

Passenger Rail Policies

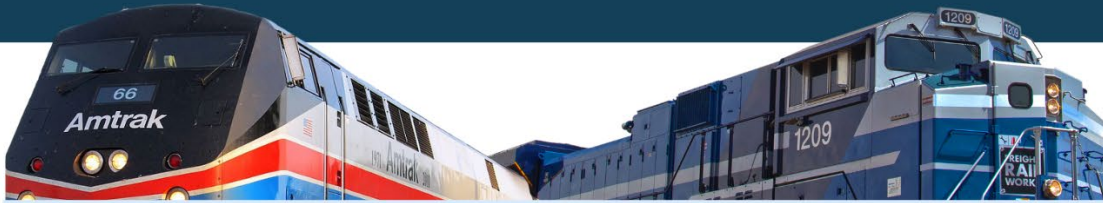
Key Takeaway: U.S. freight railroads provide the literal foundation for the overwhelming majority of intercity passenger service in America. Policymakers should ensure that the passenger rail service on corridors owned by freight railroads is done safely and does not impede freight rail service.

Other than the Northeast Corridor, [Amtrak](#) and state-supported route trains, as well as most commuter railroads, primarily operate on tracks owned by freight railroads. In addition, most of the higher-speed and intercity passenger rail projects under development nationwide plan to use freight-owned facilities. Host freight railroads follow these principles when considering proposals for new or additional commuter or passenger rail service:

- **Safety First:** [Railroads are a safe way](#) to move people and freight, and everyone involved in railroading wants to keep it that way. That is why safety has to come first when it comes to passenger or commuter trains sharing track or rights-of-way with freight trains.
- **Access & Capacity:** Passenger rail use of freight rail corridors should not compromise freight railroads' ability to serve present or future customers.
- **Full Compensation:** Freight railroads should be compensated for the use of their tracks and not be expected to subsidize commuter or passenger railroads.
- **No One-size Approach Fits All:** Each project involving passenger rail on freight-owned corridors has unique challenges and circumstances that should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Comparing Amtrak & Freight Railroads

Amtrak and freight railroads move the people and goods our nation depends on. Together these railroads reduce pollution, provide American jobs and promote local and regional economic development.



Primarily federally owned; connects large and small communities throughout nation



Privately owned; accounts for 40% of freight on a ton-mile basis.

More than 17,000 employees help move tens of millions of people annually



About 135,000 employees help move 1.6 billion tons of materials and goods annually

Over 21,000 miles of track, mostly owned by freight railroads



Nearly 140,000 mile private network

Tickets and state support covers most but not all operating costs



Average of \$23 billion privately invested back into the network

Will help meet expected 24% national population growth over next 40 years



Will help meet expected 30% increase in freight demand over next 20 years

A safe way to move passengers



The safest way to move freight over land

47% more energy efficient than traveling by car



3-4 times more fuel efficient than trucks, on average

Needs adequate funding for growth and maintenance



Needs ability to continue privately investing



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