



RAIL PASSENGERS ASSOCIATION

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P. O. Box 162
Glendive, MT 59330
July 4, 2019

Transportation Interim Committee
66th Montana State Legislature
P. O. Box 201706
Helena, MT 59620

Dear Transportation Interim Committee:

My name is Barry E. Green and I'm the Rail Passengers Association (RPA) Council Representative for RPA members in Montana. I also represent RPA members in Idaho and North Dakota account our organization doesn't currently have a Council Representative for those states.

RPA is the oldest and largest national organization speaking for the nearly 40 million users of passenger trains and rail transit. We have worked since 1967 to expand the quality and quantity of passenger rail in the U.S. Our mission is to work towards a modern, customer-focused national passenger train network that provides a travel choice Americans want. Our work is supported by more than 28,000 individual members nationwide. RPA is the largest national membership advocacy organization for train and rail transit passengers. RPA is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Dues and contributions are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. I've included two documents that explains "Who We Are"; "Our Priorities" and a "Proposed National Grid and Gateway Passenger Train Network" across the country.

I would like to thank the 66th Montana State Legislature for creating this Transportation Interim Committee to work between sessions on various transportation topics, in particular, HJ 34 – a joint resolution for an interim study of ways to improve passenger transportation services in Montana, and introduced by MT State Representative Andrea Olsen (D) – HD 100 from Missoula, MT.

All forms of public transportation are important to the citizens of Montana and passenger rail is a vital part of the state's transportation system particularly across northern Montana. Living in Montana, we can only take Essential Air Service flights in state to Billings from Glasgow, Glendive, Sidney, and Wolf Point. Intercity bus service is intermittent and only serves a minimum number of communities in Montana. Driving requires long periods of windshield time on the highway, involves congested city traffic, and is one of our most dangerous modes of travel. The state should be an advocate for improved and connected transportation services. While I and the organization I represent advocate for improved passenger rail services across the country, input can and should involve all forms of public transportation that would benefit citizens in and visitors to our state resulting in a seamless

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travel network for the public.

Currently retired from a 39 year career with the BN(SF) Railway and having been a passenger rail advocate for just about the same length of time, I feel I can offer insight towards the benefits of passenger rail and how the state should support what we have as well as being involved with possible expansion of services.

I apologize for not being able to attend your first interim committee meeting but I'm hopeful to attend future meetings as well as being able to provide information from my home in Glendive. Should you have any questions or comments pertaining to passenger rail services, please feel free to contact me via whatever method works best for you. Thank you for your time with my remarks.

Sincerely yours,

Original Signed and Mailed

Barry E. Green, RPA Council Rep. (MT)
(www.railpassengers.org) (Website)

Enclosures - 2

cc: MT State Rep. Andrea Olsen – Missoula, MT
File – Glendive, MT

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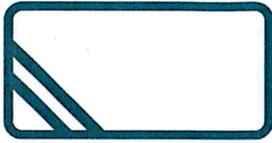
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Who We Are

- Largest national organization speaking for 40 million users of passenger trains and rail transit in the U.S.
- The only national organization that acts as a voice for passengers before Congress, the White House, the U.S. Department of Transportation, and Amtrak management.
- A grassroots, membership-based advocacy organization working to link all forms of public transportation into a seamless travel network for the public.
- More than 28,000 members nationwide; including industry leaders, legislators, students, daily commuters, and passionate rail advocates.
- Our goal is for a modern, customer-focused national interstate passenger train network that provides a safe, reliable and viable travel choice for all Americans.

Our Priorities

- **Safer Transportation:** Passenger rail is 10 times safer than driving when measured by fatalities per billion passenger miles. Growing passenger rail transportation is a key strategy for making travel safer, as 40,000 Americans are killed on U.S. highways each year.
- **More Trains:** Push for system growth with more routes connecting major urban centers, small towns and rural America with multiple daily frequencies operating on-time.
- **Better Trains:** Fully embrace customer-centric passenger service, ensuring that train travel is reliable and efficient while improving the experience for every traveler.
- **Commitment to Infrastructure:** Engage with local communities, state partners, and private industry to find ways to say “Yes” to new service with modern, high-capacity railways employing state-of-the-art technology to maximize safety and efficiency at higher speeds.

Find out more at www.RailPassengers.org

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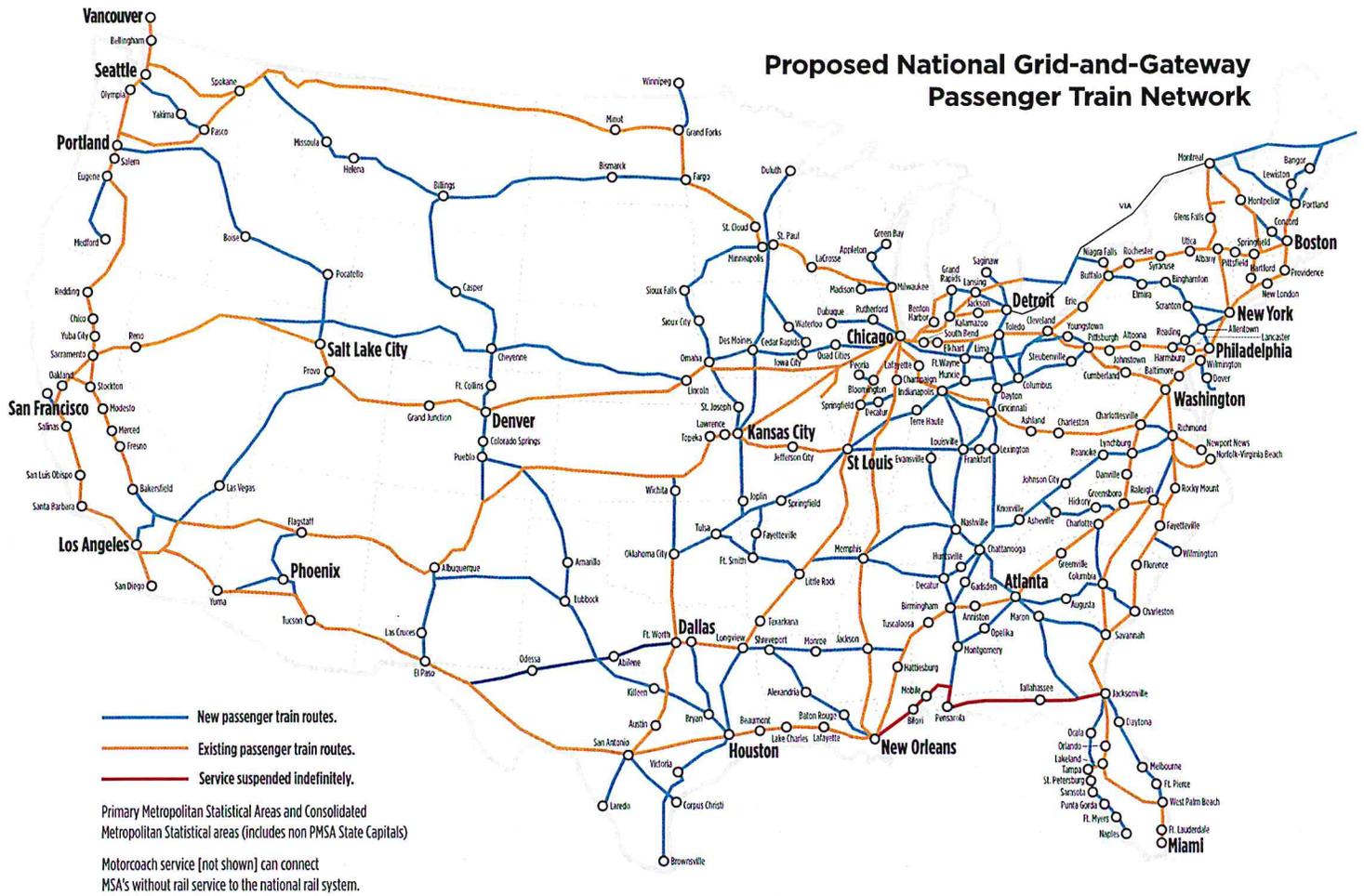
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Rail Passengers' vision is for an expanded national network of frequent, fast and reliable passenger trains, providing top-notch customer service.



TRAINS: A TRAVEL CHOICE AMERICANS WANT

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HJ-34

I was born and raised in Great Falls, MT. My father met my mother when he was stationed at Eglin AFB in the Florida panhandle during WWII. When he asked to marry her, he promised her parents that he'd bring her back to Florida from Montana for a visit every other year. He did just that for 62 years until he died.

Every other year through out my childhood, our family would go to the Great Northern train station near Central Avenue in Great Falls. We got on the train in Great Falls, Montana and got off in DeFuniak Springs, Florida, three days and two nights later.

If I lived in Great Falls today, I would have to drive 85 miles to the nearest train station. That train would probably be late and it would not have connections to DeFuniak Springs, Florida - - - or even close.

In fact, there are few places in Montana where long distance passenger trains even exist. The High-Line is really the only place and it's route spans some of the lowest population densities in the State. Some would say that trains are not practical or feasible in a State with such low population densities and such great distances between population centers. I would argue the opposite.

My 95 year old mother lives in Missoula, in her own home, and she still drives six blocks to the store when the weather is good. Yet, she is stranded in Missoula and feels isolated. She would love to spend time with her son and family in Helena but the bus ride requires eight hours, including a four hour lay-over in Butte. She could fly, but the 120 mile road trip to Helena would turn into about 1000 miles of flying to Seattle and back. Complicating the matter further, there is only one flight per day from Seattle to Helena requiring an overnight stay. I suppose she could hitchhike but she's 95 years old! Ironically, there is an operating rail line connecting Missoula and Helena which carries a number of freight trains every day but there is no passenger train. I have a ninety-two year old aunt who lives in Great Falls who is in the same dilemma, she is stranded.

Our population is growing older, how many other senior citizens feel the same isolation? How many other Montanas are marooned because they can't drive a car or perhaps don't have a car? Think of people with disabilities, blindness, legal restrictions, or low income.

Think also of the people who would prefer to take a train to a neighboring Montana city for; family visits, business trips, doctor appointments, shopping, university student travel, sporting events, fuel economy, or even for fun! A passenger train connecting the sights of Montana would certainly be a

tourist attraction providing added income for Montana businesses.

Before we surrender ourselves to those who think that passenger rail simply can't work in Montana, please consider the hardship Montanans endure, the convenience Montanans miss every day without passenger rail service. So what, if it can not pay for itself? Every other means of mass transit is subsidized. Highways have a gas tax, buses get federal subsidies, and airlines are subsidized by the services provided by the FAA. I urge you to first determine the need, then find the means to put Montana back on track.

Thank you for listening,

Paul Pacini
303 State Street
Helena, MT. 59601
406.443.7730
ppacini47@gmail.com

Paul Pacini

July 9, 2019

ppacini47@gmail.com / 406.443.7730

INDEPENDENT RECORD

A4 | SUNDAY, JULY 7, 2019

GUEST VIEW

Public health threatened

Climate is affecting our health. Today. Here in Montana. Montana Health Professionals for a Healthy Climate recently formed to promote the health of Montanans by helping address climate change through education, science and advocacy. Our first official action was to endorse the Climate, Health and Equity Policy Agenda.

The Climate, Health and Equity Policy Agenda, endorsed by 74 organizations representing more than half a million doctors, nurses, health systems, public health professionals and patients, calls for urgent action and provides a road map for local, state and national leaders to act now to stop climate pollution, promote resilient communities and support the health of all Americans.

Health Care without Harm, representing 17,000 hospitals, the American Medical Association, the American Academy of Family Physicians and the American Lung Association are among the dozens of organizations signed onto the policy priorities.

The past several years have seen a surge of concern from the health community regarding lives lost due to the warming climate and the air pollution that causes it. But rather than just conveying gloom and doom, the health organizations' Call to Action views

climate change as the greatest public health opportunity of the 21st century. Many actions can both improve human health and reduce climate change. This report challenges the United States to embrace such steps. Effective changes in transportation, housing, land use, energy, agriculture and other sectors are available, affordable and potentially life-saving.

The Call to Action identifies 10 recommendations from the healthcare community. For example, using public transportation where available or bicycling/walking for short errands lends significant health benefits and also lessens greenhouse gas emissions that help heat up our planet. Promotion of farmers markets boosts the purchase of local products, improves the sense of community important to mental health and lowers emissions from transportation. Transitioning to renewable energy saves lives by decreasing air pollution, and also lowers greenhouse gas emissions. Similar actions are already occurring, but health providers say the pace of transformation needs to be quicker.

Equity is central to climate action. As with many health conditions, climate hurts certain populations more: children, the unborn, pregnant women,

the elderly, indigenous peoples, low-income people, outdoor workers and those with chronic diseases. All of these populations are well represented in Montana. Physicians and other health-care professionals feel a moral responsibility to safeguard the vulnerable and contend that U.S. climate policies and investments can serve to alleviate current injustices.

Like the majority of Americans, the health community advocates for meeting and strengthening the commitments made by the United States in the Paris Climate Accords. Doctors, nurses and other healthcare professionals want to optimize health for their patients and other members of their communities. Climate change represents a threat to the substantial improvements in public health of the last century. We must minimize the threat and promote the opportunities.

This opinion is signed by the board of directors for the Montana Health Professionals for a Healthy Climate: Lori Byron, MD, pediatrician, Hardin; Robert Byron, MD, internal medicine, Hardin; Mari Eggers, PhD, environmental health, Bozeman; Ronni Flannery, JD, Missoula; Tom Roberts, MD, Missoula; Julia Ryder, RN, Bozeman; Elizabeth Schenk, RN, PhD, Missoula; Nick Silverman, PhD, scientist, Missoula; and Paul Smith, MD, pediatric pulmonologist, Missoula.

Nowakowski, Sonja

From: Olsen Andrea <andrea.olsen@mtleg.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, July 9, 2019 10:51 AM
To: vancesd34; Diane Sands; Mark Sweeney; Ross Fitzgerald; Carlie Boland; Jeff Welborn; denley loge
Cc: Nowakowski, Sonja; Olsen Andrea
Subject: Fwd: MT passenger rail service

Public Comment on HJ 34
Please add to public record.

From: "darlene gmail" <darlenepucillo@gmail.com>
To: "Olsen Andrea" <Andrea.Olsen@mtleg.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, July 9, 2019 7:35:15 AM
Subject: MT passenger rail service

Hello Ms. Olsen,

Thank you for your hard work.

I'd like to express my desire for a passenger rail service to run once again through Livingston MT (and specifically east-to-west —at least as far west as to Spokane WA).

Thank you,
Darlene Pucillo

Legislators are publicly elected officials. Legislator emails sent or received involving legislative business may be subject to the Right to Know provisions of the Montana Constitution and may be considered a "public record" pursuant to Montana law. As such, email, sent or received, its sender and receiver, and the email contents, may be subject to public disclosure, except as otherwise provided by Montana law.

Nowakowski, Sonja

From: Olsen Andrea <andrea.olsen@mtleg.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, July 9, 2019 10:47 AM
To: Diane Sands; Mark Sweeney; Ross Fitzgerald; Carlie Boland; Jeff Welborn; Loge Denley; vancesd34@gmail.com
Cc: Nowakowski, Sonja; Olsen Andrea
Subject: Fwd: Transportation Interim Committee Comments
Attachments: Strohmaier_InterimTransportationCommitteeComments_070819.pdf

Here is public comment from the Missoula County Commissioners regarding HJ34.

Sonia, please add to the public record.

From: "David Strohmaier" <dstrohmaier@missoulacounty.us>
To: "Olsen Andrea" <andrea.olsen@mtleg.gov>
Cc: "Josh Slotnick" <jslotnick@missoulacounty.us>, "Juanita Vero" <jvero@missoulacounty.us>, "Rebecca Meyers" <rebecca@northboundpublicaffairs.com>
Sent: Monday, July 8, 2019 6:29:59 PM
Subject: Transportation Interim Committee Comments

Hi Andrea,

Attached are my comments to the Transportation Interim Committee. Please forward to the rest of the committee, and I look forward to staying engaged in the process.

Best,

Dave

David Strohmaier
Missoula County Commissioner
199 W. Pine
Missoula, MT 59802
dstrohmaier@missoulacounty.us
406.258.4877 (o); 406.529.5580 (c)

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BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
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FAX: (406) 258-3943

July 8, 2019

Transportation Interim Committee
66th Montana State Legislature
P.O. Box 201706
Helena, MT 59620

Dear Transportation Interim Committee members:

Thank you for your service on the Montana Legislature's Transportation Interim Committee. I write to you today in support of allocating resources to explore ways to preserve and enhance passenger transportation options in Montana, including but not limited to passenger rail.

As a local elected official, I'm keenly aware of the role that transportation—especially passenger transportation—plays in all aspects of my constituents' lives and wellbeing. In particular, passenger rail service has been absent from southern Montana for 40 years, having last rolled through this part of the state in 1979. In the year 2019, the time has come to seriously examine how rail might play an expanded role in Montana's transportation future. To that end, I believe that HJ 34 draft work plan Option A would be the most desirable option to analyze costs and benefits of passenger rail, allow for stakeholder meetings and site visits, and craft an interim report.

Over the past decade, I'm aware of multiple Montana communities that have adopted resolutions in support of passenger rail (including Missoula), and that enthusiasm has not waned. If anything, with expanded tourism and citizen interest in transportation options, Montanans and visitors alike are seeking expanded choice in passenger transportation.

Although I am unable to travel to Helena for your initial meeting this week, I look forward to supporting your efforts and helping brainstorm creative, 21st century solutions for passenger transportation.

Sincerely,

Dave Strohmaier
Missoula Board of County Commissioners, Chair