



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RAILROAD PASSENGERS

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RETURN REQUESTED

Amtrak's Bipartisan Support in Congress

"As you know, the Administration has proposed to eliminate the Amtrak service subsidy from the federal budget. While I am very concerned about excessive federal spending and our huge deficit, we must not be penny-wise and pound-foolish when it comes to worthwhile programs. As I have said time and again, the plan to eliminate the federal subsidy for Amtrak makes absolutely no sense. Amtrak is doing well. Revenue is growing, efficiency is up, and, once gone, it could not easily be replaced. Let me assure you, as Chairman of the Transportation Appropriations Subcommittee, I am well aware of the importance of rail service to North Dakota and the nation. The railroad is a low-cost, fuel-efficient mode of transporting passengers and commodities across the country. It is a top priority of mine to ensure that railroad employees are able to work and that the people of our state are well served by the rail system. Throughout my career in Congress, I have consistently supported efforts to provide Amtrak service to our country's rural areas. I will continue to stand firm against any effort to eliminate that service."

—Sen. Mark Andrews, Republican—North Dakota,
Mar. 13 letter

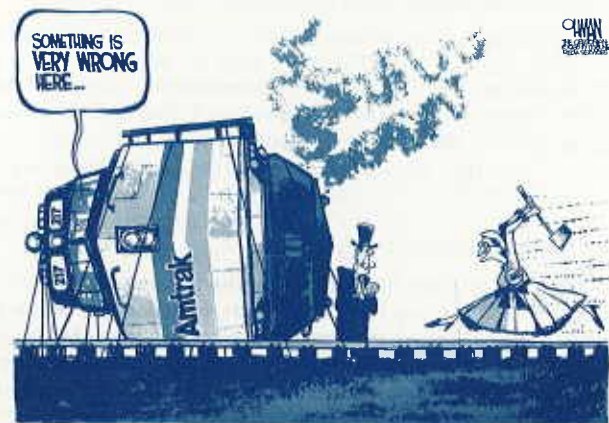
"As you know, I am a strong supporter of a national rail passenger system. I will continue to fight for adequate funding for Amtrak. As you point out, Amtrak has made great improvements over the last few years. I am hopeful these large improvements will help convince Congress to continue Amtrak funding."

—Rep. James J. Florio, Democrat—New Jersey,
Jan. 11 letter

"The proposal of the administration to eliminate funding of Amtrak altogether is yet another example of why my budget freeze proposal should be adopted by the 99th Congress. It is the only fair and equitable way of dealing with the deficit, and for dealing with Amtrak."

—Sen. Chuck Grassley, Republican—Iowa,
Feb. 4 letter

"I am strongly opposed to the administration's proposal to eliminate all funding for Amtrak. I have long advocated the need for a national rail passenger system. I believe an energy efficient rail passenger system is essential to a balanced national transportation network. I have consistently fought for adequate funding for Amtrak and have opposed efforts to significantly alter routes that are integral to a national system. I assure you I will do every-



—Ohman in *The Oregonian*, reprinted by permission of Tribune Media Services, Inc.

thing in my power to see that Amtrak continues to receive the federal funding it needs to provide rail service throughout the Northeast as well as the entire country."

—Sen. Lowell Weicker Jr., Republican—Connecticut,
Feb. 14 letter

"This proposal is very short-sighted in that it would cost over \$3 billion to shut down Amtrak. The Administration would be saving \$684 million for [FY] 1986, but it would cost \$3 billion to pay off the 25,000 Amtrak employees, close the facilities, and sell off the rolling stock for scrap. This proposal makes absolutely no sense. The American public has let the Congress know on several occasions that a nationwide railroad passenger system is important. I am sure that the Congress will reject the Administration's proposal. You can count on my support for continuing Amtrak."

—Sen. Wendell H. Ford, Democrat—Kentucky,
Mar. 1 letter

"I don't know of any nation that depends on the private sector for rail passenger service. How can you be for rail passenger service and be against federal support for it? It's almost 'Alice in Wonderland.'... I'm very regretful that we can't get your support [for Amtrak] at this time."

—Rep. William Lehman, Democrat—Florida,
addressing Federal Railroad Administrator John Riley
during Apr. 3 Appropriations subcommittee hearing

"As you know, I have been one of the most active supporters of Amtrak in the Congress, and intend to continue my efforts on behalf of passenger rail transportation. . . . Despite the pressing need to reduce the deficit, I believe that the elimination of funding for Amtrak, and the termination of rail passenger service that would necessarily result from such action, would be short-sighted and inappropriate. Accordingly, I intend to work within the Transportation Appropriations Subcommittee, on which I serve, to ensure the continuation of Amtrak operations.

"The consequences of an Amtrak shut-down would be disastrous, both for the northeast and for the nation. Amtrak currently carries over 20 million passengers per year. The elimination of Amtrak service would add enormously to air and highway congestion, necessitating massive additional federal investment for airport and highway construction, while essentially abandoning the billions of dollars that have already been invested in Amtrak equipment and Northeast Corridor improvements.

"Over 25,000 people, including some in each of 44 states, would be put out of work by the termination of Amtrak operations. . . .

"I will look forward to working with you and the other members of the National Association of Railroad Passengers in the coming months to ensure the continuation of Amtrak service."

—Rep. Silvio O. Conte, Republican—Massachusetts,
Jan. 29 letter

"Mass transportation systems, such as Amtrak, serve a vital need within our society. They are part of our valuable infrastructure which provides support for businesses and communities. This infrastructure cannot withstand heavy budget cuts. Please be assured that I will support Amtrak. . . ."

—Rep. Barbara A. Mikulski, Democrat—Maryland,
Dec. 17 letter

"As a frequent rider on Amtrak trains between my home in Wilmington and my job in Washington, I realize the value of a solid passenger railroad system. I have strongly backed efforts in the Senate to ensure that Amtrak receives the support it needs to maintain viable railroad operations. I believe proposals that have been put forth to cut train service are based on foolish and short-sighted ideas. Money saved by cut-backs of Amtrak service would be wiped out by increased wear and tear on highways that are already stretched to the limit, and would place a greater burden on states and localities to maintain access to the nation's mainstream of transportation.

"During twelve years of rail travel between my home and my job, I have seen the improvements that Amtrak employees have made in the service and financial condition of the railroad. You can be sure I will do what I can to prevent the elimination of Amtrak funding in the [FY] 1986 budget."

—Sen. Joseph R. Biden Jr., Democrat—Delaware,
Feb. 5 letter

"I understand and share your views on this matter and believe that Amtrak is a valuable component in our transportation infrastructure. It provides excellent passenger service and any action which significantly reduces its service would portend only higher utilization of our already congested airways. . . . I have strongly supported the authorization of funds for Amtrak in the past and will oppose any attempts to reduce its operating subsidy in both Committee and on the House floor."

—Rep. Matthew J. Rinaldo, Republican—New Jersey,
Jan. 4 letter

"I know how much passenger train service means to West Virginia, and I want you to know that I am opposed to any proposal that would eliminate funding for this service. . . . It has been a long and hard fight to maintain this service, and I will continue my support for it."

—Sen. John (Jay) Rockefeller IV, Democrat—West Virginia,
Feb. 25 letter

"As a member of the Senate Commerce . . . Committee, I am very interested in the economic future of America's rail passenger service. I am convinced that our national security interests and long-range energy future depends on an efficient railroad network. . . . I couldn't disagree more with [Pres. Reagan's] proposal to make such drastic cuts in the Amtrak budget. You may be assured that I will work to see that cuts of this magnitude are not made, so that Amtrak can continue to serve our Nation's rail passenger needs."

—Sen. Donald W. Riegle Jr., Democrat—Michigan,
Feb. 26 letter

"I wholly agree that the Amtrak train system does provide a valuable service to many Americans across the country. Please be assured, . . . that I will continue to do all I can in Congress to ensure adequate funding for the Amtrak train service. . . ."

—Rep. Norman F. Lent, Republican—New York,
Jan. 7 letter

"I agree with your views completely. Amtrak has made great strides in all areas of its operation over the last decade. Its on-time performance, service record, rolling stock and profitability have all been significantly improved. . . . I have strongly supported federal support of Amtrak since its inception. In fact, in 1979, I led the fight in Congress to develop a more accurate cost per mile standard so the Montrealer could continue as part of the Amtrak system. You can be assured that I will continue to fight for adequate federal support of Amtrak and the continuation of a nationwide passenger train system."

—Sen. Patrick J. Leahy, Democrat—Vermont,
Jan. 22 letter

ATTENTION, NARP MEMBERS!

Amtrak is in the fight of its life. These quotations are to encourage you to work harder on Amtrak's behalf, not to make you complacent. There's no funding for Amtrak in the new budget package assembled by the White House and Senate leaders and announced Apr. 3. President Reagan has attacked Amtrak funding publicly at least 4 times this year, although his choices of words suggest he does not understand that intercity rail passenger service would die if federal support for Amtrak ended. Many legislators have a similar lack of knowledge.

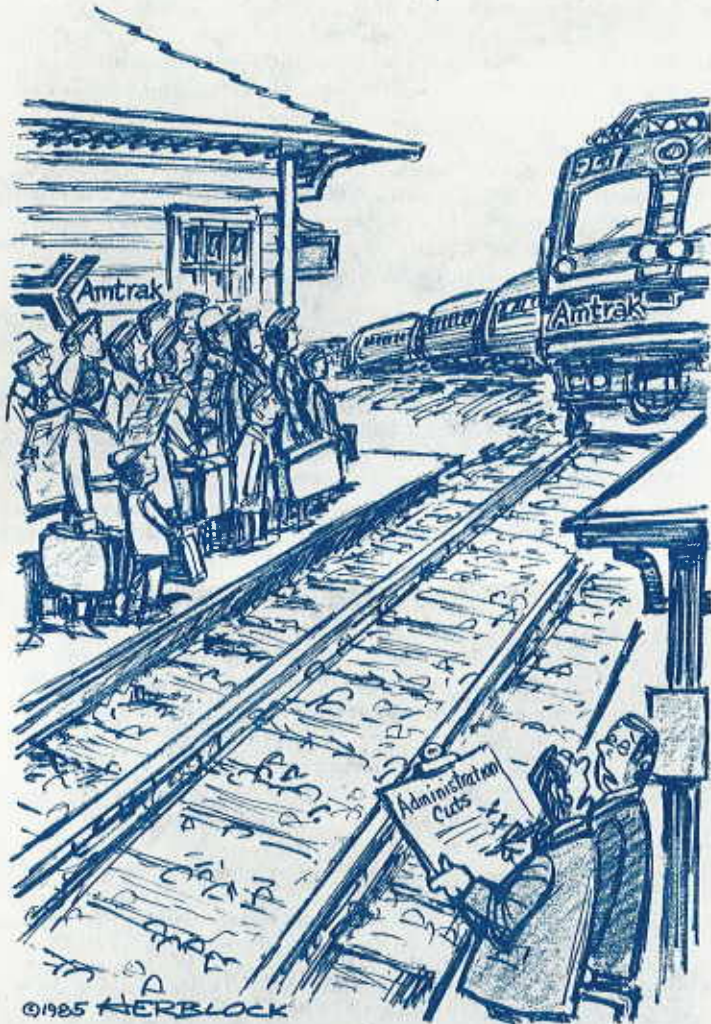
Federal Railroad Administrator John Riley's testimony rebuts the common misconceptions that Amtrak could survive a 30% funding cut by cutting service 30% and that there are profitable services which would survive even if Amtrak got nothing.

On Mar. 19, Riley told the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation: "There is no route that makes money and can operate in the absence of a subsidy. . . . In the Northeast Corridor, Amtrak sustains a loss of approximately \$247 million annually. . . . If Amtrak attempted to meet the Senate Budget Committee's levels [ed.: \$479 million in FY '86] by cutting back routes, there is no question that that would lead to the insolvency of the company." (Cutting routes would mean Amtrak would incur labor protection obligations almost as great as the subsidies saved by killing service.)

WILL SUCCESS KILL AMERICA'S PASSENGER TRAINS? is a small, slick-looking booklet cosponsored by NARP and Railway Progress Institute and available free to NARP members who send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to NARP Blue Book at our office. (Return postage 22¢—1 copy; 39¢—2; 56¢—3; 73¢—4.) Give it to friends and business associates.

To combat proposed mass transit budget cuts, an S.A.S.E. (22¢) to Ron Kilcoyne, PO Box 3552, San Francisco, CA 94119, will bring you a flier similar to NARP's and suitable for photocopying.

"IF IT DOESN'T CARRY MISSILES, WHAT GOOD IS IT?"



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"As a frequent Amtrak passenger, I also am appreciative of the railroad's service. I cannot support anything that would end Amtrak. I remember the energy crisis, and nobody has convinced me yet that it couldn't happen again. America needs a viable rail system, particularly in the Northeast."

—Sen. William V. Roth Jr., Republican—Delaware,
Mar. 7 letter

"I do not believe we will gain anything if we cut the deficit in a way which cripples our country's infrastructure and thus jeopardizes the future of the recovery. 'Killing Amtrak' is an action which I believe would do so."

—Rep. Wyche Fowler Jr., Democrat—Georgia,
Dec. 14 letter

"I certainly agree with you that Amtrak provides an essential service which is deserving of our support, particularly in view of the fact that substantial reductions in the federal subsidy already have occurred. . . . To further cut the annual subsidy would be unwise and unfair, as Amtrak has suffered in our attempt to reduce our federal spending levels. I only would support a proposal to freeze or slightly reduce by 2% funding levels for Amtrak if the action was part of an across-the-board federal budget freeze and spending reduction. It is widely recognized that Congress must find ways to reduce the federal deficit, but drastically limiting or eliminating vital transportation programs is not an acceptable option. Thus, I agree with your position and will affirm my support by advocating substantial federal allocations for Amtrak in the future."

—Rep. Stewart B. McKinney, Republican—Connecticut,
Mar. 29 letter

"Amtrak is clearly a very important contributor to the Pennsylvania economy: it has an annual [Pennsylvania] payroll of \$85.8 million and last year accounted for an additional \$76.5 million through its purchases of goods and services. Millions of Pennsylvanians ride on Amtrak every year because it provides comfortable, dependable, and affordable service. . . . I will be working to retain the necessary federal financial support for Amtrak."

—Sen. John Heinz, Republican—Pennsylvania,
Mar. 19 letter

"I have always been anxious to support Amtrak, for it has played an important role in the economic development of New Mexico. However, this year we are faced with some very difficult decisions. The Federal deficit is the largest in history and something must be done to address this problem. . . . I feel the best choice regarding Amtrak is to support a freeze of funding at current levels."

—Sen. Jeff Bingaman, Democrat—New Mexico,
Jan. 25 letter

"I share your views. I am pleased with the recent improvements in Amtrak's financial status. I agree that passenger train travel should be preserved although we must do so within the same fiscal constraints to which all government programs are held."

—Sen. Thad Cochran, Republican—Mississippi,
Jan. 4 letter

"The President's proposal to eliminate federal subsidies to Amtrak and to drastically reduce funding for mass transit programs is very troublesome to me. . . . I know how very important these services are to the residents of New Jersey. Please be assured that I will do all I can to protect Amtrak and other mass transit services from drastic budget cuts."

—Sen. Frank R. Lautenberg, Democrat—New Jersey,
Feb. 25 letter

"Too often over the last several years, many Oregonians, especially those who live outside the Portland area, have suffered from lost or diminished service from bus companies and airlines. We certainly do not need to add rail service to that list as well. . . . I continue to believe that we can straighten out our huge deficit mess by simply freezing federal spending across-the-board. No cuts, and no additions, to every federal program on the books, including Amtrak. . . . It's the fairest, most even-handed way I know to reduce the deficit without harming programs many Oregonians feel are essential."

—Rep. Denny Smith, Republican—Oregon,
Jan. 14 letter

"In the past I have supported this program, and I intend to continue to do so. There is a very real need for a well run railroad, and Amtrak is steadily improving. Its ridership is up, and its revenue-to-cost ratio has grown from 48% in 1981 to an estimated 58% in 1985."

—Sen. Edward Zorinsky, Democrat—Nebraska,
Jan. 17 letter

"I, too, am concerned by suggestions that Amtrak may become a target in budget-cutting during work on the federal government's 1986 budget. The need to reduce the federal deficit is urgent, but singling out Amtrak's modest federal subsidies is not the solution. Amtrak has invested its public dollars in building a sound and growing public transportation system. Its performance record has continued to improve, even as the proportion of its public support has declined. Withdrawing public support from Amtrak now would not be cost-efficient. I have long been a supporter of Amtrak and other efficient public transportation systems, and you may be sure that I will continue to be."

—Sen. Charles Mathias Jr., Republican—Maryland,
Feb. 11 letter

"Amtrak has turned itself into a more efficient and cost-effective rail system. It would be absurd, in my opinion, to penalize Amtrak by undermining its financial base and thereby destroy the progress which we have been making to rebuild our nation's passenger rail system. Since 1972, the United States has been victimized as a result of our dependency on foreign oil. This dependency, among other things, resulted in two major oil import disruptions and increased inflation as a result of rising oil prices. The rebuilding of our nation's passenger rail service is one part of our nation's move toward energy independence. For the federal government to hamper the rebuilding of that rail system, for short-term financial gain, could have a devastating effect in years to come when oil supplies again become scarce."

—Rep. Joe Moakley, Democrat—Massachusetts,
Jan. 11 letter

"Clearly, AMTRAK is doing far better than Congress expected it to in terms of revenues. . . . Rest assured that during the upcoming budget debates, I intend to do all I can to argue the case for AMTRAK and fight for an adequate funding level for 1986."

—Rep. Gene Chappie, Republican—California,
Mar. 7 letter

"I intend to fully support the continuation of Amtrak and do all I can to encourage my colleagues to do the same."

—Sen. J. James Exon, Democrat—Nebraska
Mar. 1 letter

"I share your belief that Amtrak must remain truly a nationwide service, and I fought earlier steps by the White House that would have restricted Amtrak's activities to the Northeastern Corridor. I will continue to press for a strong national rail passenger system."

—Sen. Paul Simon, Democrat—Illinois,
Jan. 16 letter

"I agree that Amtrak is an important alternative transportation system. Please be assured I will support as full funding for Amtrak as possible consistent with the important goal of bringing the federal deficit under control."

—Sen. Paul Laxalt, Republican—Nevada,
Jan. 23 letter

"I share your opposition to this outrageous proposal. As you point out, Amtrak continues to improve its cost-recovery percentage while providing needed rail service to . . . areas that would not be served without subsidies. . . . We should eliminate waste and unnecessary programs, not vital human services."

—Rep. Charles F. Schumer, Democrat—New York,
Dec. 13 letter

"Amtrak is a very necessary means of transportation in Montana and the railroad has seen increased use. . . . I agree that rail service is vital for travel and industry in Montana and you can be sure that I will do what I can to see that service is maintained and Amtrak continues to operate in Montana."

—Rep. Ron Marlenee, Republican—Montana,
Dec. 13 letter

"Stockman doesn't believe we can afford trains. Yet Amtrak is steadily increasing its self-sufficiency and is currently covering 60% of its costs through fares. It employs 25,000 people nationally. I don't believe we can afford *not* to have trains. I know the Government must cut the deficit and I know we in Oregon will do our fair share. But I will not support a cut in vital transportation services that benefit the whole nation (not to mention the economy)."

—Rep. Jim Weaver, Democrat—Oregon
Jan. 25 letter

"As you know, my daughter Amy and I recently took a highly enjoyable trip from Osceola, Iowa, to Washington, D.C., aboard Amtrak. This trip only reaffirmed my long-held belief that Amtrak provides a valuable service which I would like to see continued."

—Sen. Tom Harkin, Democrat—Iowa,
Feb. 13 letter

"I am aware of the importance of Amtrak. . . . I believe that the fairest method to reform and control spending is a budget freeze. For this reason, I have cosponsored . . . a one year across-the-board freeze for all federal programs."

—Sen. Mack Mattingly, Republican—Georgia,
Feb. 28 letter

"Amtrak has suffered from budget reductions every year since 1981, when it received \$900 million. Its appropriation for fiscal 1985 is \$684 million, the lowest subsidy since 1977. Clearly, Amtrak's passengers have made their contribution toward reducing the Federal deficit.

"What makes the Reagan plan even more senseless is the fact that, even if Amtrak were eliminated, we would still have to pay for it. When Amtrak was set up, a labor-protection payment plan was included in the contracts of all of its 25,000 employees. This clause provides full salary for up to six years for those workers who remain unemployed after being laid off by Amtrak. Based on previous experience, the railroad estimates that up to 80% of its employees would take advantage of this option in the first year alone, at a cost of up to \$800 million. If we are going to spend this money anyway, we should at least have a rail service to show for it.

"The choice is clear. We can terminate Amtrak and continue to pay the cost of maintaining a service that no longer exists, or we can spend money on a payroll for work that is actually being done, and have a much needed railroad."

—Rep. Gary L. Ackerman, Democrat—New York,
Feb. 25 letter

"[Without Amtrak,] we'd be the only industrialized, civilized country in the world that didn't have intercity passenger service. That's what we'd end up with and I just don't think we're going to do that. . . ."

—Sen. Ernest F. Hollings, Democrat—South Carolina,
during Mar. 6 Senate Budget Committee debate

"I've long been a supporter of Amtrak. I would tell you, however, that in an effort to reduce these massive budget deficits we are facing, I have advocated an across-the-board freeze on federal spending. . . . I feel the federal government has a responsibility under the Constitution's Commerce Clause to assure an effective transportation system which ties all parts of the country together."

—Rep. Dan Glickman, Democrat—Kansas,
Feb. 26 letter

"While I support efforts to find reasonable savings in Amtrak funding, I do not support the elimination of all federal assistance. Federal subsidies for Amtrak should be considered in the same light as the subsidies commercial airlines receive through air traffic control and terminal services."

—Rep. Tom Tauke, Republican—Iowa,
Mar. 12 letter

"We should be going in the direction of increasing, not decreasing, train service."

—Rep. Barney Frank, Democrat—Massachusetts,
Feb. 8 letter

"I am very impressed with the improvements in rail passenger service made by Amtrak in the past few years, and I believe sound management is making the service more cost effective. I believe this record deserves continuing support by Congress."

—Rep. Marjorie S. Holt, Republican—Maryland,
Jan. 29 letter