

“This work, along with other station improvements, will ensure that commuters and travelers alike can count on more reliable rail service in the future.”

AMTRAK CEO Wick Moorman on the Penn Station Renewal Program

House Appropriators Reject White House Proposal to Slash Amtrak Service

Under the guidance of Republican leadership, House appropriators passed a FY2018 transportation budget July 18 that would boost spending for passenger rail by \$360 million over current levels, with much of the increase targeted towards the enormous state of good repair backlog on the Northeast Corridor. This bill is a huge victory for NARP and our allies, who held a series of successful rallies against a Trump Administration proposal to eliminate long distance trains.

“This win belongs to all our advocates who took part in the rallies and campaigns against the White House’s disastrous proposal for the national rail network,” said NARP President Jim Mathews. “There has been a huge shift in how conservative members of the House of Representatives views Amtrak’s National Network trains as a result of

the work of our staff and our members. This is what bipartisan coalition building looks like.

“But we still have more of this battle to fight—this proposal has a long way to go before becoming law, and NARP will be fully engaged with the entire House and Senate appropriators to boost the investment figures for passenger rail and transit, and eliminate proposals that unfairly target high-speed rail projects.”

Overall, the rail and transit investments were part of a \$17.8 billion proposal, a \$646 million cut from current levels—but still represents a \$1.5 billion boost over the transportation plan proposed by President Donald Trump, which called for the elimination of Amtrak’s long distance trains. The bill presents a more complicated picture for transit, cutting top-levels by \$662 million while

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Rally For Trains A Success; New Petition Gains Momentum

On the weekend of June 23, more than 30 rallies were held as part of #Rally4trains to support Amtrak and long distance rail service in the U.S. A big “thank you” goes to all of the rail passengers and supporters who came out and voiced their opposition against a federal budget that would see more than 220 cities in 23 states lose Amtrak service.

Rallies even received media coverage from CBS, ABC and *USA Today*, as well as dozens of local media outlets. Our efforts are working, but though our voices were heard, this is just the

beginning of our work to ensure Amtrak and other public transit programs are appropriately funded.

Several rail advocacy groups are also coming together to voice their opinions and encourage Congress to support long distance trains. As part of the movement, a petition has been created online at MoveOn.org by John Webb. You can join the more than 200,000 other signers who are urging Congress to fund Amtrak passenger rail in order to maintain service for the millions of people who rely on it. You can view and sign the petition

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Share your support online using #Rally4trains
(Photo Credit: NARP)

PROPOSAL, from p. 1 preserving a key investment program that has proved crucial for rail transit and commuter rail projects.

The full House must still pass the bill, and the Senate has yet to take up its version of the transportation budget. Both bodies are working against a September 31st deadline, which is when the FY2017 budget expires.

The Numbers

The bill provides a total of \$1.4 billion for Amtrak, of which:

- \$1.1 billion to support the national network which, while a slight decrease over current funding, is still a decisive dismissal of the Trump Administration’s call to eliminate the national system; and
- \$328 million for the Northeast

Program	FY2017 Appropriated Levels	FAST Act FY2018 Authorized Levels	White House FY2018 Budget Proposal	House THUD FY2018 Budget Proposal
(In Millions of Dollars)				
Amtrak - National Network	\$1,167	\$1,085	\$525	\$1,100
Amtrak - NEC	\$328	\$515	\$235	\$328
Consolidated Rail Infrastructure & Safety Grants	\$68	\$230	\$25	\$25
Federal State Partnership For State Of Good Repair	\$25	\$175	\$26	\$500
Restoration & Enhancement Grants	\$5	\$21	\$0	\$0
Total	\$1,593	\$2,026	\$811	\$1,953

Corridor.

The bill also provides funding for two of the three intercity rail grant programs authorized by the FAST Act:

- \$500 million for the Federal-State Partnership for State of Good Repair grants, a 2000% increase over current

spending and authorized levels, which appropriators are explicitly targeting towards the \$38 billion maintenance backlog on the Northeast Corridor, and the Gateway Project specifically;

- \$25 million for the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements

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Follow #SummerByRail As Interns Embark on Cross-Country Trip

Did you know this summer marks the second-annual “Summer by Rail” trip that will see two NARP interns travel across North America? Their goal - to engage and educate the public on the connectivity, availability and ease of (cross-country) rail travel. On July 31, college students, Victoria Principato and Caitlin Boyle kicked off their 27-day trip by train in New York City. “This journey will take them to more than 22 cities throughout the U.S. and Canada.



Cate and Victoria plan out their Summer by Rail trip (Photo Credit: NARP)

During the trip, NARP wants to make sure that you have an opportunity to follow along. Victoria and Caitlin will share their travels on the “Summer By Rail” blog at www.summerbyrail.com, as well as on Instagram and Twitter under the handle [@RailPassengers](https://twitter.com/RailPassengers). To follow their journey on social media, audiences can use the hashtag: [#SummerByRail](https://twitter.com/SummerByRail). People can also follow the adventure at

[Facebook.com/narprail](https://www.facebook.com/narprail) and [YouTube.com/narprail](https://www.youtube.com/narprail).

The [#SummerByRail](https://twitter.com/SummerByRail) adventure will take the interns from coast to coast in the U.S., as well as parts of our northern neighbors, using Amtrak as their primary mode of transportation.

The dynamic duo will also venture out in each city, utilizing their own bicycles, as well as various transit systems to learn about the communities that rely on public forms of transportation. Other

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Grants, a disappointing reduction of \$43 million from the FY2017 enacted level. This newly created program—which received its first funding in April of this year—funds capital and safety improvements, planning, environmental work, and research; and

- No funding for the Restoration & Enhancement Grants, a blow towards the Gulf Coast Restoration project, and a decision which NARP will fight in the Senate appropriations process.

The bill allocates \$11.75 billion in total budgetary resources for the Federal Transit Administration (FTA)—a disappointing \$662 million below the fiscal year 2017 enacted level (but \$526 million above the White House request).

- \$9.7 billion will go towards formula grants, consistent with the FAST Act authorization levels;

- \$1.75 billion is included for Capital Investment Grants, and \$1 billion for “Full Funding Grant Agreement”

(FFGA) transit projects—a huge win for advocates, who have fought the Trump Administration’s proposal to wind down this critical project;

- \$145 million in the draft for Core Capacity projects, and \$400 million included for new projects that provide both public transportation and inter-city passenger rail service—a clear indication that this money is targeted towards the Gateway Project, which serves Amtrak, NJ Transit, and the MTA. These programs provide funding for “major transit capital investments – including rapid rail, light rail, bus rapid transit, and commuter rail.”

Now, the Bad News

While the bill provides relatively good news on funding levels, it also includes a number of damaging provisions and funding decisions, including:

Eliminating the popular TIGER Grant program, which helped fund a number of innovative intercity rail, transit, and freight rail projects since its inception;

Prohibiting funding for high speed rail in California and the California High Speed Rail Authority;

Prohibiting the Surface Transportation Board from taking action regarding the construction of high-speed rail in California unless the Board has jurisdiction over the entire project.

There will be an opportunity to push back against these provisions, on the floor of the House when the bill comes for a vote before the full body, and during the Senate committee process. We’ve already seen good signs from the Chair of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME), who said she would like to see TIGER reinstated.

NARP will continue to use our #Rally4Trains campaign to improve and advance these policies. You can help support this work through a special gift, or by going to www.narprail.org/donate. Thank you for your generous contributions! ■

RALLY, from p. 1

here (or visit <https://petitions.moveon.org> and search “Save Amtrak”) to show your support.

Though most of the media and Washington are focused on arguments between the president and media personalities, it’s hard to fathom how there is not more attention being placed on the fact that more than 140 million Americans are at risk of losing Amtrak service. Not only that, but the loss of service would hurt local and regional economies, as well as the national economy, and see the loss of vital jobs.

This is why Congress must pass legislation that will fund long distance passenger rail at current, if not higher levels. Our mission right now is to get Congress to reject the White House’s long distance train attacks. We cannot take our eye off the ball and that’s why it’s important to know that it’s not too late to host another rally. We’ll send you everything you need, including posters, flyers, handouts, sample press releases and

letters, and a list of media contacts.

Even if you cannot take part in a physical event, it is very important that you call, or continue to call, your member of Congress at: 202-224-2131. That number will allow you to connect with the people who represent you in Washington. You can also email them by visiting www.townswithouttrains.com, and clicking the “Contact Congress” button. Tell them you oppose this disastrous federal budget proposal.

Another easy way you can participate is to use the #Rally4Trains hashtag on Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter. Share a picture of trains or stations, or even rallies, and voice your frustration on the White House budget, using #Rally4Trains.

[The Towns Without Trains and #Rally4Trains project has been made possible through generous bequests from the estates of George McCallum, Edmund Fritz and Lewis Hoppe, as well as financial contributions from NARP members all across America who make our work possible.] ■

INTERNS, from p. 2

transportation services the pair will use include buses, bike-shares, streetcars, ferries, and ride-sharing services.

In between exploring each city’s sights, sounds and treats, the two interns will meet with a variety of city, state, transit, and advocacy representatives to talk public transportation, infrastructure and the importance of connecting cities and people together.

As #SummerByRail unfolds in August, Victoria and Caitlin will make stops in a variety of big and small cities, including: Burlington, VT; Chicago, IL; Montreal, QU; Toronto, ON; Los Angeles, CA; Denver, CO; Kansas City, MO; New Orleans, LA; and many more. On August 26, the NARP interns will take off on the last leg of the summer trip of a lifetime, leaving Hattiesburg, MS, for Washington, D.C. ■

STATES NEWS • STATES NEWS • STATES NEWS • STATES NEWS

All Aboard: Florida's Brightline train is on track to move towards phase two of its project as Martin County, Florida dropped the last of multiple legal suits against the rail company. All Aboard Florida will continue to receive \$1.75 billion of tax-free bonds, which was the legal suit in question, for the railroad. Brightline is expected to begin limited service between Miami and West Palm beach later this fall, while the addition of the Orlando stop is still several years away.

The Los Angeles Metropolitan Transportation Authority will put \$81.5 million towards improving its 27-year old "Blue Line" route connecting downtown L.A. to Long Beach. The repairs will focus on adding four interlocking segments to the route. The interlocking system is expected to reduce delays and allow trains to consistently arrive between 15 and 20 minutes. ■

Feds Release Updated Decision For Northeast Corridor Upgrades

The Federal Railroad Administration released a record of decision and new plan for the NEC Future Project Wednesday, July 11. The record of decision will allow the FRA to start the process of advancing repairs to maintain the tracks and increase capacity and efficiency along the NEC. The project could make the trip between Washington D.C. and New York City 35 minutes faster, and save an additional 45 minutes between New York and Boston. The project is expected to cost \$153 billion, with an estimated timeline of 25 years.

As part of its initial proposal, the



An Amtrak train waiting at a station in the NEC.
(Photo Credit: Fan Railer)

FRA considered a plan to create an inland route designed to reach Boston by cutting through Connecticut cities and towns like Danbury, Hartford, and Old Lyme. The proposed idea brought opposition from inland communities, as residents and local officials voiced their disapproval of the plan. In the end, this variation of the plan was not included in the final proposal. Now that the record of decision has been released and the first tier environmental review process has been completed, the actual work can begin—as soon as funding is identified ■

Rail Passengers' Stories on the Importance of Long Distance Trains:

From a childhood of being the only rider in an old caboose attached to a short, swaying Soo Line freight train in rural Dakota to having ridden most of the Amtrak routes in the United States, I have gained an immense respect for and appreciation for the comfort, convenience, and quality of rail travel, and the personnel working the trains. There simply is not a more civilized way to get to somewhere else. To reduce availability, to further damage that small and struggling rail network, would shame our nation and lessen our future.

*Ronald Schauer;
Longview, WA*

Almost every winter, my wife and I take Amtrak from La Crosse, WI, to visit our children and their families in Seattle. We prefer train travel to air, but beyond that, I have had several ear surgeries, and the change in air pressure can be painful and can damage my residual hearing. In addition, I am tall and have some arthritis. Both make travel in cramped seats uncomfortable. Long distance trains are a needed part of the transportation system and should be expanded, not reduced.

*David Voights;
Jesup, IA*

NARP Member Benefits

■ If you haven't done so already, claim your Travelers United Advocate Membership, and broaden support for consumer focus, at: <https://travelersunited.org/welcome-narp/>

■ Review the full and growing list of NARP benefits by logging into: <https://www.narprail.org/MyBenefits> ■

2017 In Memory and In Honor NARP Donations

In Memory of:

- Hans Mueller** by Art & Toni Poole, Nancy Goodno
- Claude Dixon** by Art & Toni Poole, Carl Fowler
- Charlotte Joanne Fore Poole** by Maston Poole
- Mr. James F. Farny** by Orbital ATK (Thiokol) Employee Action Committee
- Arnold W. Frueh** by Donald C. Frueh
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- The Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe (ATSF)** by Carolyn Stupin
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- Redmond S. Goodno** by Nancy Goodno
- Darwin Johnson** by Wendel Johnson
- Bea Minkler** by William S. Minkler
- Joe O'Shaunessy** by Meg O'Shaunessy
- Ken Vogel** by Jon P. Anderson
- Charlie and Suzanne** by Jim Newcomb

In memory of beloved pets

- Guide Dog "Hydro"** by Patricia Schmidt
- Zoe Mitzel** by Dan Mitzel

In honor of:

- Gina Spragg** by Terry Spragg

Happy Birthday to:

- Michael Alexander** from Kavita & James Bhandary-Alexander
- Steve Salatti** from Beth Salatti ■

Important Membership Reminder

■ There are still openings on the NARP Council of Representatives in several states, including one each in Alabama; Arizona; Hawaii; Idaho; Indiana; Missouri; North Dakota; Ohio; Virginia and Wyoming. If you are interested in becoming more involved with NARP and advancing our goal of 'A Connected America,' please visit our website, www.narprail.org under 'About' to 'Leadership' to 'Council of Representatives' to 'Open Seats' for more information on applying and for a complete, up-to-date list of the positions available. ■



NARP's RailNation Chicago THE Rail Passenger Advocacy Event

- ✓ Thursday, November 2 to Sunday, November 5, 2017
- ✓ Four days packed with an exciting array of presentations, speakers, exhibits, tours, and events
- ✓ Highlighting the future of passenger rail in the United States and celebrating NARP's 50th Anniversary!
- ✓ Host Hotel: Millennium Knickerbocker - E. Walton Place at N. Michigan Ave.
- ✓ Event registration and discounted hotel reservations are now open! Visit the NARP website for more information. ■



Two Brightline trains sit ready for service.
(Photo Credit: All Aboard Florida)

WEB EXCLUSIVE! NARP Welcomes New Amtrak President and CEO

Amtrak hired former Delta CEO Richard Anderson as the railroad's new President and CEO. Anderson will replace current President and CEO Wick Moorman, who is stepping down at the end of the year, and will act as an adviser in 2018. Anderson began his new role July 12, and both he and Moorman will act as co-CEOs until the end of 2017.

In response to the news, NARP President and CEO Jim Mathews said, "NARP is very pleased Amtrak is making the sensible move of bringing in an executive with strong management

experience in a customer-service oriented transportation company. While Richard Anderson is not a 'railroader,' he is a transportation professional with leadership experience in a very complex environment. Wick Moorman has already put in place many innovations at Amtrak on the railroading and operations side, and with this foundation the task can now turn to addressing Amtrak's unique and complex challenges as a passenger carrier on a national network -- especially around getting the customer-service part of the equation right." ■

NARP Traveler's Advisory

❖ **Saluki Train 390 Departs Two Hours Earlier:** Due to track improvements being performed by Canadian National Railroad, Train 390 will depart all stations two hours earlier on weekdays only, from August 1 through August 18. The schedule for Train 390 will not change on Saturdays and Sundays.

❖ **Southwest Chief Trains 3 & 4: Train Connection Changes and Possible Delays** — The Southwest Chief Trains 3 and 4 may encounter delays along the route due to track reconstruction being performed between Lamy and Albuquerque, NM, and in southern Colorado. This work is expected to continue through approximately September 4. ■