

Amtrak to Improve National Network with New Locomotives

(The following release was issued December 21, 2018 by Amtrak Media Relations. It is also available in the [Amtrak Media Center](#))

Siemens Mobility awarded \$850 million contract for 75 new Tier 4 locomotives and associated services

WASHINGTON – With demand for Amtrak service [at record levels](#), Amtrak will ac-

quire new mainline passenger diesel locomotives from Siemens Mobility to replace its aging National Network locomotive fleet. These initial 75 locomotives will be used principally for Amtrak's Long Distance train service, with options to purchase more, for use on some State Supported routes and for future growth.

"These new locomotives will offer increased reliability, more hauling power, improved safety features and lower emissions," said Amtrak President & CEO Richard Anderson.

"Siemens Mobility is honored and grateful to Amtrak for this opportunity to assist Amtrak in their mission to provide safe, world-class, environmentally conscious technology for their long-distance services," said Michael Cahill, president of Siemens Mobility's North America rolling stock business.

The new locomotives will offer the latest safety systems including Crash Energy Management and Positive Train Control. Capable of speeds up to 125 MPH, the locomotives will have 4,400 horsepower capable 16-cylinder Cummins QSK95 diesel engines with modern control systems and Alternating Current (AC) propulsion. The diesel engine will come equipped with the latest Tier 4 emissions technology, reducing nitrogen oxide by over 89 percent and particulate matter by 95 percent, and provide an average of 10 percent savings in diesel fuel consumption.

Delivery of the new locomotives will begin in **summer 2021**, with passenger service beginning in **fall 2021**. They will power trains used on the *Auto Train*, *California Zephyr*, *Capitol Limited*, *Cardinal*, *City of New Orleans*, *Coast Starlight*, *Crescent*, *Empire Builder*, *Lake Shore* (continued)



A Siemens Charger locomotive with Cummins engine. Photo courtesy of Siemens.

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(“Amtrak to Improve National Network...” continued from page 1) *Limited, Palmetto, Silver Meteor, Silver Star, Southwest Chief, Sunset Limited* and *Texas Eagle*. All locomotives are expected to be in service by 2024. Maintenance activities across the network will be supported by a supplemental multi-year Technical Support Spares Supply Agreement (TSSSA).

Amtrak is paying for the new locomotives through available funds and will comply with Buy American provisions. They will be built at Siemens Mobility’s rail manufacturing plant in Sacramento, California, a facility which uses solar power and employs more than 1,300 people.

Siemens Mobility has established a robust and diverse base of U.S. suppliers across the country to support the production of its current Charger diesel locomotives, including Cummins, which manufactures its engines in its Seymour, Indiana facility.

Siemens Mobility’s Charger locomotives are currently operating in several state-supported Amtrak routes in California, Illinois, Wisconsin, Missouri, Michigan, and Washington.

The new locomotives will primarily replace the aging Amtrak P40 and P42 locomotives, some of which have been in service for more than 25 years.

The new locomotives are part of Amtrak’s long-term planned series of improvements for fleet, infrastructure and stations. Other modern equipment includes new Acela trainsets arriving in 2021 and ongoing improvements continue at New York Penn Station and new construction at Moynihan Train Hall, in addition to expanded development of the major stations at Chicago, Washington, D.C., Baltimore and Philadelphia.

To view images of the new locomotives, please check out our gallery [here](#).

About Amtrak®

Amtrak offers a more comfortable and convenient travel experience with free Wi-Fi on most trains, plenty of leg room and no middle seat. With our state and commuter partners, we move people, the economy and the nation forward, carrying more than 30 million Amtrak customers for each of the past eight years. Amtrak operates more than 300 trains daily, connecting more than 500 destinations in 46 states, the District of Columbia and three Canadian Provinces, and reaches 400 additional destinations via connecting bus routes. Book travel, check train status, access your eTicket and more through the [Amtrak app](#). Learn more at [Amtrak.com](#).

Amtrak a “Failure”? Hardly. Here’s How We See It.

Written by [Stephen Gardner](#), Senior Executive Vice President, Amtrak, December 19, 2018



Stephen Gardner

Over the past eight months, *Railway Age* has published 31 op-eds about Amtrak—many more than it published on the freight railroad, railroad supply and transit industries combined. The majority focused on long-distance trains, which account for only 15% of Amtrak ridership, and their dining car food. Most of the others depicted Amtrak as a “failure” facing “the sword of Damocles,” to quote one op-ed author. They urged privatization of Amtrak’s operations and Northeast Corridor infrastructure, and “open access” to freight railroads’ lines for new passenger rail operators.

These op-eds ignored important facts that might surprise readers of *Railway Age*:

These op-eds ignored important facts that might surprise readers of *Railway Age*:

- Amtrak’s financial performance in fiscal year 2018 was the best in its 47-year history. Amtrak generated record revenues and has carried more than 30 million customers for each of the past seven years. Its \$168 million operating loss was its lowest ever, without adjustment for the more than 500% inflation since operations began in 1971, and a 53% reduction from just five years ago.
- Amtrak covered 95% of its operating costs from revenues last year. That’s a much higher cost recovery than any of the U.S. commuter rail services provided by the four “private sector” companies repeatedly touted as Amtrak replacements (two of which are actually owned by foreign countries). Amtrak’s cost recovery also far exceeds the 7% cost recovery reported during the first nine months of 2018 by the Miami – West Palm Beach Brightline/Virgin service that several op-eds cite as a model.
- Amtrak’s financial performance compares favorably to international railways that receive much higher levels of public funding. France’s national passenger railroad lost \$3.4 billion last year despite receiving \$16 billion in subsidies—more public funding in a single year than Amtrak has received in the past decade.

When Amtrak acquired the Northeast Corridor (NEC) from its private owner, the bankrupt Penn Central Railroad, revenues covered less than half of its operating costs. (cont’d)

(“Amtrak a ‘Failure’? Hardly...” continued from page 2) Last year, the NEC generated a \$526 million operating surplus for reinvestment in NEC assets.

The “privatization” schemes advocated in the op eds – giving subsidies to private operators to take over select Amtrak services, and soliciting bids for turning NEC infrastructure over to a private company—have been tried, in both the U.S. and internationally. They haven’t worked.

- A Midwestern state’s 2015 privatization of equipment and food service on an Amtrak state-supported route ended when the private service provider sought increased subsidies after only 17 months.
- Two Congressionally-mandated DOT solicitations for development of high-speed services on the NEC, and a FAST Act-required solicitation that offered large subsidies to entities willing to take over Amtrak long-distance routes, did not attract a single private sector proposal.

Great Britain embraced both privatization approaches advocated by the op-eds. It turned its rail infrastructure over to a newly formed private entity, but without the \$40 billion government “loan” that proponents of the similar AIRNet-21 proposal for the NEC are seeking. It also contracted-out passenger train operations to multiple operators. The infrastructure company quickly became insolvent, triggering renationalization and massive expenditures to repair unsafe tracks—a scenario no responsible person would want to risk for the NEC. Recent service failures by private operators have created a national crisis, leading many to advocate renationalization.

Despite limited funding, Amtrak is growing ridership, improving its financial performance and investing in its service. It is beginning to attract the public and private investment it needs to advance vital capital projects, such as the Gateway Program, which will replace and improve vital infrastructure to ultimately double rail capacity between New Jersey and New York Penn Station. Privatization proposals do not change the reality that providing the United States with the passenger rail system it needs requires adequate public funding.

In his 2012 book [Amtrak: Past, Present, Future](#), *Railway Age* Contributing Editor Frank Wilner chastised those who make “spiteful arguments against Amtrak subsidies” and advocate “piecemeal privatization” of Amtrak’s services. Instead, he said, Congress should give Amtrak “predictable multi-year funding” and “a clear and leading role in providing the nation with world class intercity passenger rail service.”

We couldn’t agree more.

Railway Age Editor’s Note: This is the first time since former Delta Airlines CEO Richard Anderson was appointed Amtrak President and CEO that Amtrak has responded with something to contribute—of its own accord (as is the case here), or if asked—to *Railway Age* commentaries or requests to participate in feature stories. Both Anderson and Gardner refused to be interviewed for Frank Wilner’s November issue cover story. We are pleased to see that the wall of silence—in our opinion, erected by Anderson, not Gardner—appears to be coming down. We hope the wall is dismantled completely. In any case, our purpose as an industry publication is to facilitate constructive dialogue and debate. We are glad that Amtrak has finally decided to participate. Let’s keep the dialogue going. — William C. Vantuono

All Aboard Indiana Editor’s Note: This article can also be found online [here](#). (This article courtesy of the author and *Railway Age*)

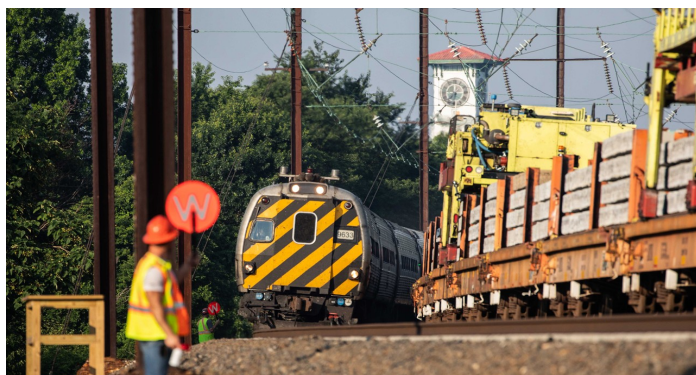
URPA Responds to Stephen Gardner

Written by [Andrew Selden](#), January 4, 2019

If Amtrak honestly accounted for all the costs of generating its revenues, and included the vast infrastructure costs of the NEC, its losses and “cost recovery” would have been far worse than Gardner’s assertion.

Amtrak Senior Executive Vice President Stephen Gardner’s response to *Railway Age*’s recent coverage of Amtrak encapsulates perfectly why Amtrak is such a rolling financial and commercial disaster. It also shows that Amtrak’s senior leadership is either deep in the well of self-delusion, or possibly intentionally misleading its various stakeholders.

[Gardner makes several assertions of a carefully selected subset of data points that support his thesis that all is well](#) (cont’d)



(*"URPA Responds to Stephen Gardner"* continued from page 3) [at Amtrak](#). These assertions, characteristic of recent Amtrak propaganda, omit more than they state, but even what they state is either false or misleading. These examples illustrate the problem:

Gardner disparages the long-distance trains because they account for only 15% of Amtrak's "ridership." He omits that they also produce the plurality of its output of passenger transport, substantially outperforming (last year and every year) the Northeast Corridor (NEC) and the regional corridors. Amtrak hides that output data because it collapses the myth that the NEC and the other short corridors are the company's strongest business segments. Ridership—simply the number of customers carried—tells us nothing useful about Amtrak's performance of its statutory mission to provide a *national network of intercity rail passenger services*. Only *revenue passenger-miles* measure the performance of that mission. Gardner ignores RPMs. Perhaps he fails to grasp their significance.

Gardner touts Amtrak's fabulous financial performance in FY 2018 (the best in its history, he says) using a concocted artificial metric, "adjusted operating results" (key word: "adjusted"), that omits two critical points: the vast annual costs of upkeep in the NEC—not accounted for in Gardner's claim—and Amtrak's dismal corporate financial results using real-world (GAAP) business accounting. In FY 2018, Amtrak lost more than \$868 million on \$3.2 billion in revenue. And even that dismal outcome would have been far worse had Amtrak not massaged its results by *deferring maintenance and purchasing*—the oldest game in railroading—by \$679 million, up a quarter of a billion dollars from the previous year.

If Amtrak honestly accounted for all the costs of generating its revenues, and included the vast infrastructure costs of the NEC, its losses and "cost recovery" would have been far worse than Gardner's assertion.

Gardner's biggest howler of all is the claim that the NEC produced a \$526 million "operating surplus" that was "reinvested in NEC assets." That is true only if, like Gardner, one fails to disclose and account for the billion dollars or more in annual fixed-asset costs in the NEC, *and* the additional half billion or more in budgeted and presumably necessary NEC maintenance that management deferred, because Amtrak's revenues plus subsidies were so far short of covering all of its actual costs. Gardner omits any disclosure that the NEC's \$25

billion so-called state of good repair deficit also just rose by another half billion dollars as a result of its poor financial results and the consequent deferrals.

Gardner coyly asserts that the recent effort by Indiana to free itself from Amtrak overcharging for operating the *Hoo-sier State* failed. He's a little vague on why that occurred, neglecting to mention Amtrak's actions that undermined it. Perhaps he never read Indiana's contracts with Iowa Pacific and Amtrak, which guaranteed IP's failure by promising Amtrak full recovery of its arbitrary and inflated "costs" of operating the train before IP was paid for its customer-facing contributions. No one could succeed under that arrangement. The wonder is not that IP withdrew, but that it lasted as long as it did.

Gardner also left out entirely some of the most important non-financial metrics of Amtrak's performance in 2018. Most vitally, its market share for intercity passenger transport, both in the NEC and nationally, already trivially small, fell again in FY 2018, as it has every year for decades.

Worse, Amtrak continued its obstinate failure to invest in new capacity in the long-distance segment, where trains are statistically nearly sold out and thus incapable of growth. This is the only segment that generates a real cash surplus (more than \$400 million in FY 2018) and therefore operates essentially free of federal or state subsidy. These trains soldier on despite Amtrak steadily stripping away their positive attributes, like dining cars, checked baggage, reliable connections and staffed stations.

The long-distance interregional trains are also the only segment that is even capable of either organic or scale growth, because it is the only segment where latent demand exceeds capacity. The low load factors in the NEC and other corridors, a constant for decades, show compellingly that those vacant seat-miles cannot be sold. If they could be, by now they would be and Amtrak surely would show much higher corridor load factors (small gains in load factors in FY 2018 instead reflect quiet reductions in train- and car-miles, not significant increases in passenger-miles).

Measured by actual financial results (not Amtrak-"adjusted" data), by financial returns on capital investment (which historically are negative in the NEC), and by social relevance measured by market share, Amtrak is a basket case propped up only by political interest in feeding (*cont'd*)

("URPA Responds to Stephen Gardner" continued from page 4)
billions in subsidy into NEC infrastructure.

It doesn't have to be that way. But as long as Amtrak allocates capital based on political inertia rather than financial returns, willfully fails to grow its largest and only commercially successful business segment, and engages in blatant self-deception through its use of inappropriate metrics and manufactured accounting as reflected in Stephen Gardner's arguments, it is doomed.

*Editor's Note: The acronym "URPA" stands for **United Rail Passenger Alliance**, a private research and policy development organization (basically a "think tank" for rail passenger issues). The author represents URPA. This article can also be found online [here](#). (This article courtesy of the author and **Railway Age**)*

Why Is Public Transit in the USA Crumbling?

(A sincere thank you to **Josh Kramer** and **Dan Nott** at **The Nib**)

The United States is falling way, way behind on funding public transit. And it's hurting us. Go online [here](#) and read this very good "story" which we at IPRA think is spot on!

Interpretation and Commentary: The Surface Transportation Board Publishes Decision on Nickel Plate Corridor

An Interpretation & Editorial Commentary by
Tod K Bassler, IPRA Board Member,
Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance

In December 2018, five days before Christmas Day, the **Surface Transportation Board (STB)** published their **Decision and Notice of Interim Trail Use (NITU)** for the 37.56-mile rail line between milepost [I-2.13] in Indianapolis, IN and milepost [I-39.69] in Tipton, IN (commonly referred to as the Nickel Plate Corridor). The full 13-page **Decision and NITU** document can be found online [here](#). You're welcome to read it, which is a very detailed legal document.

Here's an interpretation of this document after thoroughly reading it (just the highlights):

1. The STB's **Decision and NITU** document has an effective

date of **December 21, 2018**.

2. The 37.56-mile Corridor (a.k.a. Line) has approx. 11.87 miles in Indianapolis, approx. 5 miles in Fishers and approx. 4 miles in Noblesville.
3. Before being sold in 1995, the Corridor's owner was **Norfolk and Western Railway** and the operator was the **Indiana Rail Road Company**.
4. Since 1995, the Owners of the Corridor have been the cities of **Fishers & Noblesville** and **Hamilton County**. The city of **Indianapolis** is *not* an Owner.
5. In May 2018, the STB notified the Owners that they could pursue **railbanking**, which is a 1983 amendment to and is authorized through the **National Trails System Act** (a.k.a. **Trails Act**). Railbanking allows an out-of-service rail corridor to be used as a trail until a railroad needs the corridor again for rail service. This is what **interim** in NITU means.
6. If the Owners or trail sponsors have no intention to allow future reactivation of the Corridor for rail service, railbanking would not have been allowed (per the **Trails Act**).
7. A bona fide **third-party petitioner** can request that an NITU be cancelled so the corridor can be reactivated for rail service.
8. During 2018, a freight rail company tried to activate the Corridor for rail service but the STB denied that company's petition for a Preliminary Injunction and specified that there is no path to rail activation until after a trails use agreement has been reached between the Owners and trail sponsors.
9. The Owners were approached by parties saying that Indiana Law was violated but, being a national organization, the STB has no say regarding state or local law so their request to wait was denied by the STB.
10. The trail sponsors (a.k.a. Owners) are responsible for managing their respective sections of the Corridor, including legal liability (if applicable) and taxes.
11. All three NITUs were requested at separate times during the year 2018 and the STB granted them effective **December 21, 2018**.
12. If agreements for railbanking on each of the three segments of the Corridor are not reached by **June 19, 2019**, the Owner(s) **may** abandon that segment.

Here are some thoughts that come to mind:

1. Why did Indianapolis, where most of this Corridor is located, not become an Owner?
2. Starting in August 2018, Indianapolis (not an Owner) started legally participating with the Owners.
3. The Owners refer to "excursion train advocates", which is an incorrect interpretation of the issues (*continued*)



("STB Publishes Decision on Nickel Plate Corridor" continued from page 5) brought up regarding ownership, representation and authorization.

4. The role of Indianapolis (not an Owner) in this matter continues to be puzzling.
5. The input from residents in the communities where the Corridor is located are not being accurately represented by their elected officials.
6. Why did Indianapolis (not an Owner) and the Owners request **expedited** approval of the NITU request **only** for the segment of the Corridor in Indianapolis?
7. As long as Central Indiana continues to **not** have a regional transit authority, development may continue to be not in the best interest of Central Indiana as a region.
8. At this time Noblesville has no plans to develop their approx. four miles of this Corridor in year 2019 (Thanks to the reporting of **Samm Quinn** at the *Indianapolis Business Journal*.)
9. Also, Indianapolis has no plans at this time to develop their approx. 11.87 miles of the Corridor.
10. An article recently published in Indianapolis says that people who live next to the Corridor can sue the Federal Government for compensation for a trail that uses their land. They'll need it because the trail will most likely cause their property value to drop. See [here](#) for the article. (Thanks to **John Touhy** at the *Indianapolis Star*.)

On Facebook, the *private* **Save the Nickel Plate** group for volunteers and supporters has more information about the ongoing effort to establish a **[Rail + Trail]** along this corridor so people may someday travel around this part of Central Indiana more safely and less stressfully (than via automobile) as well as get some great exercise when the weather is nice!

Book Review: An Anti-Passenger-Rail Manifesto

By [David Peter Alan](#), Chair,
Lackawanna Coalition, November 13, 2018

It was a sunny Friday morning on the Colorado prairie. Amtrak Train #3, the *Southwest Chief*, was making good progress along the historic Santa Fe Raton Pass Route on track rated for either 60 or 79 mph along that part of the route, and this writer was aboard. Amtrak has proposed turning that portion of the route into an 11-hour bus ride; a sure-fire formula for killing it entirely. Surrounded by this pastoral battleground in the struggle to save our skeletal Amtrak long-distance train network, this writer set to task and began to peruse Randal's Rant.



"Romance of the Rails: Why the Passenger Trains We Love Are Not the Transportation We Need" By **Randal O'Toole**. Published by the Cato Institute. Reviewed by David Peter Alan.

It began seductively, with a cover sporting four photos that provided great eye candy for railfans: the *Burlington Zephyr* of the 1930s, a partial consist of the Great Northern's *Empire Builder* (1950s version, including four domes), a hostess in a dome car on the legendary *California Zephyr* (1949-1970) and a Peter Witt streetcar in the "rocket red" of the Toronto Transit Commission. The title, *Romance of the Rails*, was written in large, white script. This was the deceptively inviting cover of a railfan's odyssey into the magnificent past of passenger trains and transit, except for the disquieting subtitle: "Why the Passenger Trains We Love Are Not the Transportation We Need."

If it were not for that ominous subtitle, the cover would have been completely misleading. What followed is a 328-page diatribe that condemns all passenger transportation on rails, from the Amtrak that kept a few long-distance routes alive for the past 47 years, to the emerging light rail systems and streetcars that are returning to America's cities. According to Mr. O'Toole, trains and rail transit comprise only a corrupt, wasteful exercise in incompetent or malicious urban governance.

He has absolutely nothing positive to say about anything that runs on rails, and he claims that buses fill all of the nation's transit needs outside the New York area (at 261-62). He would tear up the tracks in Chicago, Boston, Philadelphia, San Francisco and a host of other cities, and replace them all with more roads for buses (at 264-65). He would spare the rails only in the New York megalopolis, with its uniquely high population density. This writer has written and spoken repeatedly of the problems that New Jersey Transit's customers face, but even that level of mobility is better than being thrown off the train and onto a bus, along with (continued)

("Book Review: An Anti-Passenger-Rail Manifesto" continued from page 6) thousands of other powerless riders.

Mr. O'Toole chronicles the decline of America's passenger trains and rail transit, sometimes in railfannish detail, but always with the assumption of inevitability (Chapters 5 through 9). He then takes his readers on a long journey through the corrupted halls of politics that have allegedly wasted the time, money and communities of powerless urban dwellers with the folly of sticking them onto trains, streetcars or other rail vehicles, and moving them slowly and inefficiently. His problem: subsidies for transit and Amtrak (Chapter 15). His solution: autonomous motor vehicles (at 323-25). He presents his auto-utopia as a sweeping generality, without considering the bumpy road on which it rides. When will such vehicles, like the one that killed a woman in Arizona earlier this year, be available to today's non-motorists, as well as motorists? When motorists can have them, would they surrender control of their vehicles, which would negate one of the primary selling points of the auto industry? When today's non-motorists eventually buy them, where could they be stored and used? Every vehicle takes up more room per person than a seat on a train or a streetcar. What would this scenario do to the urban environment and landscape? Would these additional vehicles exacerbate the effects of climate change?

He does not say. Instead, he repeatedly lambastes trains and transit as wasteful because they do not make a profit. That seems to be his only measure of success.

Mr. O'Toole does not claim to possess a degree in economics or business, so his opinions on the subject must be considered those of a lay person, no matter how many quotes he uses to support his assertions. Not every work that looks like scholarship is truly scholarship. Mr. O'Toole did not publish his opinions in a peer-reviewed journal or with a well-known publisher. The Cato Institute publishes his opinions because they agree with each other.

Transit is a public utility, like police or fire protection. At one time, fire insurance companies supported firefighters, who only fought fires on policyholders' property. They allowed other people's houses or buildings to burn to the ground. Is this the model that Mr. O'Toole deems appropriate for transportation?

Trains between cities and transit within cities are more than merely a matter of profit and loss. Good transit makes people want to live and work in or near cities. It liberates them from having to watch the road, so they can

enjoy their devices. It allows them to enjoy an urban environment without having to pay for or store an automobile. Rail transit brings people together and fosters community. Mr. O'Toole does not mention these or any other benefits of transit. It appears that, to him, they do not matter.

He ridicules Jane Jacobs and the "New Urbanism" that was inspired by her efforts (at 175-77). Her greatest accomplishment was to unite her fellow Manhattanites to prevent Robert Moses from building three highways that would have cut swaths through the land so wide that a map of Manhattan would look like it were sliced like a layer cake. Would Mr. O'Toole have preferred a New York like that? Presumably he would not care, since he lives about 3,000 miles away.

New York City climbed out of its financial morass of the 1970s and resumed its rightful place as our nation's cultural capital. Transit has kept the city moving for much of its history. Transit is keeping other cities moving, too: Dallas, Seattle, Portland, Denver, Salt Lake City and others. Even downtown Detroit is coming back with a construction boom almost comparable to New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina. There is a streetcar on Woodward Avenue again, for the first time since 1956. One of the slogans that the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) uses is "Transit Means Business." A new streetcar has brought plenty of business to downtown Kansas City, while Over-the-Rhine in Cincinnati is now a prime neighborhood, full of newly re-established activity and connected to downtown by a new streetcar. "OTR" used to be one of the city's most dangerous places, but local advocates say that the upgrades began in anticipation of the streetcar and accelerated after it was built.

It is not only corporate employment and money that keep a city going. So do tourists, and rail transit can be a strong tourist attraction. Mr. O'Toole would spare the New York subways, but the elevated trains on Chicago's Loop, the cable cars and streetcars of San Francisco, and the 1923-vintage streetcars on St. Charles Avenue in New Orleans attract tourists and locals alike. Yet, Mr. O'Toole derides these systems, even though they are fun to ride, bring business to their cities and help city residents get around.

Mr. O'Toole criticizes the "urbanist" view that cities are "monocentric" or "polycentric" as a remnant of the long-distant past (at 320-21). Yet, it was rail transit that moved people into and out of the central cores of our cities efficiently, and it is doing so again. He abhors *(continued)*

(*Book Review: An Anti-Passenger-Rail Manifesto* continued from page 7) “smart-growth corridors” and champions the “nanocentric city” (*Id.*); a concept that sounds much like suburban sprawl. Los Angeles took a major step toward his concept of “nanocentrism” in 1940, when it decentralized city functions; a move that began to disrupt the “smart-growth corridors” (the term did not exist then, but it describes the areas) along the Pacific Electric rail transit lines. It only took about 20 more years to kill the rail system entirely, and Los Angeles sank into a deep decline. When this writer first visited there in 1979, the buses were slow and unappealing, and downtown was deserted. Today, rail transit is back, and so are the people. The city had previously developed according to Mr. O’Toole’s vision, but abandoned it recently for something more successful.

Mr. O’Toole says: “Nearly everyone today has access to a car” (at 241). This appears to be his core assumption. It is untrue, and it is contemptuous. There are millions of Americans: seniors, persons with disabilities, persons who cannot afford an automobile, and others who choose to live a car-free lifestyle, who do NOT have “access to a car.” There are millions of us in that situation; perhaps as many as 20% of adult Americans, and increasing as we grow older. Mr. O’Toole would leave us with no mobility at all, except a few bus lines that private-sector corporations would consider sufficiently profitable. Otherwise, he would not permit us to venture further than we can walk.

Mr. O’Toole lives in Camp Sherman, a town of 233 (2010 census) in Jefferson County, Oregon. Madras, the county seat, has some demand-response transportation from Cascades East Transit on weekdays. Camp Sherman has none. Mr. O’Toole can deride transit all he wishes; he does not need it, or even have it. He can use his automobile to go everywhere, including to the airport. Yet, he never complains about the enormous federal and state subsidies to automobile transportation since 1919. He only vilifies the much-smaller subsidies per passenger-mile that go to public transportation, which he chooses to avoid and disparage.

Sadly, it appears that Mr. O’Toole is caught up in his own nostalgia. He loves his “Streamliner Memories” (although his name does not appear on the www.streamlinermemories.info web site). It is true that privately owned railroads ran the great streamliners of the past, but those same railroads killed them, too. I am four years older than Mr. O’Toole and have my own “streamliner memories.” There is a difference, though. He wants to relegate trains to the dustbin of history.

I and many others want to ride them now and in the future. We want to go places, and we want trains to take us there. We also want transit to take us around, once we get there. Whether we like it or not, the private sector gave up passenger trains and transit, and only the public sector has kept operating what few trains and what little transit we still have.

Mr. O’Toole’s ideas about trains, cities and transit may be governed by a similar sense of nostalgia. During the “Golden Age of the Streamliners,” Alfred P. Sloan and his followers were destroying rail transit in the cities, while private railroads were killing passenger trains. The preferred location was the transit-free suburb, the transportation was the automobile and nothing else, the oracle was the General Motors Institute, and the cities were on their way to becoming the “nanocentric” sprawl that he continues to praise—despite the recent decline in automobile use and migration to the cities, especially among young people. It appears that Mr. O’Toole’s nostalgia for the trains of the 1950s and 1960s mirrors a similar nostalgia for the transportation planning of the same era. He and other anti-transit warriors like Wendell Cox will continue to fight against anything on rails as long as they can draw breath, but we must bear in mind that Mr. Cox could not keep St. Louis’s Metrolink light rail out of Belleville, Ill., his home town. Mr. O’Toole cannot hold back the tide, either. People want trains and people want transit, and we will get them; if not now, then someday.

Mr. O’Toole may remember the Romance of the Rails, but time has passed him by.

David Peter Alan travels extensively on the entire Amtrak system, having averaged about 25,000 miles per year over the past two decades. He has also ridden most rail transit in the United States. Alan is Chair of the Lackawanna Coalition, an independent non-profit organization that advocates for better service on the Morris & Essex (M&E) and Montclair-Boonton rail lines operated by New Jersey Transit, as well as on connecting transportation. The Coalition, founded in 1979, is one of the



nation’s oldest rail advocacy organizations. In New Jersey, Alan is a long-time member and/or board member of the NJ Transit Senior Citizens and Disabled Residents Transportation Advisory Committee and Essex County Transportation Advisory Board. Nationally, he belongs to the Rail Users’ Network (RUN). Admitted to the New Jersey and (cont’d)

("Book Review: An Anti-Passenger-Rail Manifesto" continued from page 8) *New York Bars in 1981, he is a member of the U.S. Supreme Court Bar and a Registered Patent Attorney specializing in intellectual property and business law. Alan holds a B.S. in Biology from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (1970); M.S. in Management Science (M.B.A.) from M.I.T. Sloan School of Management (1971); M.Phil. from Columbia University (1976); and a J.D. from Rutgers Law School (1981).*

*Editor's Note: The article can also be found online [here](#). (This review courtesy of the author and **Railway Age**)*

Bullets from the Board

By **Steve Coxhead**, President,
Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance

The Board of the Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance (IPRA) did not meet in December 2018 but will meet this month in Indianapolis. Watch your email for the time and specific location. As 2018 ends, here are some thoughts for 2019.

- Indiana really needs the next State budget to include sup-

port for doubling the frequency of the **Hoosier State** passenger train. The state needs two trains, in each direction, each day instead of the current one train, in each direction, four days per week. As Indiana reviews the budget this for the **Hoosier State**, this is a good time to request for this enhancement! Please talk with your **State Representative** about this. The budget is finalized in four months in April 2019.

- Indiana needs the **Northern Indiana Passenger Rail Project** (linking Chicago with Columbus, Ohio, via Fort Wayne) to go forward. Talk with your **State Representative** about finding at least some state funding for this important project.
- IPRA will continue the dialogue with the **Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT)** concerning support for passenger rail in our State.
- An attempt will be made to explore the possibility of **updating Indianapolis Union Station** in connection with development of the adjacent Pan Am Plaza adding Indiana Convention Center space plus two Hilton-branded hotels.
- IPRA will reach out to the **Governor's staff** to initiate a dialogue at that level concerning more extensive support for passenger rail in our state.
- The possibility of an additional station at **Indianapolis International Airport** will be explored with the Airport, INDOT, IndyGo and Amtrak. Think what a multimodal air/train/transit station at **Indianapolis International Airport** would do to improve your transportation connectivity and options!
- Support will be given to the effort to repeal the **light rail ban** and to the creation of a **Regional Transit Authority** for Marion county and its "donut" counties.
- Support from IPRA for both rail and trail will continue in order to preserve the **Nickel Plate corridor** for transit.
- IPRA has reached out to the **Indiana Economic Development Corporation (IEDC)** to discuss the potential for collaboration.
- Greater use of social media, such as **Twitter** and **LinkedIn**, to spread our message will be seen over the coming year, in coordination with the existing **Facebook** page. Anyone interested in getting involved with this initiative should contact us via email [here](#).
- Along with an increased use of social media, the coming year will see a major clean up and modernization of the **IPRA website**. Content will be streamlined and made more relevant. Anyone interested in getting involved with this initiative should contact us via email [here](#).
- A more active outreach to **southern Indiana** will be seen in 2019 in an attempt to effectively articulate (*continued*)



Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance

The Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance is a not for profit organization of concerned citizens, working to bring modern, 21st Century passenger rail systems to Indiana. We believe such systems are one of the keys to Indiana's economic success in the new century.

Goals for Indiana:

- Improve the Chicago-Indianapolis-Louisville-Cincinnati corridor (The Hoosier State)
- Build the Chicago-Fort Wayne corridor
- Expand the NW Indiana South Shore commuter system
- Develop light rail commuter systems for Central Indiana

Modern transit systems are demanded by the work force now coming of age, and expected by 21st Century businesses considering locations for expansion.

Want more information?
Contact us at: info@indianahighspeedrail.org

("Bullets from the Board" continued from page 9) that area's needs and desires for modern passenger rail systems.

- We are planning an **IPRA Board Meeting in southern Indiana** near the end of March in either Seymour or Columbus. Stay tuned for further developments. There will also be something fun to do!

The next **IPRA Board Meeting** will be held on **Thursday, January 24, 2019 (i.e. the 4th Thursday)**. All IPRA members are welcome to attend!

What: **IPRA Board Meeting**

When: **Thursday, January 24, 2019, from noon to 2:00pm, Eastern (Indianapolis) Time**

Where: **Downtown offices of Faegre, Baker, Daniels LLP, 300 North Meridian Street, #2700, Indianapolis, 46204**

Food: **Sandwiches will be brought in so that we may have a working lunch**

Those planning to attend this Board meeting are requested to respond to the meeting announcement so that we may plan adequately.

Don't forget to include the *Hoosier State*, the *Cardinal* and other Amtrak services in your travel plans. Heavy ridership is the most important weapon we have in the fight to improve rail passenger service in Indiana.

Finally, please let us know about your conversations regarding passenger rail in Indiana by sending a message via email [here](#).

Riding the Rails

By **Tod K Bassler**, Editor – *All Aboard Indiana*,
Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance

HOOSIER STATE Update–

- The On-Time Performance (OTP) of the ***Hoosier State*** train for the most recent six months (with a 6-month average of **86%**) is:
 - July 2018 – 87%
 - August 2018 – 94%
 - September 2018 – 91%
 - October 2018 – 83%
 - November 2018 – 74%
 - December 2018 – 89%
- Ridership (up 8.6%) and revenue have been trending **up** every month since [start of fiscal year] July!
- Radio advertisements for the ***Hoosier State*** started in mid-November in Indianapolis & Lafayette.



EASILY EARN UP TO 50,000 POINTS

Only a few weeks left to earn 2X the points

[LEARN MORE](#)

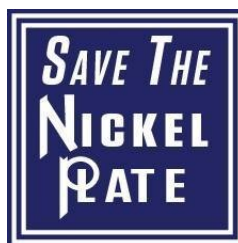
Now is the best time to join and support the Rail Passengers Association. As a new member, you can earn up to 50,000 Amtrak Guest Rewards® points—that's double the standard offer. Plus, members of any level will also receive a 10% discount on most Amtrak® rail fares. Learn more about the Rail Passengers Association and check out the [full list of benefits](#). Make sure to join now because this offer ends January 26, 2019.

Already a member? You can renew your membership [here](#).

- This information is courtesy of the **Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT)**.
- See INDOT's website [here](#) for more information.

NEW AMTRAK CHICAGO UNION STATION WEBSITE IS NOW LIVE—This brand-new website [here](#) is now active and is a very good Internet "window" to this Chicago jewel. Please have a look and we trust it will be informative and beneficial as you use this continually improving multimodal transportation center. (This news courtesy of **Amtrak Media Relations**)

SAVE HOOSIER TROLLEY HISTORY – The **Hoosier Heartland Trolley Company's** mission is to remove their historic collection of



railroad cars from the old [now closed] **Indiana Transportation Museum** grounds in Noblesville, IN. Please donate so they can recover these priceless vehicles. Go online [here](#) for more detail and to donate.

SEE [ROUND THE RIPPLE] AND FACEBOOK FOR UP TO DATE INFORMATION ABOUT THE NICKEL PLATE CORRIDOR – Go online [here](#) and read IPRA Board Member **Bill Malcolm's** updates on the continuing saga of the plans for the Nickel Plate rail corridor. You can read all articles online and while Bill has written much about this topic and this editor recommends that you read Bill's column in the Broad Ripple Gazette (*cont'd*)

("Riding the Rails" continued from page 10) Volume 15, Numbers 19 through 25 (current issue) in order. Anyone interested in the most recent and upcoming activities of **Save the Nickel Plate (StNP)** is encouraged to join the StNP email list online [here](#) and follow StNP on Facebook online [here](#).

INDIANAPOLIS-CHICAGO AMTRAK ROUTE IS BIKE FRIENDLY – Don't forget that bicycles are accepted between Indianapolis and Chicago aboard both the Amtrak *Hoosier State* and Amtrak *Cardinal* trains. Read this article online [here](#). (This news courtesy of **Amtrak Media Relations**)

NEWS RAILROAD FEES ATTRACT SCRUTINY – See the January 2nd issue of the Wall Street Journal for this interesting article about freight railroads wanting to improve their efficiency. To encourage quicker unloading of railcars, the freight railroads are decreasing the unload time before a fee kicks in and when it does, the fee is higher. The Surface Transportation Board (STB) is looking in to this practice. (This news by **Paul Ziobro** at *The Wall Street Journal*)

PARIS, KENTUCKY HISTORIC TRAIN DEPOT RENOVATION IS COMPLETE – The *Trackside Restaurant and Bourbon Bar* is now open in this quaint Victorian building, once a Louisville & Nashville Railroad depot. Their website is [here](#) and is still under construction but the restaurant is open for business! (This news thanks to **Don Yehle** and *USA Today*)

MOST RAIL SYSTEMS IN USA MISS PTC DEADLINE – Only 4 of the nation's 41 rail systems have met the December 31, 2018 deadline for implementation of **Positive Train Control (PTC)**. The other 37 systems, including Amtrak, have either applied for or been granted extensions. See online [here](#) for a full article. (This news thanks to **Gregory Wallace** at *CNN*)

BRIGHTLINE TO START BUILDING RAIL FROM SOUTH FLORIDA TO ORLANDO IN MARCH WHILE IT REBRANDS AS VIRGIN TRAINS USA – All you Brightline/Virgin Trains USA fans should read this very good article online [here](#). (This news courtesy of **Kevin Spear** at the *Orlando Sentinel*)

Discounts

Amtrak - The Rail Passengers Association (RPA) members **save 10%** online at www.amtrak.com if booked three or more days in advance. Select the **NARP** discount on Amtrak's website.

Rail Passengers Association (RPA) (a.k.a. NARP) members now have a benefit... **MemberDeals**. Current RPA members will find details on RPA's website. **If you're not an RPA member, this is a great time to join!**

STUDENTS CAN SAVE ON AMTRAK MIDWEST TRAVEL – If you're a traveling student, please go online [here](#) and learn how you can save money traveling on Amtrak!

Crowne Plaza Union Station in Indianapolis: Selecting Corporate ID = **6972** or calling 317-631-2221 and requesting the Amtrak rate will get you a King or two Doubles for **\$134 per night**. You can also request an historic train car room for **\$154 per night** (King or 2 Double beds). The cancellation policy is 48 hours and these rates will be available until December 31, 2019.

For More Information

All Aboard Indiana is a monthly publication of the Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance (IPRA), formerly the Indiana High Speed Rail Association (INHSR).

To learn more about IPRA, please visit on our website:
<https://www.indianahighspeedrail.org>

...or contact us at our mailing address:
Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance
125 West South Street, # 662
Indianapolis, IN 46206-0662

...or at email address: info@indianahighspeedrail.org

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Newsletter Publisher: **Shereen Vinke**

IPRA Membership

Membership can be purchased online at <https://www.indianahighspeedrail.org> or using this form:



Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance

A one-year membership in the **Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance** is only \$25 (Student) or \$30 (Member)

Join or renew at

<http://www.indianahighspeedrail.org/join.html>

Please mail check to: Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance, 125 West South Street, Unit 662, Indianapolis, Indiana 46206-0662

Name: _____

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City: _____

State: _____

Zip Code: _____

E-mail: _____