



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
RAILROAD PASSENGERS

TRAINS: A TRAVEL CHOICE AMERICANS WANT

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Help save Amtrak and intercity passenger rail!

- Fully fund Amtrak's appropriation request of \$1.53 billion, plus \$150 million of Strategic Investment Options. The Administration-proposed figure of \$800 million is a **shut-down budget**.
- Senators: Support S.294, the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act.
- House Members: Support introduction of companion legislation to S.294 in the House.

Facts About Amtrak

- Ridership increased in eight of the last nine years. The Fiscal 2005 level of 25.4 million is up 29% from 1996.
- Similarly, the yield (average revenue per passenger mile) rose in ten of the last eleven years, with the FY 2005 level up 65% from the 1994 level. **Amtrak is not "buying" ridership with cheap fares.**
- Long distance trains are well-used. They accounted for 47% of Amtrak's passenger-miles last year (a passenger-mile is one passenger carried one mile). The average long distance train carried 356 passengers per trip.
- Long distance trains are the only intercity passenger trains in 25 states.
- It is misleading to say "buying everyone a plane ticket is cheaper than running an Amtrak train." Many Amtrak cities have no air service and many more have no discount air service. Also, many Americans cannot or chose not to fly.
- Amtrak is controlling food and beverage costs. On long-distance trains, Amtrak is revising dining car processes and reducing on-board staff; savings to date are near \$20 million.
- Carriers worldwide consider on-board food and beverage service as necessary to attract business, not as profit centers. They measure food losses as a percentage of ticket revenues. In a November 2005 speech, Jonathan Metcalf, Chief Operating Officer of Britain's Great Northeastern Railway, said that food service on his trains, "probably loses [(\$3.5-\$5.4 million US) a year. If we didn't do food, we'd lose passengers...it's a key reason why they travel with us...we probably would have lost [\$35-\$54 million US] in ticket revenue [without food service]."
- Amtrak is doing more with fewer employees—the headcount was 24,877 at the end of September, 2001, and 18,944 at the end of February, 2006. On an "apples-to-apples" basis (*excluding* about 1,630 employees transferred to MBTA in 2003 and Metrolink in 2005), the headcount declined about 4,300 or 18.5%.
- Amtrak has taken on no new debt since June 2002. From September 2002 to December 2006, Amtrak reduced its outstanding debt by nearly \$400 million.

Please contact NARP Executive Director Ross Capon or NARP Assistant Director David Johnson if you would like to discuss passenger rail and Amtrak.

Our Mission: A modern, customer-focused national passenger train network that provides a travel choice Americans want