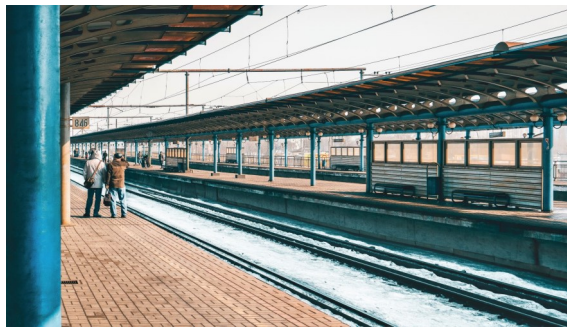


Lament for the *Hoosier State* train (and the *Hoosier State*)



By: **F. K. Plous**, Director of Communications, Corridor Rail Development LLC, Chicago, IL

Across the U.S. advocates for passenger-rail service are scratching their heads wondering why the State of Indiana is letting its sole intercity passenger train, the *Hoosier State*, die. The state has refused to include the train's annual \$3.5 million operating cost in the next budget, so Amtrak says it will discontinue the 196-mile Indianapolis-Chicago run after June 30.



Where is the *Hoosier State*?

The more knowledgeable rail advocates, of course, understand that the State of Indiana actually sentenced the *Hoosier State* to death many years earlier when it repeatedly refused to invest the money needed to make intercity passenger trains successful.

While neighboring Illinois and Michigan matched their own dollars with federal grants to upgrade their key main lines for 110-mph passenger service, Indiana neglected the *Hoosier State*'s track, signals and bridges to the point where the train's average speed is 39 miles per hour and the scheduled running time is five hours—two hours longer than driving on I-65.

Compare that with 1948, when the New York Central Railroad's James Whitcomb Riley stamped from Indianapolis to Chicago in 3 hours 30 minutes—behind a steam locomotive.

The news accounts rarely mention it, but the *Hoosier State* farrago is simply a private shame of the State of Indiana, which will not fund passenger trains even though it has a rail map with the potential to support a very strong and functional corridor service with a high potential to enhance the state's business growth.

Based on the performance of trains in 16 other states that support intercity passenger rail service, a modest investment by the State of Indiana could create something of a corridor-train showcase.

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The reason is Indiana's map, plus a prairie topography that favors straight, flat track and high speed. The capital and largest city, Indianapolis, is positioned almost at the exact center of the state on an inverted-Y-shaped rail network connecting Chicago with Indianapolis (196 miles) and then branching into two 100-mile routes connecting Indy with Cincinnati and Louisville, respectively.

If Indiana were to invest in infrastructure improvements raising the passenger-train speed limit on this simple hub-and-spoke network to 110 mph--as Illinois and Michigan already have done on the Chicago-St. Louis and Chicago-Detroit routes—all three spokes would be busy—think 10 trains a day between Chicago & Indianapolis, with five branching off to Louisville and five to Cincinnati. Although four states would be connected, the payoff for Indiana would be greater than for any of the other states because of some attributes unique to Indiana.

Purdue University, for example, with its enrollment of 41,000 (many of them living within walking distance of the depot), enables the city of Lafayette (pop. 73,000) to punch way above its weight class in generating rail travel. Purdue has a huge out-of-state and foreign-student population that relies on O'Hare Airport to get home, and a 110-mph corridor-train service could get these people up to Chicago in less than 90 minutes or to a station next to Indianapolis International Airport in about 30 minutes. But the State of Indiana doesn't care.

The city of Indianapolis also has a unique potential to benefit from passenger-train service not only because of its hub position on the 4-state rail network but also because of the geographic location of Indianapolis Union Station. Unlike most big "downtown" rail stations, which usually are situated in a sketchy border area separating the central business district from an older manufacturing/warehousing district, Indianapolis Union station actually is right in the heart of downtown (and a really nice downtown, with most of its classic WW I-era office and hotel buildings intact and restored).

A passenger alighting from a train in Indianapolis walks out the original main entrance into a charming little park and by walking two blocks to the right ends up in the heart of the central business and hotel district or by walking three blocks to the left is in the middle of the State House and government-offices complex. Business travel just got easy.

But it gets better. Just across the tracks to the west of the depot is the Lucas Oil Stadium, making Indianapolis the only city in North America where an out-of-town visitor can step off a train and walk right into an NFL stadium to watch a game. No taxis, Ubers, car rentals, shuttle buses or chartered motor coaches needed--just ride a train to the stadium, walk from the game to a bar or restaurant afterwards (you're in the heart of the hospitality district too), and then board a train home.

Or sleep in a nice hotel. Because in downtown Indianapolis all those amenities are in the same place.

Because of its central location and strong, compact downtown, Indianapolis should be the conference center of choice for businesses in the Lower Midwest. It's the ideal central point for meetings--for the day or for a multi-day function--for businesses in Chicago, Louisville, Cincinnati, Dayton, Columbus and even places as far away as Pittsburgh and St. Louis. But nobody in Indiana government cares, and even the city of Indianapolis seems not to sense this location's potential under a properly organized passenger-rail system.

Why do Indiana legislators and decision makers routinely overlook the commercial potential of a strong, Indy-centered passenger-rail network?

Some people say the state's disdain for trains has something to do with its love of its rural heritage. Indiana sees itself largely as a farm state and does not sense the potential of its one large city, much less the potential of passenger trains that meet there.

Critics also theorize that the anti-train attitude is a heritage of the Hoosier State's love affair with the auto industry. The northeast part of the state is particularly vested in automotive technology because of its adjacency to Detroit, which historically has sourced parts from Fort Wayne and surrounding communities. South Bend, Elkhart and Goshen are the capital of the RV and mobile-home industries, Fort Wayne cranks out Tokheim gas pumps and hundreds of smaller suppliers support these name-brand industries.

Looming even larger than today's auto industry is yesterday's. Hoosiers cherish their history, and the Indiana auto industry left them lots of it. Studebakers used to be made in South Bend, Indianapolis made Duesenbergs, Auburn made the Auburn and the Cord was built in

Connersville. Those cars don't survive, but their legends do. Switching from car travel to rail can seem so—*un-Hoosier*.

The railroads didn't do Indiana any favors either. While the car building industry and the federal highway program were catapulting Hoosiers into the automotive age, the railroads were largely ignoring the state, scheduling their fastest trains across Indiana in the middle of the night on their way from Chicago or St. Louis to New York, Philadelphia and Washington while ignoring the shorter local travel market. Fast, frequent daytime corridor trains scheduled for shorter trips of 100-400 miles were unknown. In fact, the word "corridor" itself had not yet been applied to busy travel routes, and the idea of a state deliberately organizing and sponsoring passenger trains to meet the needs of its own citizens and businesses was beyond even the most extravagant imagination.

Indiana needs to catch up with its neighbors and start organizing its own daytime corridor rail system connecting Indianapolis to its neighbors with fast, frequent daytime corridor trains suited to both business and discretionary travel.

But before it takes this step, Indiana decision makers need to re-examine their historic anti-passenger-train attitudes. Too many in state government and the business community seem to believe that trains are useful only for carrying the state's corn and soybeans to market. Too many still believe the **South Shore Line** is an invasive species good only for carrying Hoosiers to their jobs in Chicago. Too many continue to believe that the classic Richardsonian Romanesque Indianapolis Union Station has attained its highest and best use as a hotel and conference center with a bus station on its backside and the remains of its passenger facilities maintained only at the minimal level needed to shelter sleeping bums.

State officials in Indiana are proud of their "pro-business" attitudes and policies, but in fact the state's devotion to business growth can be summed up not so much in policies but an attitude: Low taxes. Strategically investing to attract business is not yet part of the state's growth strategy. Once Indiana realizes investment is as important as attitude, an investment in passenger rail will follow.

IPRA Press Conference at Indiana Statehouse

By: Steven Coxhead, President, Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance

The Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance will hold a press conference on **Wednesday, April 17, 2019 at 4:00 PM** at the Indiana State House to decry the loss of daily passenger rail service from Indianapolis to Chicago.

Speakers invited include elected leaders (including Senator Alting, Representative Negele, Representative Campbell, Representative Kirchhofer and Beech Grove Mayor Buckley), the Indy Chamber, employees at Amtrak Beech Grove shops, and rail and transit advocates.

Since 1850, Indianapolis has had daily passenger rail service to Chicago. Indeed, in 1958 there were 3 companies operating 8 trains per day round trip.

Currently the state funded **Hoosier State** Amtrak line will cease on July 1, 2019 absent a continuation of state support. The four day a week train services Crawfordsville, Lafayette, Rensselaer and Dyer between Indianapolis and Chicago. (The 3 day a week Cardinal service which is funded by Amtrak is unaffected.)

"I-65 is a mess. Hoosiers need an alternative. Ditto for flying to O'Hare," said rail advocate Bill Malcolm.

"We urge the Indiana Legislature to restore funding for the train," continued Doug Yerkson, Board member of the Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance.

The Union Station Terminal at 350 S. Illinois is just steps to Lucas Oil Stadium, the Convention Center, hotels, and museums. Rail service is a hidden gem that the state and City need to embrace. It is also near the soon to be renovated Pan Am Plaza.

"Certainly a state that can subsidize a Delta flight to Paris and \$850 million for a basketball team can support passenger rail," continued Malcolm. The state also subsidized the United nonstop flight to San Francisco recently. Think how many more Hoosiers travel to Chicago—not to mention the Chicago visitors to Indy.

The move is a last minute plea for lawmakers to restore train

funding in the state budget as they have the past 2 budget sessions.

For further information, contact the Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance, at info@indianahighspeedrail.org.

Transit Day at the Statehouse

By: **Phillip Streby**, Treasurer, Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance & **Indiana Citizens' Alliance for Transit** (ICAT)

Three members of the Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance (IPRA) joined other representatives from various transit agencies around the State at Transit Day at the Indiana Statehouse on Tuesday, March 26, 2019. The event beginning at 9:30 AM was well attended by both the public as well as local and state government.



Presented by the Indiana Citizen's Alliance for Transit (ICAT) and partners, **Transit Day at the Statehouse** is the one day during the Indiana General Assembly session dedicated entirely to transit education and advocacy. Constituents from across the state, including riders, community partners, and transit providers, meet with their state elected officials to share information and build support for sustainable and dedicated transit funding for our Indiana cities and towns.



Kim Irwin, Executive Director, Health by Design, speaking at Transit Day at the Statehouse

ICAT educates on the benefits of transit and advocates for the immediate development and ongoing support of comprehensive transit options in communities across Indiana.

Throughout the 2015 General Assembly session, ICAT coordinated business leaders, community partners, and taxpayers from across the state to ask elected officials to increase state funding for transit to \$50 million in the biennial budget as part of its **INvest INtransit** campaign.

The **Public Mass Transportation Fund (PMTF)** is the formula mechanism that is used to fund all of Indiana's 65 public transit systems. For decades, PMTF was indexed to the state sales and use tax. However, in the closing hours of the 2011 General Assembly session, it was detached from that source and flat-lined at the prior budget amount, \$42.5 million – and it has remained at that level since then.

Had PMTF remained indexed to the state sales tax and grown at its average annualized rate since its inception, it would stand at nearly \$60 million today.

It's important to note that, while transit funding has remained stagnant, transit use has not. Transit ridership across the state was up 15 percent from 2004 to 2013, and many believe it could have grown more with sufficient funding.

Additional investment will connect more Hoosiers to jobs, school and medical care and spur additional business for more than 60 Indiana-based companies that manufacture, supply and distribute transit-related parts and services.

To put it succinctly, transit has not been allowed to keep pace with demand and economic opportunity across Indiana.

At the end of the 2015 General Assembly session, fiscal leadership came to an agreement to fund PMTF at \$43 million for Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 and at \$44 million for FY 2017. While this year's budget allocation is an improvement, a \$1.5 million increase divided amongst 65 transit agencies will not make any significant changes to transit service in our communities.

Again and again, transit advocates are told by legislators that transit is not an important issue to them because they don't ever hear about it from their constituents! Even though there are numerous organizations across the state advocating for transit development, legislators need to hear from voters, taxpayers & transit riders – not just interest groups. Go online at <http://www.iga.in.gov/legislative/find-legislators> to find names, phone numbers and emails for your state legislators. Download and use

[these talking points](#) and also see at <https://www.apta.com/mediacenter/ptbenefits/Pages/default.aspx> about the **Benefits of Transit**. Contact your elected officials and tell them we need improved transit in Indiana! Taking just a few minutes to contact your elected officials can make a tremendous impact on our issue!

IPRA Board Member **Fred Lanahan** & Northern Indiana Passenger Rail Association (NIPRA) Corporate Secretary **Curt Sylvester** were able to speak with several State Reps and Senators in support of passenger rail and public transit. NIPRA also had a table and information on passenger rail at Transit Day. We made an impact with legislators concerning passenger rail in Indiana. Fort Wayne Citilink Bus service for Fort Wayne and New Haven sent a small bus down to Indianapolis providing several of us passenger rail and transit supporters a fun ride to Transit Day.

Congress Hears from Hoosiers, Others about Need to Fund Passenger Rail

By: **Donald Yehle**, Board Member, Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance and **Phillip Streby**, Treasurer, Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance

Members of the **Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance (IPRA)** joined fellow **Rail Passenger Association (RPA)** passenger rail advocates from around the nation in Washington D.C. on Tuesday, April 2, 2019 at the **Rail Nation DC—2019 Advocacy Summit, Day on the Hill & Congressional Reception** to ask Congress for “**predictable, dedicated, and robust funding**” in support of the nation’s passenger rail network, which serves 31.7 million riders.

Given the dramatic rise in host railroad interference and passenger delays, RPA is (also) asking Congress to grant Amtrak a “**Private Right of Action**” to enforce dispatching preference.

The following six IPRA members participated in getting out these **important messages**. They are:

- ◆ Duane Chatten, Vincennes
- ◆ Andrea Ditto, Terre Haute
- ◆ Mike Ditto, Terre Haute
- ◆ Philip Streby, Peru
- ◆ Tod K Bassler, Indianapolis
- ◆ Don Yehle, Bluffton, SC

In total, more than 130 RPA members scheduled in excess of 275 appointments with U.S. Senators, U.S. Congressmen, and/or their staffs to make the case “to continue funding rail transportation at or above the levels provided in the Fiscal Year 2019 Appropriations bill.”



L to R: **Mike & Andrea Ditto, Tod Bassler, Duane Chatten, Congressman Larry Bucshon, Phil Streby**

Indiana’s congressional delegation was among those to hear of the “ask” in support of both rail and transit. Nine House members and two U.S. Senators represent Indiana in Congress. (This ask is separate and distinct from monies needed to fund the **Hoosier State** – a State of Indiana-supported passenger train.)

Here are the main points “in the ask,” delivered to members of Congress representing Indiana:

- ◆ A fully funded and implemented passenger rail program created by the **Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act**, and voted on by Congress and signed into law December 2015.
- ◆ Pass a multi-modal infrastructure bill that addresses the deficit in transportation investment (especially passenger rail).
- ◆ Fund new equipment purchases putting Americans to work manufacturing the train cars desperately needed to keep and improve our passenger rail system.
- ◆ Enforce the law requiring host railroads provide passenger trains on-time performance (OTP), and grant Amtrak private right-of-action. By law, Amtrak is required to receive priority over freight trains when operating on freight railroad tracks, though enforcement



Spring in Washington—Cherry Blossoms!

has proven difficult. Private right-of-action would allow Amtrak to take legal action against host railroads including CSX.

Indiana's U.S. Senators, Congressmen, and their staffs were also told investment in passenger rail will be repaid, not by the trains themselves, but by the private investment around stations that follows public investment in those stations which brings cities and towns together to form economic areas and regions.

One example of this return on investment is found in the WSP/Parsons-Brinckerhoff study commissioned by **OrthoWorx** of Warsaw, Indiana. Totaling the potential economic impacts of passenger rail, including the value represented by time savings, productivity increases and additional economic activity in the region, the [OrthoWorx study](#) found the potential for a total impact to the region over 20 years of as much as approximately \$160 million.

Another example is the \$2 billion in private real estate development around the new Cincinnati streetcar system which opened last September. We need, and can have, this kind of investment right here in Indiana cities, IPRA's six RPA members told Congress.

Below, are links to some of the information shared in Washington, D.C. The information is also available on the [Rail Passengers Association \(RPA\)](#) website.

- ◆ [Fiscal Year 2020 Legislative Ask](#): A one-page summary of RPA's discussion points.
- ◆ [Surface Transportation Reauthorization One-Pager](#): A simple outline of Rail Passengers' policy priorities for the FAST Act replacement.
- ◆ [Map of Underinvestment](#): What does half a century of under-investment in passenger rail look like?
- ◆ [2017 Economic Benefits](#): Calculating economic benefits of investment in passenger rail.
- ◆ [Long Distance Trains](#): Why a national network of passenger rail is needed, and, Long Distance Trains - A Foundation for National Mobility: fact sheet detailing the economic and mobility benefits of Amtrak's national network.
- ◆ [Manufacturing Benefits of Railcar Investment](#): Illustrating the manufacturing supply chain and job

creation supported by investment in railcars.

- ◆ [Rural Mobility](#): Connecting Millions with Appropriate Access to Public Transit.
- ◆ [Ridership Statistics](#): Select States, Stations, Business Lines, Routes & Congressional Districts for details Amtrak statistics.

When RPA members from as far away as Alaska and Hawaii were not on Capitol Hill, they were at the host hotel networking and learning! These individuals, some with family members, came together from Sunday, March 31st to Thursday April 4th to discuss strategy and to plan for the Day-on-the-Hill meetings with Congress about the importance of passenger rail to this country's economic vitality.

Sunday's Board of Director's meeting was open to all attendees, with some venturing comment or question. Participation was a welcome addition as always. Monday consisted of a full day of speakers including some of our own members voicing advocacy strategies that work for them. During lunch, Amtrak's Executive Vice-President & Chief Safety Officer, **Kenneth Hylander**, a relatively new person with Amtrak spoke about the safety culture at work at Amtrak, especially following the recent tragic accidents which claimed the lives of two of our own. A big concern is how to get the employees to report safety issues or violation without creating a situation in which (1) they can do so without reprisal from the company, and (2) Amtrak doesn't create a situation whereby an employee can deliberately violate safety rules without fear of disciplinary action. Currently, managers discipline first, and ask question later, so to speak, but true. Phil knows, since he was both an employee and a union representative. "I often had to fight on two sides of the fence, while representing a co-worker."

RPA's Abe Zumwalt and CEO Jim Mathews presented on "How American Long Distance Trains Make Money" quantifying the economic benefits of passenger rail. Kudos to Abe!

The next panel provided an eye-opening look at the Province of Ontario's spending for transit: a whopping **\$30 billion Canadian!** Could we even dream of that occurring in the States?! Later that afternoon we heard from two staffers about the transportation agenda for the 116th Congress, and a transportation specialist on **"How to Sell Trains to Your Member of Congress"**. Sean Jeans-Gail reviewed our official RPA ASK for our meetings.

Monday's summit wrapped at 4:30, but for the next two hours a meeting of the Routes and Schedules Committee, headed by Steve Musen and Al Papp, and a discussion of Re-Authorization led by Carl Fowler ensued.

Carl Fowler later presented a well-attended Switzerland Rail Journeys video tour with donations benefiting the Jim Hamre Memorial Scholarship Fund. Jim was one of our fallen comrades who was on the inaugural Cascades run which overturned on a curve on December 18, 2017 on the Point Defiance Bypass, a new passenger rail route south of Tacoma, Washington. A number of automobiles on southbound I-5 were crushed and three people on board the train died.

Tuesday we all got to work and spent the day on Capitol Hill (as detailed earlier in this article). That evening a catered Congressional Reception was held during which time presentations were made to those Congressmen who took up the fight to save the *Southwest Chief*.

Wednesday was devoted to Council business and Resolutions, but we also heard an excellent presentation from Fritz Plous on how the national highway system (and air transport) came to be, and how our fight for rail comes down to finding those proponents in our Federal and State governments who are willing to act in our behalf to make the same things happen to create the visionary rail passenger system future generations may enjoy.

Growing the Vitality in the Midwest is reason enough to Save the *Hoosier State* Train

By: Phillip Streby, Treasurer, Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance

The Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance (IPRA) is made up of members from all around Indiana and a few from outside of the State. Our common goal is to see a robust public transportation system connecting Indiana cities and towns both within and outside the state. The Midwest is one of the economic regions in this country, and needs a vital and balanced system of roads, airports, waterways, and railroads (including passenger trains) if it is to grow and prosper. Younger generations are moving to where good public transportation exists, and right now, Indiana is not attracting that talent. Corporations also look at public transportation when evaluating locations for their companies. Additionally, they look at talent available for hire. Again, Indiana is losing

that challenge. A huge portion of Purdue University graduates look outside Indiana for job opportunities.

The latest example of corporate bypassing Indiana occurred when Amazon saw not only the poor public transit, but also the state law forbidding the use of tax dollars to build light rail systems. These are the considerations that business look at. Are the prospective employees available for hire and training, and can they get to work? Amazon moved on.

Upon learning that the train is to be discontinued July 1st if State of Indiana funding does not recur in the next budget cycle, the IPRA Board met to discuss strategy. An on-line petition* is being circulated, and flyers are being distributed both off and on board the *Hoosier State* train. And that brings up the question in the title. We've had conversations with Amtrak Public Affairs officials; Amtrak continues to work with the Governor's office as well as with State Representatives.

*As of April 16th, the online petition now has **654 signatures**! If you haven't already, please video the great video and sign the petition at <https://www.midwesthsr.org/indiana>.

But, where is the consideration of what the train brings to our communities. It isn't just the fare box which pays back the investment in passenger rail, but the economic vitality and growth spurred by having the train. The Federal [Department of Transportation] government's own algorithms estimates that the return on investment for passenger rail is \$3 for every \$1 spent. From that I conclude that the *Hoosier State* train, while not fully recovering the \$3.5 M annual expenditure according to the state accountants, are overlooking the \$10.5 million dollars the train brings to the economies of the local communities en route.

The Indiana Government Legislators don't seem to have that same issue when looking at the money spent on the state's highway system, which, by the way, is far more. Don't get me wrong. I like the new highways, but I'm pretty certain that my gas taxes don't pay the full fare to use them. How about the money spent funding and promoting the direct Indianapolis to Paris Delta Airlines route? I am sure that promoting this tourist & business route is important, but, how many Hoosiers does this really affect? Why is the train always singled out for budget cutting purposes.

Since 1850, Indianapolis has had daily passenger rail service to Chicago. At one time there were over 70 daily trains operating out of Indianapolis Union Station. Indeed, as late as 1958 there were still three railroad companies each operating 8 trains per day round trip. The Indianapolis Union Station at 350 S. Illinois is just steps to Lucas Oil Stadium, the Convention Center, hotels, and museums. Rail service is a hidden gem that the State and City need to embrace. It is also near the soon to be renovated Pan Am Plaza.

Currently the state funded *Hoosier State* Amtrak line will cease on July 1, 2019 absent a continuation of state support. This four day a week train services Crawfordsville, Lafayette, Rensselaer and Dyer between Indianapolis and Chicago. The 3 day a week Cardinal service which is Federally funded Amtrak is unaffected.

"I-65 is a mess. Hoosiers need an alternative. Ditto for flying to O'Hare," said rail advocate Bill Malcolm. "We urge the Indiana Legislature to restore funding for the train," continued Doug Yerkeson, Board member of the Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance. "Certainly a state that can subsidize a Delta flight to Paris and \$850 million for a basketball team can support passenger rail," continued Malcolm. The State also recently subsidized the United nonstop flight to San Francisco. Think how many more Hoosiers travel to Chicago—not to mention the Chicago visitors to Indy.

This route should, instead, be developed into a true corridor with faster speeds, multiple daily schedules, improved connections to other major (and minor) cities within our region, pleasant and safe stations, and improved services such as checked baggage. Ridership will follow.

Bullets from the Board

By: Steve Coxhead, President, Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance

The Board of the Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance (IPRA) met on Saturday, 4/6/19, at the downtown offices of Faegre, Baker, Daniels, in Indianapolis. The meeting was called to order at twelve minutes after noon, and adjourned at 2:18 pm.

- ◆ The Board normally meets on the 4th Thursday of the month, on odd numbered months, with exceptions being made as necessary. The next meeting is tentatively

planned for May 23rd. Subsequent meetings are planned for July 25th, September 26th, and November 21st (week before Thanksgiving).

- ◆ Long time Board member, Bill Malcolm, has announced his intention to step down from the Board as of the end of 2019, as his work responsibilities are consuming an increasing amount of time and attention. His contributions to the Board will be missed!
- ◆ This month's meeting was devoted to discussions concerning the lack of funding for the *Hoosier State* passenger train and our response to that situation.
- ◆ Amtrak is reaching out to various stakeholders, and to various governmental levels, in an attempt to persuade our General Assembly to restore *Hoosier State* funding to the budget.
- ◆ The elimination of funding was a political decision made by the Governor. His party controls both House and Senate, and so members are reluctant to break party discipline by openly opposing the Governor on this issue. However, politicians (including the Governor) want to get re-elected. The best hope of changing peoples' minds, and restoring funding is for the greatest number of ordinary voters to tell the Governor and legislature members that dropping *Hoosier State* funding is a very bad idea. If enough letters and calls come in, sometimes minds are changed. IPRA is embarking upon a multi-pronged approach to encourage voters to do just that. We are employing both traditional and modern media in the campaign.
- ◆ Our message must not be limited to preserving the *Hoosier State* in its present form. In order to be a valuable economic asset, and pay its own way, the service *must* be improved. At least three (3) trains each way, each day, with modern on board amenities is what is minimally required. The message must be to fund the train at a level that allows it to reach its' potential. So, first preserve, and then improve.
- ◆ There was also some discussion of alternatives to state funding. Federal funds could, conceivably, be available from a number of programs. IPRA will investigate possibilities in that regard. It is also not impossible that private rail operators could be interested in providing service in the *Hoosier State* corridor. That approach will also be investigated.
- ◆ The budget bill is now in the Indiana Senate. The budget

will be passed, and the General Assembly adjourned by the end of April. If **Hoosier State** funding is not restored to the budget by that time, the train will be discontinued starting July 1, 2019.

- ◆ Time is of the essence! Please contact your state Senator (particularly if he is a Republican). Contact the Governor's office. And if you know your county Republican Party chairman, it would not hurt to reach out to them. **Now is the time for action!**
- ◆ 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](#).

The next IPRA Board meeting will be held on Thursday, May 23, 2019. All IPRA members are welcome to attend!

What: IPRA Board Meeting

When: Thursday, May 23, 2019 from 12:00 noon to 2:00 PM Eastern Daylight Time

Where: TBD

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. **Please watch your e-mail for more details as this meeting's date approaches.**

For your plans, future IRPA Board Meetings are scheduled for these year 2019 Thursdays: July 25th, September 26th & November 21st.

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 talk with your State Representative about Indiana's commitment to modern, 21st Century transportation systems. They do listen. Also, 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 Passenger Train Update–



⇒ The On-Time Performance (OTP) of the **Hoosier State** train for the most recent six months (with a 6-month average of **83%**) is:

- October 2018 – 83%
- November 2018 – 74%
- December 2018 – 89%
- January 2019 – 88%
- February 2019 – 77%
- March 2019 – 86%

⇒ This information is courtesy of the **Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT)**.

See INDOT's website [here](#) for more information.

INDOT SEEKS PUBLIC COMMENT ON [STATEWIDE TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM \(STIP\)](#) – INDOT is hosting 12 public open houses this spring from March 27th to May 16th to solicit input regarding STIP. **Please attend one of the meetings and ask for improved passenger rail in Indiana!** For details, go online to: <https://calendar.in.gov/site/indot/event/indot-hosting-public-open-houses-regarding-the-statewide-transportation-improvement-program-stip/>

PLEASE VIEW THE VIDEO & SIGN THE PETITION TO SAVE THE HOOSIER STATE TRAIN – Demetrius Villa of the American Rail Club has produced a fantastic video on YouTube about the state of passenger rail in Indiana. This video is a **MUST SEE!** Ensure that you also sign the **petition** (now at least 646 signatures). Please go online to <https://www.midwesthsr.org/indiana> and do your part.

AMTRAK'S HOOSIER STATE IGNORED BY SENATE TOO – Read this April 16, 2019 article online at <https://www.jconline.com/story/news/2019/04/16/amtraks-hoosier-state-ignored-senate-too-prospects-fade-save-line/3482102002/>. It's not done yet. Simply put, if the State invests in the service, it has no where to go but up. (This article thanks to **Dave Bangert** at the *Lafayette Journal & Courier*)

CANCELLING THE CENTRAL INDIANA LIGHT RAIL BAN IS NOW WITH THE INDIANA SENATE – The Indiana House Bill **HB-1365** passed in February with voting [89 yes, 5 no]. This bill is now with the Indiana Senate for consideration. Please contact your Indiana **Senator** and ask him/her to vote **yes!**

MIDWEST HIGH SPEED RAIL ANNUAL MEETING 2019 WAS AN EXCELLENT DAY IN CHICAGO – On March 23, 2019, Maggiano's Little Italy in Chicago's River North was the place to be if you were interested in passenger rail. Go online to <https://www.midwesthsr.org/annual-meeting-2019> and view the agenda. While many good speakers focused on projects in Chicago and Illinois, we also learned of a high speed rail commission being proposed for the State of Washington and an update on the *Hoosier State* situation. An absolute highlight was **American Rail Club Demetrius Villa's** superb presentation about *Millennials and the future of transit*. See a recording of his presentation on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BS6SiDkciPI>.

VIRGIN TRAINS USA RECEIVES APPROVAL TO RAISE \$US 950 MILLION DEBT – After Virgin Trains USA cancelled its planned IPO, this is the preferred plan! See the article at <https://www.railjournal.com/financial/virgin-trains-usa-receives-approval-to-raise-us-950m-debt/>. (This news thanks to the *International Railway Journal*)

SPECIAL PRIVATE CAR TRIP FROM CHICAGO TO CARBONDALE, IL ON JUNE 8, 2019 – This is a treat for the rail enthusiast who is celebrating, maybe, a birthday! Go online to <https://shoutout.wix.com/so/83MdRRhNI?cid=7c53f3cd-99f5-4ca6-84e3-4391c90fc5b3#/main> for

details. Act soon before you lose out! (This news courtesy of *Midwest Rail Rangers*)

VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS (VRE) NOW RUNNING ALL TRAINS UNDER PTC – Read this short feel-good article about a great win for VRE, who must coordinate with **two** host railroad. Find this story online at <https://www.progressiverailroading.com/ptc/news/Virginia-Railway-Express-now-running-all-trains-under-PTC--57336>. (This news thanks to the *Progressive Railroading*)

MUSK O'HARE EXPRESS PROJECT IS LIKELY DEAD – Now that Lori Lightfoot will be Chicago's next mayor, read this article at <https://www.chicagotribune.com/news/local/breaking/ct-biz-chicago-mayor-transportation-preckwinkle-lightfoot-20190227-story.html> where Lightfoot called the plan "a fiction". (This news thanks to the *Chicago Tribune*)

INDYGO TO FINISH CONSTRUCTION OF RED LINE BRT IN INDIANAPOLIS BY END OF SUMMER – The completion of construction for the IndyGo Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Red Line between University of Indianapolis and Broad Ripple via downtown has been moved up 4 months. This will reduce the

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

"time window" of negative impact of construction on people and allow this much anticipated service to start sooner!

PLEASE SIGN THE ILLINOIS FAST TRACK PETITION –

Passenger Rail improvements in Illinois will also benefit Indiana (embarrassment is a great motivator). Please go online to <https://www.midwesthsr.org/pritzker-petition> and tell Illinois Governor Pritzker and members of the Illinois General Assembly that you want to see modern rail transportation in Illinois. (This request courtesy of *Midwest High Speed Rail Association*).

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 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 travelling on Amtrak!

YOUR KIDS GET A 50% DISCOUNT WHEN TRAVELING

WITH YOU – Please go online [here](#) and learn how you can save money when travelling with your children on Amtrak!

Crowne Plaza Union Station in **Indianapolis**: Selecting Corporate ID = **6972** will give you the Amtrak rate of **\$134 per night** (King or two Double beds). 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. You can also call the hotel directly at 317-631-2221 and ask for the Amtrak rate.

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:

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IPRA Membership Form

Membership, **which has recently been reduced by \$5 per year**, can be purchased online at:

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

You are also welcome to print and mail this form:

 <p>Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance</p> <p>A one-year membership in the Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance is only \$15 (Student/Senior 65+) or \$25 (Member)</p> <p>Join or renew at http://www.indianahighspeedrail.org/join.html</p> <p>Please mail check to: Indiana Passenger Rail Alliance, 125 West South Street, Unit 662, Indianapolis, Indiana 46206-0662</p>	<p>Name: _____</p> <p>Address: _____</p> <p>City: _____</p> <p>State: _____</p> <p>Zip Code: _____</p> <p>E-mail: _____</p>
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