

# ONERAIL COALITION

September 25, 2009



The Honorable John W. Olver  
Chairman  
House Committee on Appropriations  
Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development,  
and Related Agencies  
2358A Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Olver:

As Congress considers Transportation and Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations for Fiscal Year 2010, the OneRail Coalition urges that the maximum amounts be made available for railroad investment in the United States. Freight and passenger rail infrastructure improvements offer significant environmental, energy and mobility benefits, and will create good jobs for American workers particularly in states which have experienced losses in other sectors. Most importantly, the American public has expressed strong support for greater investment in our nation's rail networks.

## Increase Rail Infrastructure and Service Investments

We respectfully request that you fund proposed FY 2010 Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) grant programs at the following levels:

High Speed and Intercity Passenger Rail (including \$50 million for HSR R&D)	\$4.0 billion
Amtrak	\$1.84 billion
Rail Safety Technology Grants	\$100 million
Rail Line Relocation	\$40 million
National Infrastructure Investment Grants	\$1.1 billion

Funding the High-Speed and Intercity Passenger Rail account at the House-proposed level of \$4 billion can make the most dramatic difference in augmenting our nation's mobility options and realizing the potential of higher-speed rail sooner. A higher level of funding would demonstrate Congress's commitment to sustaining the President's vision for more robust and competitive U.S. intercity passenger rail networks, and support critical safety investments in our freight railroad network necessary for higher-speed passenger rail, including Positive Train Control.

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The authorized funding level for Amtrak is necessary to meet increased expectations and responsibilities for passenger rail service and address mandates in the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008. OneRail urges the conferees to adopt the full authorized amount for Amtrak for FY 2010.

Rail Safety Technology grants should be funded at not less than the Senate-proposed level of \$50 million and optimally at \$100 million reflecting the unfunded FY 2009 authorization to support the necessary installation of Positive Train Control. FRA's recent cost estimate of \$10 billion for industry-wide PTC deployment, far exceeding identified commensurate safety benefits, clearly demonstrates that significant additional public funding will be necessary to meet this Congressional mandate.

The Rail Line Relocation and Improvement program should receive appropriations at the House level of \$40 million to permit continued enhancement to the nation's rail network benefitting communities and increasing network utility.

## **Continue National Transportation Infrastructure Improvements**

OneRail urges the conferees to adopt the Senate recommendation of \$1.1 billion for national infrastructure investments to continue the transportation improvement goals of the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) program. The numerous and diverse applications submitted to USDOT for funding under this initiative demonstrate the potential of rail and intermodal projects, especially freight rail, to add capacity, increase safety, reduce environmental and emissions impact, and save energy. Additional funding of \$1.1 billion in the FY 2010 THUD appropriations measure would ensure that many of these worthwhile projects can be funded and completed.

## **Assure Eligibility for Rail of General Fund Investments**

OneRail finally asks that the conferees make rail passenger and freight infrastructure projects eligible expenditures to the degree that general fund revenues help maintain current federal surface transportation programs. Eligibility for freight and passenger rail infrastructure for general funds allocated through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, where a public interest benefit is demonstrated, provides sound precedent.

On behalf of our member organizations including American Public Transportation Association, Amtrak, American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association, Association of American Railroads, National Association of Railroad Passengers, National Railroad Construction & Maintenance Association, Natural Resources Defense Council, Railway Supply Institute, States for Passenger Rail Coalition, Surface Transportation Policy Partnership, and United Transportation Union, we urge the

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conferees to support the highest funding levels for rail infrastructure investment in the FY 2010 THUD appropriations measure.

Thank you for your consideration of our views.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anne Canby". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Anne P. Canby  
President  
Surface Transportation Policy Partnership  
on behalf of the OneRail Coalition