarter of what was spent by Britain and one-sixth of the investments by France and Australia." (*New York Times*, May 20, 2015).

What could make matters even worse is the recent decision of the Republican-controlled House Appropriations Committee to cut \$262 million in Amtrak's capital investment programs as part of a \$54-billion spending bill for transportation and housing programs. As this spending bill will reach the House floor in early June, we need to take action to request more money be spent on Amtrak's aging infrastructure, not less! Be sure to call your state's U.S. Representative to demand action on this matter.

2015 Schedule of RUN Board Meetings:

Meetings for the remainder of 2015 are scheduled for May 30, July 11, September 26 and December 12.

Board meetings take place at the MTA headquarters in New York City from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m., unless otherwise noted.

For more information, contact Richard Rudolph, Chair, at 207-776-4961.

SUPREME COURT RULES AMTRAK IS A “GOVERNMENTAL ENTITY,” BUT COURT CHALLENGES WILL CONTINUE

(Continued from page 1)

On Monday, March 16, the Court issued its opinion. Justice Anthony Kennedy, usually the “swing vote” on the Court, wrote it. It was short, to the point, and settled little. The majority opinion was only 12 pages long, and Kennedy used most of those pages to review the history of the dispute. This included the founding of Amtrak under the Rail Passenger Act of 1970 and Amtrak’s subsequent relationships with the freight-carrying railroads, which were permitted to discontinue their own passenger trains when Amtrak was formed (or when they joined Amtrak, if they did so after 1971).

The Court reversed the D.C. Circuit, citing the government’s close supervision of Amtrak, as well as its broad authority concerning Amtrak’s affairs. The opinion described the relationship between the government and Amtrak. The Department of Transportation (DOT) owns the Amtrak voting stock, the President appoints most of the members of the Amtrak Board, Congress regulates Amtrak, Congress funds Amtrak, and some of Amtrak’s goals are set by statute.

Given those circumstances, the Court said: “Given the combination of these unique features and its significant ties to the Government, Amtrak is not an autonomous private enterprise.” The opinion continued: “Thus, in its joint issuance of the metrics and standards with the FRA, Amtrak

acted as a governmental entity for purposes of the Constitution’s separation of powers provisions. And that exercise of governmental power must be consistent with the design and requirements of the Constitution, including those provisions relating to the separation of powers.”

The Court’s opinion concluded its analysis of Amtrak as a government instrumentality by saying: “The political branches created Amtrak, control its Board, define its mission, specify many of its day-to-day operations, have imposed substantial transparency and accountability mechanisms, and, for all practical purposes, set and supervise its annual budget. Accordingly, the Court holds that Amtrak is a governmental entity, not a private one, for purposes of determining the constitutional issues presented in this case.”

Despite vacating the judgment below, the Court also noted that there were issues concerning the appointment of Amtrak’s President to its Board of Directors, its participation in the arbitration process under PRIIA §207(d), and the question of whether the “metrics and standards” in question interfered with the freight-carrying railroads to the point where they constitute a “taking” of their money without Due Process of Law. The Court remanded the case to the D.C. Circuit for a determination on these issues, with the direction that Amtrak be considered a governmental entity for the purpose.

Justice Samuel Alito issued a concurring opinion, which means that he agreed with the majority about the result, but he did not agree with all of the majority’s reasoning. He commented: “The language from §207 ... should raise red flags. In one statute, Congress says Amtrak is not an ‘agency.’ 49 U. S. C. §24301(a)(3). But then Congress commands Amtrak to act like an agency, with effects on private rail carriers. No wonder the D. C. Circuit ruled as it did.” Alito concluded by questioning whether Amtrak’s structure is consistent with the Constitution.

Justice Clarence Thomas also filed a separate opinion. He concurred in the judgment; that the case should be remanded to the D.C. Circuit. Otherwise, his opinion appears more like a dissent. His reasoning sounded more like that of the D.C. Circuit, which refused to allow the delegation of rule-making power to Amtrak, than like that of the Court majority. In a footnote, Thomas indicated that he would have preferred the jurisprudence of an earlier time; specifically the Nineteenth Century. He added: “Much of the upheaval in our delegation jurisprudence occurred during the Progressive Era, a time marked by an increased faith in the technical expertise of agencies and a commensurate cynicism about principles of popular sovereignty.”

A close reading of the case does not support the conclusion that Amtrak won a clear victory. The matter will be sent back to the D.C. Circuit; the same court that decisively disapproved

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SUPREME COURT RULES AMTRAK IS A “GOVERNMENTAL ENTITY,” BUT COURT CHALLENGES WILL CONTINUE

(Continued from page 12)

of any authority on Amtrak's part to help make rules that ensure that its trains receive priority over freight shipments. The issue of Amtrak interfering with the freight-carrying railroads' operations and costing them business opportunity (that means some of their profit) without Due Process is particularly troubling. With the Court now clearly holding that Amtrak is a “state actor,” there is no question that any role that Amtrak might play in helping to enforce priority for passenger trains over freight trains is clearly “state action”; a situation that will trigger a

claim by the aggrieved freight-carrying railroads, on Due Process grounds. Amtrak could still be held liable to the freight-carrying railroads for damages.

The result could be the same as the worst-case scenario profiled in our coverage of the case in the Fall, 2014 edition of the *RUN Newsletter*. The D.C. Circuit could hold Amtrak liable for depriving the “freight railroads” of some of their profit without Due Process, and send the case to a trial court for a determination of such damages. If Amtrak is held liable in that manner, it is unlikely that Amtrak could raise the funds to pay such damages, and the entire long-

distance passenger-rail network would again be in jeopardy. In this writer's opinion, Amtrak has not won a victory, but a reprieve for a few years.

The advice that this writer has given before is still valid: Ride as many long-distance trains on Amtrak as you can, while you know you still can.

David Peter Alan is a member of the RUN Board of Directors. He lives and practices law in South Orange, NJ. The opinions expressed are his own, and do not necessarily reflect those of RUN, or any other organization or individual. They are presented for informational purposes only, and are not intended to be construed as a “legal opinion.”

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THE ROCK ISLAND LINE, IT IS A MIGHTY GOOD ROAD



Illinois Gov. Bruce Rauner may cut \$16 million from the state's support for Amtrak operations.

(Continued from page 2)

to install ABS and remotely controlled siding switches. All upgrades are calibrated to support 79-mph passenger service.

Despite a \$2.2-million line item for "contingencies," the total cost of the project has ballooned due to inflation as well as Iowa Interstate's demands for certain improvements not specified in the original plan. A brief and somewhat vague news release

issued by the Illinois Department of Transportation in October 2014 indicated that IDOT and IAIS had settled their differences and agreed on a program and budget for necessary improvements. The costs are funded by a State of Illinois bond program. Indeed, some bond money already is flowing to the BNSF to fund improvements at its Eola Yard, just east of Aurora, where growing freight congestion (as well as busy Metra traffic) threatened to impede the progress of the two new daily

round trips needed to serve the Quad Cities.

Moline has been designated as the station site for all four cities, and the city and a private developer already are at work converting a former office building into an intermodal center. The new train service is expected to be extremely popular. Based on the busiest segment of the state's busiest rail corridor, the 184 miles between Chicago and Springfield on the Lincoln Service route, Chicago-Quad Cities bids fair to be even bigger.

The Quad Cities have four times more people than the government ghetto Springfield, and they're a real city, with household-name smokestack industries like John Deere, 3M, Alcoa and the Rock Island Arsenal to supply plenty of busy people who'd like to get some work done on a fast ride to Chicago. Airline fares can run up to \$900 for a round trip, and the three-hour drive on I-80 can be punishing, so the speedy rail alternative is likely to be welcomed.

Three ominous developments darken the picture, however:

- Amtrak lacks the additional equipment to service the new route. Bi-level "Next Generation" cars funded by President Obama's 2009 Stimulus Act as well as by the 2010 federal budget are allocated to Illinois, but six years after funding no cars have been built and the Nippon Sharyo factory at nearby Rochelle, IL is said to be plagued by engineering and production problems.

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THE ROCK ISLAND LINE, IT IS A MIGHTY GOOD ROAD (BUT NOT YET)

(Continued from page 14)

- Illinois' new governor, Bruce Rauner, has proposed slicing \$16 million out of the \$42 million budgeted for Amtrak service under his predecessor, Pat Quinn, as part of his drastic austerity program needed to save the state from being bankrupted by its over-promised and under-funded pension plan for state employees. If Rauner's cuts go through, Illinois not only will not be able to start up new frequencies but actually will have to annul existing ones. The Chicago-Quincy and Chicago-Carbondale routes might revert to one train a day each. Rauner also has put all plans for state-funded rail infrastructure improvements on hold until his staff completes a review.

- Rush-hour congestion at Chicago Union Station has forced Amtrak to schedule the arrival of the first train of the day out of the Quad Cities for a noon arrival when it should be pulling in at 9 or 9:30 a.m. to give Quad City business

people time for a full day in Chicago. When Union Station opened in 1925, the busy western suburbs along BNSF's main line were tiny country towns and only about a dozen trains a day were needed to serve them. No tracks or platforms have been added since that time. Amtrak officials say they expect the situation to relax somewhat once Metra's 15 weekday Southwest Service trains serving the old Wabash Railroad line to Manhattan are rerouted into nearby LaSalle Street Station. But that won't happen until a quarter-mile connection is built between the Belt Railway of Chicago and the Rock Island main line on the South Side of Chicago, a project which isn't fully funded yet.

Eventually all three obstacles will be overcome. The Quad Cities extension enjoys strong bipartisan support in the General Assembly and is broadly supported by the local business community, while the "74th Street Connection" is an important part of Chicago's CREATE program of rail improvements for which commuters,

Amtrak and the freight railroads alike have long been yearning.

Based on its demographics and its distance from Chicago, the Quad Cities never should have been left off the state's passenger-rail map when Amtrak started up. The community became a passenger-train outlier only because on Amtrak Day the fortunes of history left it with a bankrupt and disabled railroad while the state's three other routes were owned by relatively healthy carriers that could still move a passenger train at 79 miles per hour.

The Quad Cities' day is coming again—but a little late. First we have to build some new track, install some new signals, create a new interchange track out on the prairie and shuffle a bunch of commuter trains around Chicago like a Rubik's cube. That's no easy job in a society that as recently as 25 years ago still believed it would never have to invest in trains again, because they were all going away.

EK. Plous is director of communications at Corridor Capital LLC.

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PLEASE BECOME A MEMBER OF RUN...

FROM THE RUN BOARD OF DIRECTORS

We invite you to become a member of the Rail Users' Network, which represents rail passengers' interests in North America. RUN is based on the successful British model, which has been serving passengers since 1948. RUN networks passengers, their advocacy organizations, and their advisory councils. RUN is working to help secure an interconnected system of rail services that passengers will use with pride. RUN forms a strong, unified voice for intercity, regional/commuter, and transit rail passenger interests. By joining together, sharing information, best practices, and resources through networking, passengers will have a better chance of a vocal and meaningful seat at the decision making table.

Rail Users' Network Newsletter is published quarterly by the Rail Users' Network, a 501 (c) (3), nonprofit corporation.

RUN members enjoy newsletters, international conferences, regional rail forums, and other meetings to share information while working to improve and expand rail passenger service.

Membership is open to passengers, official advisory councils, advocacy groups, public agencies, tourist and convention bureaus, carriers and other profit-making organizations.

We welcome your thoughts and comments about our newsletter. Please write to us: RUN, P.O. Box 8015, Portland, ME 04104

We hope you will join — vital decisions and legislation affecting the North American rail transportation system are being made daily. Don't be left behind at the station!

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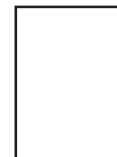
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