

Invest in Rail

Presentation to House Transportation Committee
All Aboard Washington
Gary Wirt, Luis Moscoso, Charlie Hamilton
January 11, 2023

Safe and Reliable Passenger Rail



**US Senator
Patty Murray**

<https://www.aawa.us/news/posts/december-2022-aawa-aorta-meeting/>

“I support the advocacy you are doing on the ground pushing for safe and reliable passenger rail service to help everyone get where they need to go. If there’s one thing I hear from folks across the state it’s that they need better transportation options where they live...and because of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, families across the Pacific Northwest can look forward to a more modernized Amtrak network, less roadway congestion, and decreased carbon emissions.”

Take Advantage of Federal Money



**WA Senator
Jeff Wilson**

<https://www.aawa.us/news/posts/december-2022-aawa-aorta-meeting/>

“We must take advantage of the federal funds for passenger rail. These opportunities do not come around every day...**We need an action plan to divert money for Stampede Pass...**I agree with the legislative agenda of AAWA in its entirety!”

New Highways Cost More

“We’re at a point of diminishing returns where building new highways costs more and more and we get less and less out of it.”

Roger Millar

Secretary of the Washington State Department of Transportation and the president of the American Association of Highway and Transportation Officials



Benefits of Rail



Economy

Intercity passenger trains help strengthen local economies across the Northwest.



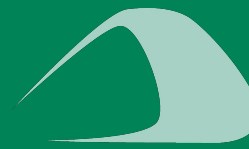
Environment

Intercity passenger trains provide low-emissions regional transportation.



Equity

Intercity passenger trains connect communities small and large.



Passenger Rail is Key

“The Yakima Valley region has been actively discussing returning passenger rail service to our 250,000+ residents for the past several years. Passenger rail service is viewed more importantly as a regional and interstate (national) transportation accessibility and equity issue since Amtrak ended service in October 1980 than as a local transportation option. Our **region foresees passenger rail service as a key component of travel** as our region continues efforts to augment, integrate, and improve our areas transit, trails, and micro-transit systems. YVCOG and its member jurisdictions respectfully request an opportunity to be part of the multi-state discussion and planning efforts to return passenger rail to rural America.”



Yakima Valley Conference of Governments
Regional Partnerships, Regional Solutions

Conduct Followup Analyses

“[We] request your support in laying the groundwork for improving our transportation network [by] restoring passenger rail service to Central and Eastern Washington via the Stampede Pass corridor. Washington State has not yet undertaken **the follow-up benefit-cost analysis and economic impact analysis studies needed** to determine whether the service is worthy of investment. The time is right to conduct the needed studies.”

“We highly encourage Washington State to take advantage of the BIL funding opportunities by **submitting an “expression of interest” from our state to the FRA**. It is the next step in the process of restoring passenger rail service via the Stampede Pass corridor.”



BENTON-FRANKLIN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
Regional Planning Agency for Benton & Franklin Counties

Benton-Franklin Metropolitan Planning Organization • Regional Transportation Planning Organization
Benton-Franklin Economic Development District

Additional Letters



[Kittitas County Chamber
of Commerce](#)



[People for People, Yakima](#)

CITY OF TOPPENISH

21 West First Avenue
Toppenish, WA 98948

"Where the West Still Lives"

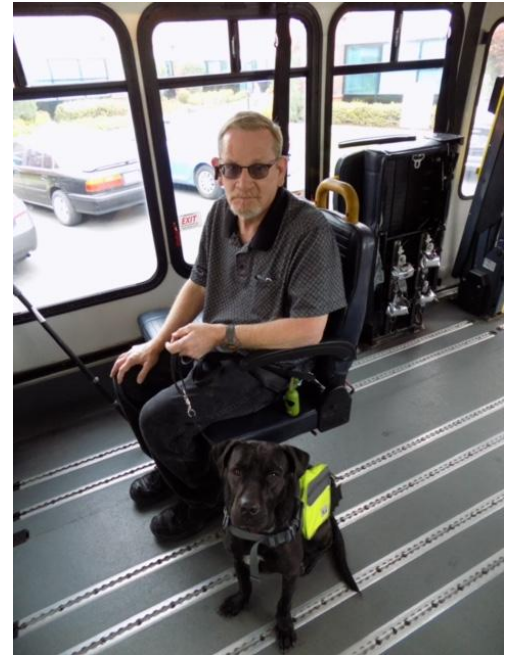
[City of Toppenish](#)

Need Freedom to Visit Family

“My family is all around the state but it’s hard to get there to see them, and it’s hard to get around when I am there. I’d like the freedom to visit.”

Harry, Vancouver, Legislative District 17

From the Disability Mobility Initiative, Disability Rights Washington Transportation Access for Everyone Storymap



Recreation is Impossible

"It would be nice if there were public transit available to National Parks and beaches, and other tourist attractions. Recreation is pretty much impossible."

Joseph, Legislative District 47, Auburn

From the Disability Mobility Initiative, Disability Rights Washington Transportation Access for Everyone Storymap



**DISABILITY
MOBILITY
INITIATIVE**

Need Trains in Rural Towns

“I would like to go to Olympia and talk on behalf of people with disabilities, but I can't because I don't have transportation, unless I fly, which could be really expensive for me. I wish there were train stations in rural towns so I could get from Colville, all the way to Seattle in a day.”

Cody Shane, Legislative District 7, Chewelah

From the Disability Mobility Initiative, Disability Rights
Washington Transportation Access for Everyone Storymap



We're Stuck in the City

“For nondrivers like myself, we are stuck in the city. There is not much opportunity to do outdoor trips as all other Washingtonians do.”

Anisa, Seattle

From the Disability Mobility Initiative, Disability Rights Washington Transportation Access for Everyone Storymap



Rail Must Be Our Surface Transportation Backbone



Gary Wirt
Yakima
AAWA
Vice-President

Rail must be the backbone of our surface transportation network because of its **energy efficiency, low carbon emissions, electrification potential, and reduction in vehicle miles traveled.**

Let's take advantage of the funding opportunities for rail that are provided by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law by

- Applying to the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) for inclusion of the Stampede Pass route
- Conducting a benefit-cost analysis and economic analysis

Additional 2023 Legislative Asks

- **Establish a working group** of public & private sector stakeholders to consider the advantages/disadvantages of establishing an interstate passenger rail compact and provide appropriate recommendations to the legislature.
- **Conduct the “further work”** as recommended by the 2020 JTC STEER study regarding Seattle-Spokane passenger rail service via the Stampede Pass corridor.
- **Submit an “expression of interest” letter** to the Federal Railroad Administration in accordance with Federal Register Notice dated 5/13/2022, “Establishment of the Corridor Identification and Development Program” in support of establishing Amtrak long-distance service from Chicago to Seattle via Stampede Pass, and Washington State sponsored service between Spokane and Seattle over the same route.

Please Contact Us For More Info

(360) 529-5552 / (509) 213-0070 / aawa.us

