



**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
RAILROAD PASSENGERS**

TRAINS: A TRAVEL CHOICE AMERICANS WANT

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Poll after Poll: Americans Want Trains!

Opinion polls show that Americans want more, better, faster, and convenient passenger trains. Here's a compilation of such polls over recent years.

- A Harris poll released February 8, 2006 found that, “as personal travel and freight transportation grows in the future, the American public would like to see an increasing proportion of that traffic going by rail...The modes of transportation which the largest number of adults would like to see ‘have an increasing share of passenger transportation’ are: commuter trains (44%), long-distance trains (35%), local bus service (23%), and airlines (23%).” The comparable percentage for “long-distance travel by car” was just 10%, long-distance bus service 6%.
- A poll conducted by CNN/Gallup/USA Today near the height of Amtrak’s June, 2002, cash crisis (June 21-23) found that 70% of the public support continued Federal funding for Amtrak.
- Similarly, The Washington Post found that 71% of Americans support continued or increased federal funding for Amtrak (August 5, 2002, article reporting on July 26-30 poll).
- An October 27, 1997, nationwide Gallup Poll sponsored by CNN and USA Today asked whether “the federal government should continue to provide funding for the cost of running Amtrak, in order to ensure that the U.S. has a national train service, or the federal government should stop funding Amtrak, even if that means the train service could go out of business if it doesn’t operate profitably on their own.” Favoring continued funding were 69% of respondents, with 26% against (and 6% other responses).
- Wisconsin: A poll by Chamberlain Research Consultants of Madison, released by the Wisconsin Association of Railroad Passengers in June, 2002, indicated that:
 - 77% of Wisconsin residents “support a nationwide system of passenger trains with increased routes, frequencies, and shorter travel time,”
 - 76.6% said they would use the trains if the planned nine-state Midwest Regional Rail network becomes available to them.
 - 54.3% responded positively to this question: “If federal funding is available for improving intercity passenger rail services, Wisconsin may try to attract these rail improvement funds by pledging to pay for a portion of the project with state money as we do now with highway and airport projects. Is this something you favor, oppose, or neither favor nor oppose as a way to raise money to develop passenger rail services in Wisconsin?”

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

- Ohio: The Ohio State University Center for Survey Research (OSU-CSR) released a poll ("Tracking Ohio") on March 8, 2001, which found that 80% of Ohioans want the state to develop passenger rail service. The following question produced a 74% positive response: "If Ohio had a modern, convenient and efficient passenger rail network, do you think it would improve the quality of life in Ohio or would it have no effect?"

About two-thirds (65%) of respondents said state money should be used to attract federal passenger-rail funding to Ohio, if such federal funding were available. More than half (53%) said the best way to relieve road traffic congestion is to "improve all forms of transportation including mass transit and high-speed rail." The statewide poll was conducted by telephone January 2-31, 2001, as part of the OSU-CSR's monthly Buckeye State Poll. The margin of sampling error was no more than +/-4.3%.

- New York: In 1998, the Marist College Institute for Public Opinion (Poughkeepsie) released results of a poll it conducted of New York State registered voters regarding state investment in intercity rail passenger service (trips longer than 75 miles one way). Findings: 82% believed that having modernized intercity passenger train service is at least as important as having good highways and airports (of this figure, 12% felt rail service was even more important); 87% favored an increase in government spending for intercity passenger train service. The poll was based on approximately 600 responses with a margin of error of no more than +/-4%. It was commissioned by the Empire State Passengers Association and the Empire Corridor Rail Task Force.