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**POLICY STATEMENT ON IMPLEMENTING INTERCITY
PASSENGER TRAIN ON-TIME PERFORMANCE AND
PREFERENCE PROVISIONS OF 49 U.S.C. § 24308(c) AND (f)**

Any attempt to modify current laws governing preference given passenger trains on privately owned track should be done by elected representatives with input from their constituency. Law changes should not be dictated in a policy statement composed by those who stand to gain financially. These laws were established as part of a bipartisan bill passed by congress in October 1971 when the government-funded National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak) was formed to relieve private rail companies of responsibilities imposed as part of government land grants and public property easements critical to the creation of cross country rail corridors.

With the aid of government sponsored infrastructure and regulation enforcement, the auto and commercial airline industries rapidly diverted attention away from passenger rail transportation in the latter half of the 20th century. Revenue losses made private rail companies more than willing to accommodate Amtrak's assuming responsibility for passenger rail service by agreeing to the current preferences given for passenger trains on private rail corridors.

Contrary to the commonly held belief at the time, passenger rail service did not die out. In fact the demand is growing. The aging society, increasing population and increased awareness of negative environmental and economic impacts of internal-combustion-engine emissions and the highway infrastructure are increasing the need and acceptance of public transportation. Wherever passenger rail service is provided, ridership has been increasing.

The United States has a growing need for environmentally friendly transportation options. We should be moving toward greater emphasis on mass transportation. Autos, vans and busses will continue to be used for trips under 50miles and planes will most likely be preferred for trips over 800 miles. A reliable passenger rail service not only provides the best option for that 50-800 mi gap, it also would provide a rational, easily organized mass exodus from areas targeted for catastrophic events. It is critical that this mobility option be assessed on its many merits and not on the minor barriers it might impose on movement of raw materials and finished product.