



**States for Passenger Rail Coalition (SPRC)  
Policy Principles  
May 2022**

*Intercity passenger rail provides affordable mobility across the social and economic spectrum encompassing America's rural and urban landscape, while helping to reduce energy consumption and transportation emissions.*

**The States for Passenger Rail Coalition supports the following:**

**Establishment of a dedicated capital funding program for intercity passenger rail.** The new program should include formula funding with match requirements that mirror the Federal Highway Program and should be in addition to any existing and proposed discretionary grant programs. Consistent and predictable funding streams would provide the foundation for state investments in existing services and the development of new services.

**Maintain substantial federal funding levels for both the Amtrak National Network and the Amtrak Northeast Corridor to continue efficient and effective passenger rail mobility, recognizing that it is a national modal network.**

**Modernization of and investment in the existing and future Amtrak Long-Distance routes.**

**Continued capital and operating funding for the existing, highly competitive discretionary programs at levels in line with identified intercity passenger rail needs.** The "Projects in the Pipeline" Report, jointly developed based on SPRC and AASHTO member surveys, identifies 80 passenger rail capital projects, requiring \$17B of investment, which are ready or almost ready for final design, or construction grant applications. An additional 75 projects identified in the report, reflecting a \$41B investment, are in the scoping phase of project development.

**All discretionary intercity passenger rail grant programs should allow broad eligibility to include States, transportation authorities, compacts/commissions, other local and regional public entities, and Amtrak.** Eligible projects should include infrastructure improvements, rolling stock acquisition, capital maintenance of equipment, Positive Train Control (PTC) maintenance activities and costs, and funding for emerging technologies to enhance safety and environmental improvements.

**Federal funding should continue to be made available to support the operation of newly initiated or expanded passenger rail routes during the first six years of service.** Transitional operating assistance is critically important and would help states establish or increase service.

**Funding programs should permit multi-year federal agreements to support larger scale passenger rail investments, with partial funding of project elements (without independent utility).**

**No less than 80% of funding for capital projects should be available for federal awards and matched through a combination of state, local, regional, and private funding.** To ensure equity across the country, project selection criteria should not prioritize a higher share of the non-federal match.

**Clear timelines should be established for the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) to award and deploy grant programs.** Delays can limit the ability for states to commit to and deliver programs.

**Federal credit programs should not be counted as part of the Federal financial share of projects.**

**Updates and revisions to the PRIIA 209 Cost Methodology Policy to address the cost approach and the business relationship between the States and Amtrak as outlined in the principles established by the States-Amtrak Intercity Passenger Rail Committee (SAIPRC).** The policy statement can be viewed at <http://bit.ly/SAIPRC-209-Principles>.

**New Funding for the PRIIA 305 Next Generation Corridor Equipment Pool Committee (NGEC):** It is critical that new funding is provided to the NGEC to continue the development and maintenance of standardized next generation passenger rail vehicle specifications, to help lower operating and maintenance costs, extend vehicle life expectancy, reinvigorate the US Rail manufacturing and supply industry, and enhance workforce development. The new funding will enable the NGEC to continue exploring emerging technologies (such as zero emission/climate friendly propulsion alternatives) and develop additional next generation specifications that cover the full spectrum of intercity passenger rail services in the United States (U.S). Amtrak, States, and private entities all across the US and Canada are using NGEC specifications in procuring new passenger rail equipment. The new Charger Locomotives and Venture passenger rail cars are delivering positive results for the traveling public with enhanced accessibility, modern amenities, and improved reliability.

**Funding and resources sufficient to enable the Surface Transportation Board (STB) to fulfill its investigative authority in monitoring Amtrak's performance and access on railroads.**

**Inclusion of federal language in legislation and policies affirming that States who sponsor, but do not operate intercity passenger rail services, are not classified as railroads, nor are they railroad carriers.**

**Federal policies that recognize States as key stakeholders in negotiations for intercity passenger rail service improvements with operating railroads (both freight and passenger).** State and regional plans for passenger rail service are public documents which should guide federal investments for federal-state partnerships in passenger rail service enhancements. Any investment of federal funds for passenger rail service enhancements should require state approval if operating support is to be provided by a State entity. Policies should reflect a recognition that some states may require a stronger partnership with Amtrak than other States.

*Our Vision: An expanded intercity passenger rail network integrated into our national transportation system that improves mobility, supports economic growth, promotes equity, protects the environment, and enhances quality of life.*