

Tracks to Opportunity: Passenger Rail as a National Economic Tool

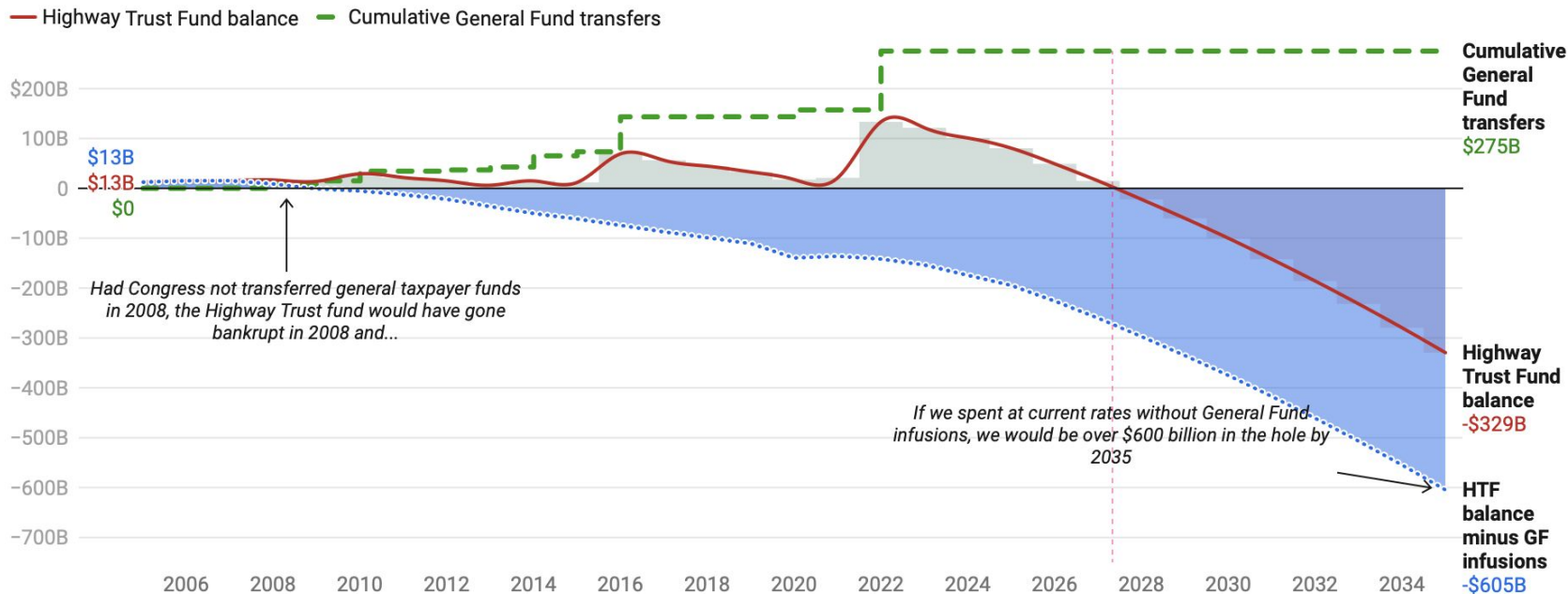
John Robert Smith

May 28, 2025



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The Highway Trust Fund's trajectory to insolvency



Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics (<https://data.bts.gov/stories/s/Transportation-Economic-Trends-Government-Transportor/6bdc-i7mh/>) and Congressional Budget Office (<https://www.cbo.gov/system/files/2025-01/51300-2025-01-highwaytrustfund.pdf>)

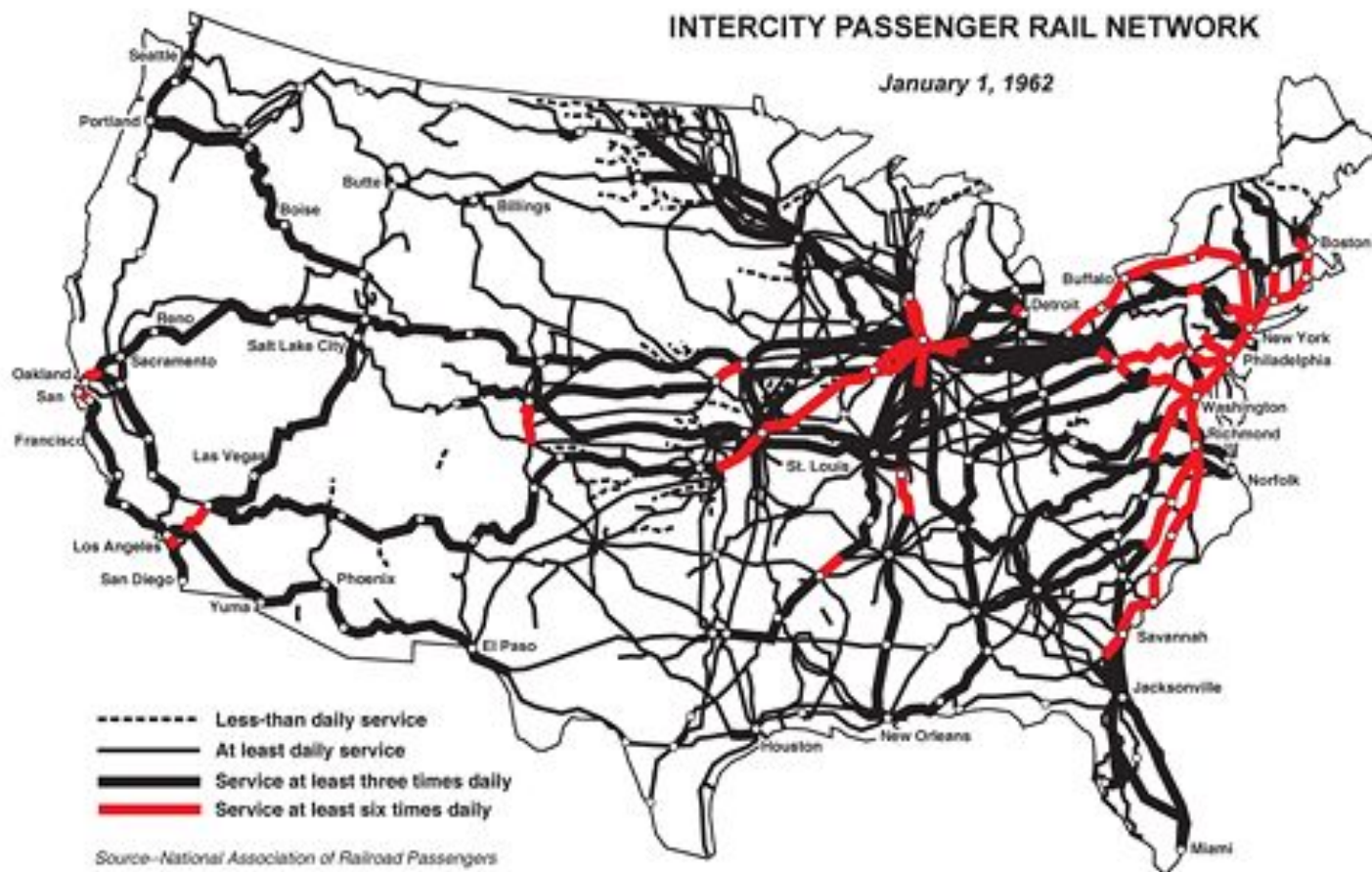
Source: Transportation for America • Get the data • Created with Datawrapper



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INTERCITY PASSENGER RAIL NETWORK

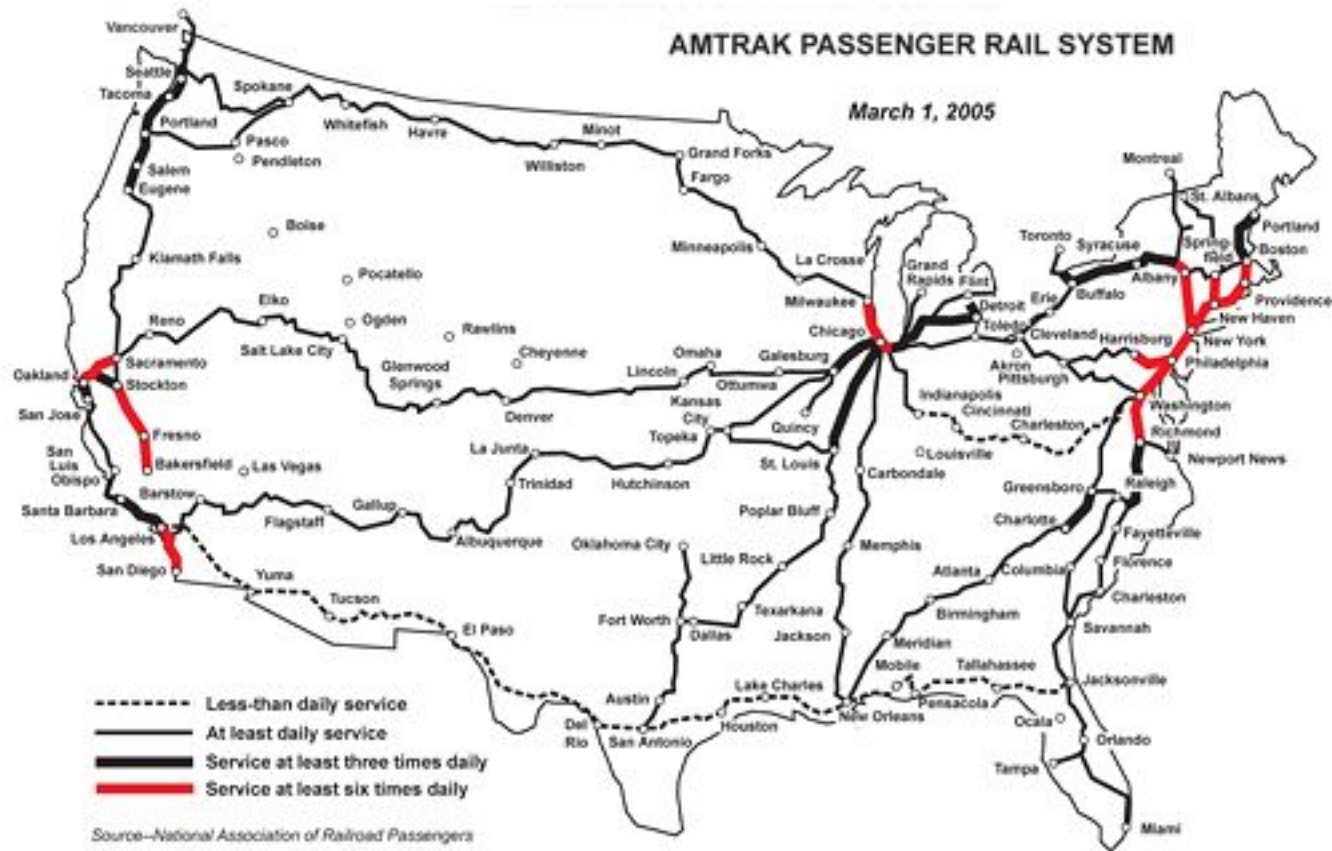
January 1, 1962



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AMTRAK PASSENGER RAIL SYSTEM

March 1, 2005



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Meridian's Union Station



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Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act

- First effort to provide significant funding commitment to Amtrak
- Introduced 2005
- Passed 2008



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Senator Trent Lott (R-MS)

Senator Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ)

Rep. James Oberstar (D-MN)



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Gulf Coast



FAST Act

- First time transportation reauthorization included Amtrak as well as highways and transit
- Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements Program (CRISI)
 - Rail infrastructure/equipment
 - Nearly \$6 billion since 2015
- Restoration and Enhancement (R&E) Grant
 - Covers 6 years of operational support



FAST Act

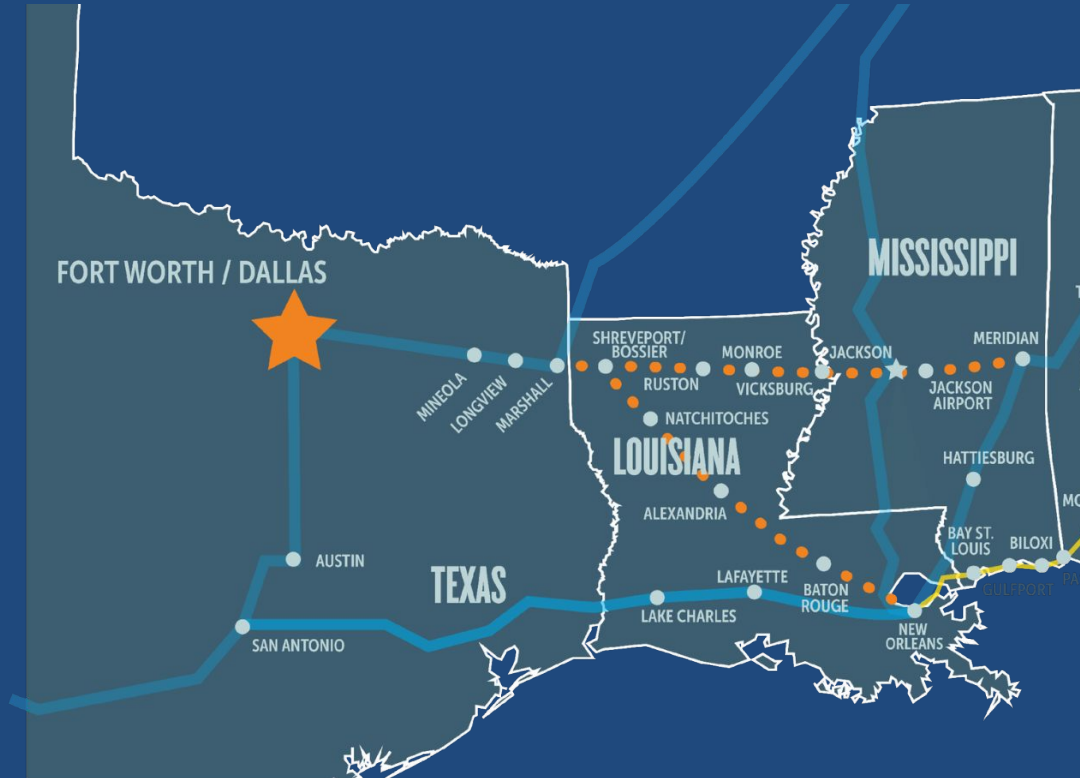
- First time transportation reauthorization included Amtrak as well as highways and transit

Senator Roger Wicker (R-MS)
Senator Maria Cantwell (D-WA)
Rep. Bill Shuster (R-PA)



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I-20 Corridor



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IIJA

- Corridor Identification and Development Program (CIDP)
 - Corridors under 750 miles
 - 69 corridors selected
- Interstate Rail Compacts (IRC) Grant Program
 - Operating support for up to 10 interstate compacts
 - Southern Rail Commission is the model



IIJA

- Corridor Identification and Development Program (CIDP)
- Interstate Rail Compacts (IRC) Grant Program

Senator Maria Cantwell (D-WA)

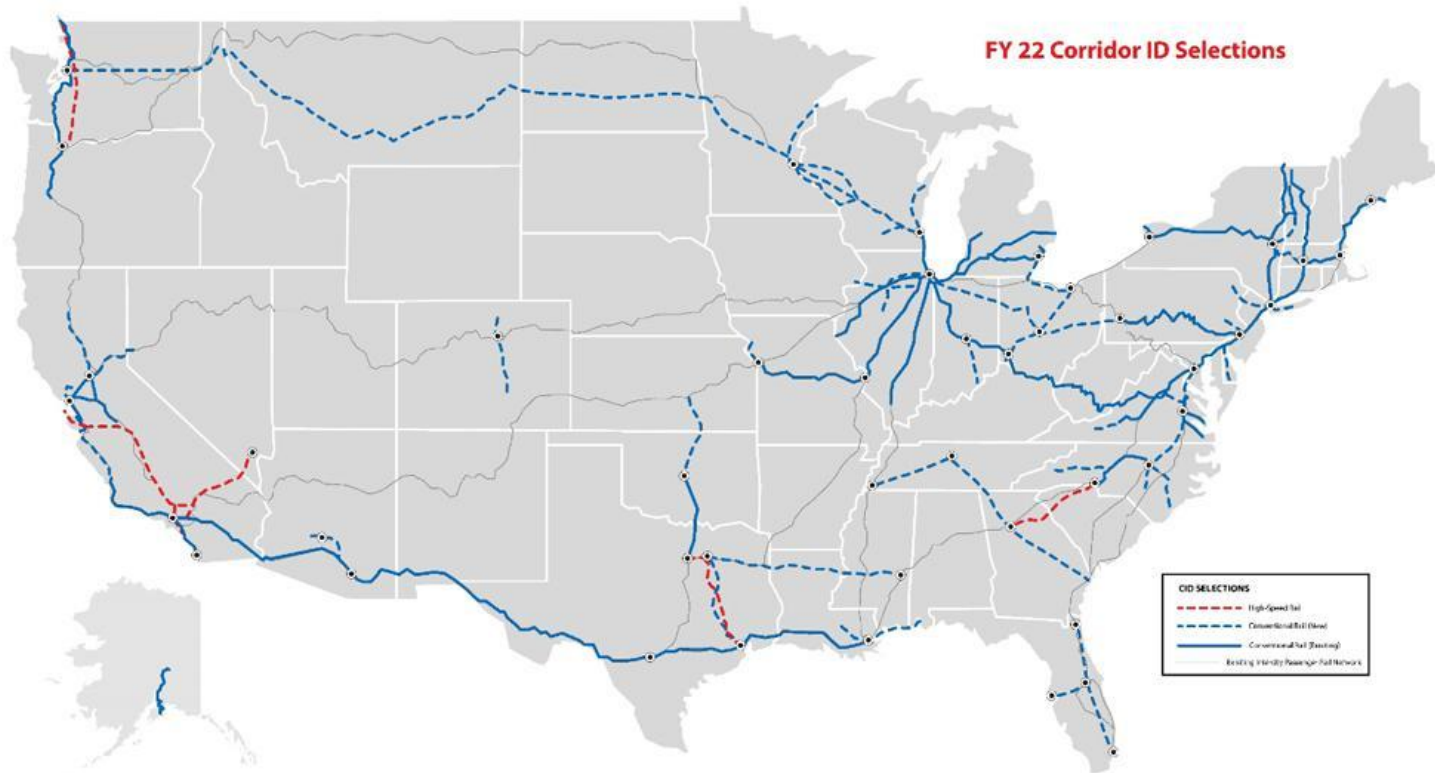
Senator Roger Wicker (R-MS)

Rep. Peter DeFazio (D-OR)



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FY 22 Corridor ID Selections



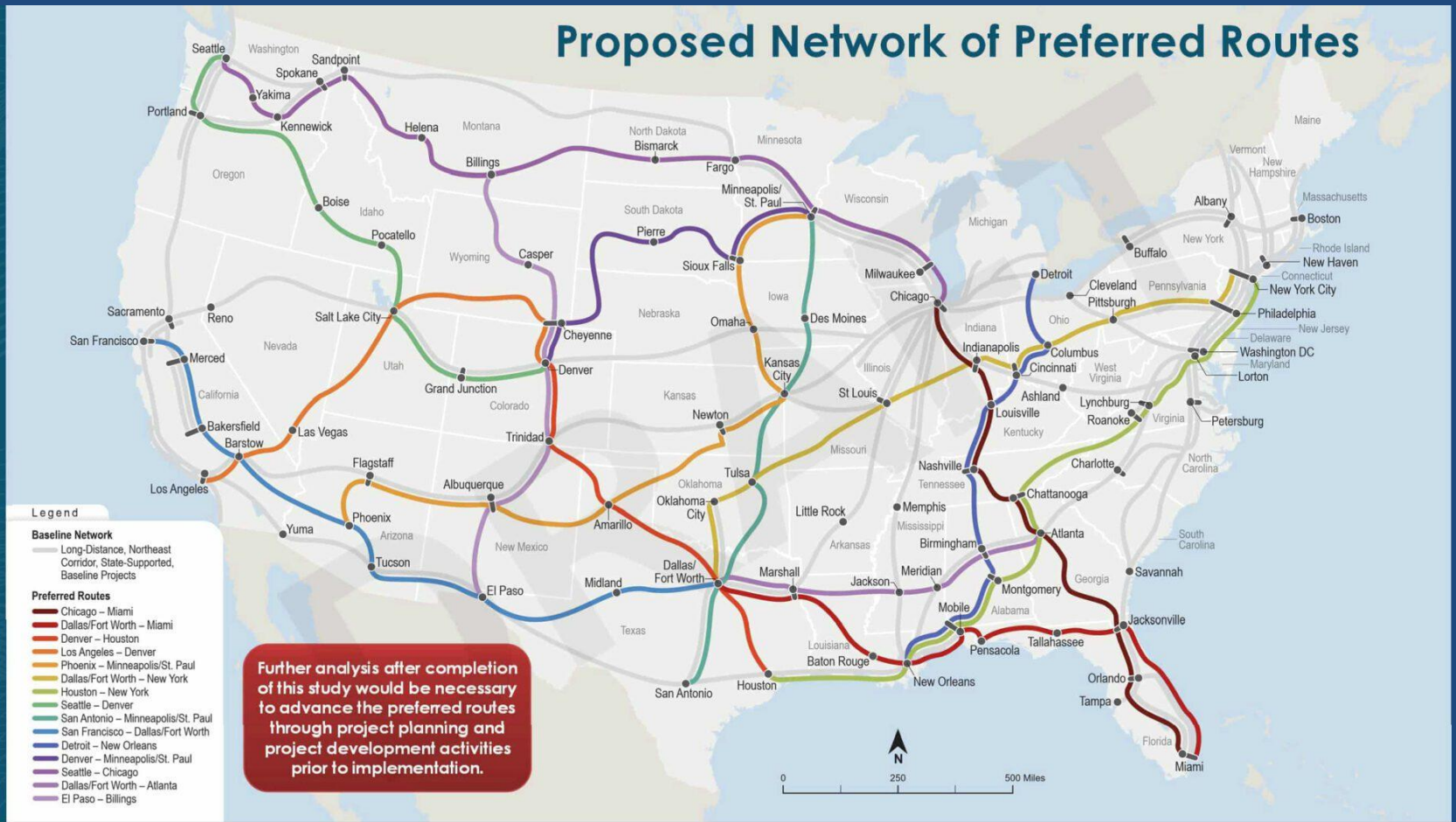
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DECEMBER 2022



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Proposed Network of Preferred Routes



Denver, CO



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Normal, IL



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Downeaster



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Empire Builder



Surface Transportation Board

Passenger Rail Advisory Committee

Co-Chair

James Derwinski
Metra

Co-Chair

Henry Posner III
Iowa Interstate Railroad

Secretary

Lori Winfree
North County Transit District

Gregg Baxter
Herzog Enterprises

Shoshana Lew
Colorado Department of Transportation

Liliana Pereira
Steer

Joseph Black
WSP

Patricia Long
Railway Supply Institute

Christopher Perry
Amtrak

James Blair
Amtrak

Jim Mathews
Rail Passengers Association

Greg Regan
AFL-CIO Transportation Trades Department

Husein Cumber
Brightline Holdings

Michael McClellan
Norfolk Southern

John Robert Smith
Transportation for America

Andy Daly
CSX Transportation

Robert Padgett
Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority

Carl Warren
North Carolina Railroad Company

Aaron Edelman
Mooney, Green, Saindon, Murphy & Welch

D.J. Stadtler
Virginia Passenger Rail Authority

Jonathan Lamb
Lake Superior Warehousing Co., Inc.

Next Reauthorization

- Incentivize more providers
 - Indemnification and liability
- Open national equipment pool
 - Available to all providers
 - Standardize rail procurement practices
 - Stable federal funding

