Amtrak Special Public Board Meeting

Transformation Initiative: Public Listening Session

Date: Tuesday, November 10, 2026

Location: 20 F Street NW, Washington, D.C.

Time: 2 – 3:00 p.m. ET

Edited transcript prepared from real-time captioning. Lightly edited for readability; [inaudible] marks portions the captioner could not capture.

CHAIR TONY COSCIA

Good afternoon, everyone, and welcome. Thank you for joining us for this special public meeting of the Amtrak Board of Directors. We call today's meeting for a very specific purpose to provide an opportunity for the public to share comments directly with the Board about Amtrak's proposed Transformation initiative.

Over the past several months, we've shared information about the initiative, and we have received valuable feedback from many stakeholders. Today is about continuing to listen. This session provides another opportunity for you to share your perspectives, your questions, and your feedback and will add to the input the Board has already received as we continue to consider the path forward.

We're inviting participation today in two ways. Everyone's invited to speak to personally deliver your remarks and everyone is also encouraged to leave written feedback in the chat function. All comments that are submitted through the Chat function today will be delivered to the Board.

Joining me today virtually are my fellow Board members and I'd like to introduce them. Our Vice Chair, Joel Szabat. The Transportation Secretary Designee, Deputy Secretary Steven Bradbury. Ron Batory, David Capozzi, Lanhee Chen, Elaine Clegg, Chris Koos and Robert Gleason.

This initiative is, as you know, in response to the extraordinary opportunity that we believe exists for passenger rail in the United States today and no one disputes just how vitally important this mode is to the nation's transportation system. This initiative is how to capture that opportunity and how to make Amtrak a stronger and better company. I want to thank each of you for taking the time to participate today. We recognize that Amtrak serves many different communities and stakeholders across the country and hearing directly from the people that we serve is an important part of this process. We're grateful for the opportunity to hear your perspectives directly. Although we won't respond to individual comments during the session, we will listen carefully and consider the input that's shared. And with that, I'd like to turn it over to John Shea who will briefly review how today's session will work. And get us started. John, over to you.

JOHN SHEA

Tony, thank you very much. I'm John Shea with the Amtrak Corporate Communications team. I want to review the ground rules for today's meeting, and as Tony noted, today's comments will add

to the feedback that we've already received through the Future of Amtrak website and other channels. We've also received significant interest from the people who would like to speak today, so we've made the decision to extend this meeting to 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time. This will give us the opportunity to hear from as many participants as possible. This full session will be recorded, and every Board member will receive the transcript and the recording afterwards.

Let me briefly explain how today's session will work. We have about 250 people who registered for the meeting and 60 people who expressed an interest in speaking today. For everyone who said they would like to speak, our producer will reach out to you at some point during the meeting and signal to you that your time to come on camera is coming and if anyone else would like to speak who did not originally say yes to speaking you may raise your hand through the chat function, so we can identify you in that way.

To give as many people as possible the opportunity to participate, each speaker will have up to two minutes. A countdown clock will be visible while you're speaking so you can keep track of your remaining time, and the countdown clock will turn red with 30 seconds to go. Out of respect for everyone who wants to speak, we will immediately transition once your time is up to the next speaker. We mean no disrespect if we inadvertently cut someone off. It's just out of respect to everyone to make sure that everyone has a chance to be heard, and we need to keep to this strict 2-minute time limit. We also encourage everyone who's speaking today to avoid repeating points that you've already submitted in writing. The Board already has them or to repeat points that others have made during the session. This will help us hear from as many people as possible.

As a reminder, this is a listening session rather than a Question-and-Answer Session. So, while you're welcome to raise questions as part of your comments, Board members will not be responding to individual speakers during today's meeting. And again, we will post this recording and this video on our Future of Amtrak's website and the Amtrak Board of Directors webpage following the meeting. With that, let's begin. Christy, if you can get our first speaker online, we'll get started.

MARLENE MCCANN

Good afternoon, members of the Amtrak Board of Directors. My name is Marlene McCann, and I'm an independent Amtrak passenger who has traveled extensively throughout your National Network. I recently submitted a report entitled "One Journey, One Passenger Promise Offering Six Recommendations" regarding Amtrak's proposed organizational restructuring. My central message is simple, a passenger experience is one Amtrak journey, not three businesses. I encourage the Board to ensure that accountability remains connected across that entire journey. When something goes wrong, passengers should not have to navigate organizational boundaries to find answers or resolution. Employees also need the communication, resources, and support to serve passengers well.

Through my travels, I've encountered extraordinary Amtrak employees whose dedication has made a lasting impression on me. One of the most important conclusions in my report is this. The system should enable excellent employees more often than excellent employees have to compensate for

the system. I also encourage the Board to connect passenger feedback and service recovery to organizational learning. Resolving today's problem matters but preventing the same problem tomorrow matters just as much. I offer these recommendations not simply as criticism, but because I believe in the value of passenger rail service, and I want Amtrak to succeed. My hope is that this transformation strengthens the experience of both passengers and employees. While improving accountability and fiscal stewardship. Thank you for the opportunity to contribute and thank you for your service to Amtrak.

JIM TILLEY, PRESIDENT, FLORIDA COALITION OF RAIL PASSENGERS

Good afternoon. My name is Jim Tilley; I'm President of the Florida Coalition of Rail Passengers. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed framework. On September 9th, Mr. Herrmann set a clear test for the new fleet business. Quote, do we have the equipment our customers need when and where we need it. For the long distance Amtrak's own reports to the FRA say no, availability fell from 94% in April to 78% in August and Amtrak no longer has a single spare sleeper.

The problem is execution and not organizational structure. By way of example, Superliner's sleeping car, 32085, derailed at Joplin, Montana in 2021 with damage largely confined to its running gear. It returned to service last month, five years later. Experienced managers would have seen that car as a significant revenue opportunity and would have pressed for its return to service earlier. No organization chart supplies that kind of judgment.

A 3-unit structure and railroading has run this experiment before. In 1986, CSX split its railroad into operations, sales, and equipment units tied together by transfer pricing and Jim Hagen who was formerly chair and CEO of Conrail and CSX executive Vice President at the time characterized the structure as crazy John Giles, who managed CSX Automotive Business Unit before being named Vice President of Planning in 1991, recollected, quote, no telling how much time and energy was wasted sorting out between the agendas and priorities of the leadership of the business units and its CSX chairman, Hayes Watkins later acknowledged that the transfer pricing never worked and by 1991, CSX was again an integrated railroad. A better benchmark is Amtrak's own business partner, Union Pacific. It owns more than 40 times as much railroad as Amtrak and operates … *[Note: Public comment ended here, as speaker reached 2-minute time limit.]*

JOHANN MOORE

While I'd have been happy to cede the rest of my time to James Tilley and I'll defer the more erudite comments to him and RPA. I'll identify myself as a member of Rail Passengers Association and Empire State Passengers Association and in fact Jim Tilley's group the Florida Coalition of Rail Passengers. That tells you a little bit about how I use Amtrak once a year in each direction for a seasonal relocation for half the month each.

Aside from the obvious negative experiences of the European railroads, divvying up and some of them regretting and reversing that, I'll pose some seemingly minute rhetorical questions how will this new scheme make a drain maintenance protocol more likely or more likely to be followed?

How will it make a water pressure and water temperature maintenance protocol more likely or more likely to be followed? How will it in fact make a shower head positioning mechanism maintenance protocol more likely to be followed or put in place? All of that implies some of what we went through in an accessible bedroom, my disabled U.S. veteran husband and myself. So, those practical questions are really what concern the riders and others, and I'll wax a little more broadly and how can we stack up the aggregate time benefits of all the improvements along the Silver Service corridor in order to get at least an afternoon arrival in Florida, even if not, the wished for morning arrival. Thank you very much for letting the public submit our comments.

ED D'AMATO, LAKE SHORE RAIL ALLIANCE

My name is Ed D'Amato. I am the co-founder of the Lake Shore Rail Alliance, which is an umbrella group representing several passenger rail organizations between Chicago and New York. And a 30-year passenger rail advocate and observer of the passenger rail industry in the United States and elsewhere. My remarks today are my own. I am not speaking on behalf of the FRA or any organization.

I've been watching this unfold for the last several months, this discussion about this reorganization and I have seen people be concerned that, well, this is just a stealth way to get to Amtrak privatization, and I just want to say that that is not true. Privatizing Amtrak would require an act of Congress irrespective of how Amtrak organizes its business. Also, Other people have mentioned well, look at the British rail did this and it was a disaster, well that is true for Britain, but the entire European Union, in the European Union, there is a mandate that all of the state-owned railroads do exactly what Amtrak is doing — not doing, but proposing. And one of the reasons for that was to bring greater transparency to the costs because, you know, I'm sorry, I'm stumbling on my words but one of the reasons was to bring greater transparency to costs. And it has been this has been successful in the European Union, and I see no reason why it would be a problem for Amtrak. Thank you.

JIM MATHEWS, RAIL PASSENGERS ASSOCIATION

Good afternoon, everyone. I'm Jim Mathews. I'm president and CEO of the Rail Passengers Association and we appreciate the opportunity to share our views with all of you, as you approach decisions on restructuring. Here at the association, we are approaching Amtrak's restructuring proposal with open minds but also with very clear expectations. Separating infrastructure rolling stock and operations could improve accountability and performance. But it could also create new problems unless those entities remain focused on one single shared mission, delivering better passenger rail service. Our written comments identify 10 conditions for success, and thus I will let them stand alone. But today, please let me emphasize three broad ideas.

And first, Congress must be a partner and not a spectator Congressional oversight, Amtrak's existing legal authorities, and public accountability all must remain intact. Second, the money must match the mission A new corporate structure cannot substitute for stable predictable investment and Amtrak needs to explain how the three subsidiaries will function when appropriations inevitably fall short. Third, we must measure what's actually important. All three

subsidiaries need shared, passenger centered performance goals, safety, reliability, equipment availability, customer satisfaction, network growth otherwise we risk creating three organizations competing over resources shifting costs and assigning blame. Instead of collaborating to run a better railroad. And throughout this transition if it happens, the existing service must be protected with the clear commitments to expanding the National Network.

We're not here to endorse or reject restructuring in the abstract, but we are here to insist that its benefits be real, measurable, and meaningful to passengers. Changing the organization should not be the objective, improving the railroad should be. Thank you very much.

SCOTT SPENCER, CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER, AMERISTAR RAILROAD

Good afternoon. I'm Scott Spencer, Chief Operating Officer for Ameristar Railroad. The proposed restructuring of Amtrak is compatible with Ameristar Rail's proposed partnership with Amtrak to transform northeast quarter services with private sector ingenuity, innovation, and investment our proposed partnership with Amtrak is not privatization. Our key recommendation is to be sure that the responsibility and the accountability for system safety and security is integrated throughout Amtrak's new structure. We also recommend that the restructuring target specific goals and results to improve Amtrak service for passengers.

Ameristar Rail's proposed partnership with Amtrak will help Amtrak achieve remarkable results for each of the core operating businesses. Infrastructure. Northeast Corridor infrastructure will still be owned and maintained by Amtrak. Ameristar Rail will pay Amtrak hundreds of millions of dollars annually in new track user fees, station services fees, and monthly performance incentives to use Northeast Corridor tracks and stations. These user fees will provide funding to improve Northeast Corridor safety and security with the world-class standard for high-speed rail lines and of trackside security fencing along the entire route from Boston to Washington.

Washington, Fleet. Rebrand the NextGen Acela Fleet as the Amtrak Liberty Liner Illini with triple class service of coach, business, and first class seating. On every train this will end America's unfortunate distinction as the only country in the world that does not allow coach passengers to ride high speed trains. Ameristar Rail's Liberty Liner 250 operating plan is the fastest way to replace the aging Amfleet cars since the Amfleet cars are now over a half century old. They pose unknown safety issues since no one in railroad history has operated a rail passenger car so old so fast at 125 miles an hour. And the Ameristar Rail partnership will improve Amtrak's competitiveness Currently Amtrak record ridership is only a single digit market share of rail, car, bus, and air trips on the Northeast Corridor.

LOUIS VALLANCE

I'm Louis Vallance out of Cheboygan, Michigan. I'm happy that we are doing this. I also would like to see in the fleet, for the West coast, the reconsideration of the single level, you have some areas — in the California's Zephyr and on the Empire Builder where a single level, you're not going to be able to experience the, you know the sites on the — on those two lines. So, and — also, the fact that connectivity in the Midwest needs to be better than what it is right now. You have your partners

not connecting us to the National Network in Chicago for 10 o'clock in the morning. So, I'm saying to you, the Amtrak Board, that you have a select executive guest rewards member here, and we need to get Northern Michigan connected to the network. This is good to step forward, and I thank you very much.

TONY DE GARATE

I have been reading about your transformation aspirations with great interest when it comes to improvements in Amtrak's fleet, infrastructure, and service. I offer my full support. Unfortunately, I'd like to bring to your attention an action that you took recently that was utterly inconsistent with those goals when you eliminated seemingly on a whim, the California Rail Pass and I saw Mr. Herrmann speak eloquently about Amtrak's commitment to service and customer care, but eliminating this pass did nothing of the kind. There was no advance notice, no meaning explanation of the reasoning behind the decision, and no replacement even contemplated.

For the third year in a row, I had a neat little vacation all planned out based on my California rail pass and you ruined it. When I tried to buy the pass at the counter, the clerk told me there was only one day before the cancellation even went into effect. When I emailed you folks, to express myself, I can only assume that you never received it because there was no response, not even a thank you for your comments. There's no reason you can't restore the pass while you come up with an alternative to restore the California Rail Pass. Please do so. Thank you.

ALEX BECKMANN, BROTHERHOOD OF LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS AND TRAINMEN

Hi. My name is Alex Beckman and I'm here on behalf of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen today. The BLET and the BLET Amtrak General Committee of Adjustment share the Administration's goal of a safe, reliable integrated national passenger rail service system that grows service and union jobs. But Amtrak has not shown how its restructuring is will meet these goals without creating operational complications or jeopardizing labor protections, Amtrak proposes to establish infrastructure, passenger operations, and the rolling stock as separate entities, and but fundamental questions remain about the allocation of responsibilities distribution of funding and implementation costs, and without these details neither we, nor our members, can fully evaluate this proposal. Our foremost concern is protecting passenger engineers and the broader Amtrak workforce.

We greatly appreciate our productive engagement with USDOT Secretary and Amtrak's. Duffy has reaffirmed the administration's commitment to preserving Railway Labor Act coverage and existing collective bargaining agreements and made clear that labor questions should be resolved as part of the organizational design and not afterward. And we thank the Secretary for his commitments. While these assurances are welcome, they're not enough. Amtrak's initial labor protection agreement fell substantially short. Any restructuring must expressly preserve existing agreements, representation rights seniority, and work jurisdiction, and railroad retirement and employment benefits, with safeguards against contracting out transfers that circumvent those agreements those commitments must be binding and enforceable before the Amtrak Board acts.

We also question if Amtrak is going to produce the capability as Amtrak claims. In 1994, Amtrak reorganized into separate strategic business units, each with its own president. That structure — created silos impaired communication and ultimately required consolidation in 2001. Amtrak has not explained how this proposal avoids repeating those mistakes. The BET is not opposed to reforms that demonstrably strengthen passenger rail service, and we remain willing to work constructively with Amtrak, just as we would with the Administration. Thank you very much.

ALAN FISHER

Hi. I'm Alan Fischer and a freelance railroad advocate creator covering the industry, putting our future and country first. We'd like to think back to Margaret Thatcher when she was the prime minister of Britain in the 1980s. And she did not break up British Rail, notably but she did start restructuring it into different pieces because she did not want the responsibility of being the one that was then held. Thank you so much. And as we know, British Rail did not have a successful it didn't turn out successful from that venture and it — it's not only just British rail.

It's Amtrak was again, now it's not legally Amtrak is not legally allowed to be privatized but you cannot even though you cannot privatize the whole thing, you cannot, you can privatize parts of it and more. Have not only tried to do that now, but they tried to do that under George W. Bush and trying to split operations from infrastructure. No one has given a good reason why this needs to be done now and all current problems are with leadership issues, not a structure issues, and this will affect workers, the unions and passengers and Amtrak has hit record riderships [sic] for the last three years. So why change it this is entirely about shifting responsibility, so that no one can be blamed when something goes wrong or something is sold off. All of the Board wants to not be the one that has their name written on how Amtrak got privatized or what got privatized as part of it. Easily we know there are many actors in the industry that want different parts of this, like maintenance away or to take over union shop jobs and everything like that. So, I think this is a terrible decision and it's one that will be marked on the industry far into the future. So, no to this. Thank you.

ETHAN IVERSEN

Hi, everyone. Thank you everyone. I just want to thank you so much for hosting this panel today. It's an absolute pleasure to be here. I think I might be the youngest person on the here yet. And so, I'm happy to see that. But what I'd like to say is I grew up in Indianapolis, just five minutes from the Beach Grove shops. So, I've always had Amtrak in my life. And I've taken the Cardinal and the Hoosier State to Chicago to see family as a kid. And I actually just graduated with my master's. And I had to move to Virginia. And now, the Cardinal provides me with a way to get home and see my family on the weekends without having to take any additional time off work.

So, I know Jon Tester threw it in that 2022 bipartisan infrastructure bill to get the Cardinal back to daily service 98,000 riders in 2025. You know, I keep hearing, how about the Borealis had 200,000 riders in a year. Well, that was only three days a week of Amtrak Cardinal Service right if we got the Cardinal up to seven days a week, I think that you would get over 200,000 riders, and boy, do we need it in the Rust belt. We need the reliability, we need frequency, and we need affordability. We

need affordable train tickets. Don't overlook Indianapolis don't overlook Cincinnati, don't overlook Charleston, West Virginia, these services are very important to Midwesterners the train provides an affordable way to get around. And of course, with the gas prices right now, it's just insane. So please please, please Cardinal Daily Service we'd really, really, really appreciate it invest in the Beach Indy shops Indiana — Indiana, is all for Amtrak and we value the economic and the travel benefits that Amtrak gives to us.

Also Shout out to Amtrak Joe. Thank you so much. People just don't appreciate what he did for us, and now, we're finally getting the new Airo trainsets sets. Of course, the West Coast is getting them first. I'd love to see them on the Cardinal. But I'm well aware that's probably going to be years before that happens. So, I'm a young voter and I will always vote for Amtrak. I will always vote for public transportation and haven't missed an election yet. So, thank you guys so much again for hosting this and don't forget Indiana and don't forget the Midwest and don't forget the Cardinal. Take care. Thank you.

ABE ZUMWALT, ECONOMIST, DAVID EVANS AND ASSOCIATES

Hello. My name is Abe Zumwalt. I am an economist with David Evans & Associates. Railroad economist, that is. And I have to say that it's very heartening to see the goals outlined. And this is not a for-profit conversion, but a method to carry more passengers, support more service, and deliver stronger financial performance in that order. One of Amtrak's great challenges has been the relatively static number of trains that it must leverage a National Network footprint worth of overhead expenses across. Demand, as demonstrated by the smashed projections of the Borealis and Mardi Gras, or as expressed through stratospheric sleeping car prices is not the issue. But supply is. If Amtrak is able to run more trains in every dimension, longer consists, new routes, additional frequencies, it is will deliver stronger financial performance however, the present structure of the corporation and how it reports financially, I believe has been one of the anchors holding it back from this needed growth.

A new system or systems pertaining to the three proposed business units must align with rail industry best practice with avoidable cost basis accounting. And right now, the Amtrak Performance Tracking Allocated Cost Accounting System is unique in the industry, and it really should only be used as reporting per congressional requirement and not as a basis for planning. One of the issues with this is the fact that railroads are capital intensive. Railroad is generally an exercise in capital asset maximization and right now, the organization and cost structure should assume a profile that incentivizes this outcome. And anecdotally, the present structure has not done this and the overall way that you look at the costs, look like linear costs rather than stairstep expenses. Thank you very much for your time.

GARRETT EUCALITTO, COMMISSIONER, CONNECTICUT DOT

Good afternoon. My name is Garrett Eucalitto, and I currently serve as the Commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Transportation, I'm here to express Connecticut DoT's support for the current discussion and efforts that are underway and to acknowledge the real thoughtful and collaborative approach that FRA and Amtrak leadership has taken in discussing and evaluating

these changes and your efforts in seeking input from partners throughout this process and many more in this process.

Connecticut, as many of you know has a very unique and multifaceted relationship with Amtrak. Amtrak operates both Acela and Northeast Regional and Vermonter service over Connecticut-owned infrastructure between New Haven and New York border and Amtrak also operates the Hartford Line shuttle service under Section 209 as state-supported route on behalf of Connecticut and Massachusetts providing service between New Haven and Springfield Field. We also operate, CONDOT operates the CT Rail Hartford Line service over Amtrak owned infrastructure, and we also have CT Rail Shoreline East service, not to mention Metro North service through the entire New Haven line. So, all of those relationships exist alongside the intercity and state-supported services throughout our state and as you can imagine, that level of activity requires not only contractual agreements, but a strong ongoing partnership, and our teams, we're close together every day, but we recognize that organizations have to evolve to meet changing and demands and expectations.

And really for that reason, I appreciate the efforts to focus on accountability, performance, and continuous improvement as we support to strengthen the Future of Amtrak. And Amtrak — and that's, that's going to be key for us at Connecticut is making sure that Amtrak leadership consistently has that support and has those performance indicators and awareness. And so, really just want to thank you again the engagement through the working groups with the state DoTs. I appreciate it.

MARCUS NELSON

Good afternoon. I'd like to start by expressing my appreciation to the Board, both for their willingness to explore the possibilities of how America's railroad can best serve America into the future and for this necessary outreach to riders like me. That being said, I have struggled in these past months to determine precisely what value is being created for the riders by the proposed separation of functions and there is substantial risk, as other members of the public have noted today, to the creation of what could very likely operate as silos within Amtrak, separating team members and functions such as to reduce their effectiveness.

For one such specific example and the preliminary function placement presented by Amtrak separates procurement, maintenance, and fleet acquisition between free entities. Given the billions of dollars of rolling stock of acquisition now underway how can we be sure that these entities will actually be capable of effective collaboration and coordination to ensure this essential new equipment arrives on time, on budget and without delay? What will ensure separate maintenance and technical authorities take proper care of equipment that might need to survive decades on our rails?

Most alarmingly, despite the claims previously made by management, the risk of privatization of elements of Amtrak food is restructuring looms large. And what is to prevent within a short time of these changes, developments that might mean a private asset manager is now controlling the placement of pipelines or other assets on the Northeast Corridor, or the use of a, sale leaseback of the Airo and Acela fleets to a British style rolling stock company, or the sacrifice of Amtrak's

employees to Herzog or some other private firm. For operating tasks. These choices might not fit the definition of privatizing Amtrak but ultimately produce the same result. As privatization. If nothing else, I do hope that the Board takes the time to carefully consult our new Congress on the direction the American people might desire for their railroad. The magnitude of these changes demands such care. Thank you.

PUBLIC COMMENTER

Good afternoon. I'd like to thank the Board for listening to the riders of Amtrak. My question is more for the future. Why do you not think of the rails and retrofit the Interstate Highway System? Putting some type of monorail bag level? There's is all different kinds of systems that could be designed and do like a moon mission, a 10-year mission to produce high-speed mass transportation over the current system or the current Interstate Highway System but use the current system more for like corporate meetings or family leisure trips and use nostalgic rail cars, and a new business dynamic and a new vision for the future. That would be my suggestions for the Future of Amtrak and how it could be more viable more cost effective, and more enjoyable for the riding public. Thank you again, once again for your time. Have a very good day. And Everybody be blessed.

JOHN ROBERT SMITH, TRANSPORTATION FOR AMERICA

Good afternoon. I'm John Robert Smith, Senior Policy Advisor to Transportation for America and I have been about passenger rail for the past 35 years, and I appreciate the time that you've afforded me. For I stood in your place at one time, and I was a Board member to Amtrak and also served as Chairman of the Board and I was there when we rolled out the first Acela service, which has been so successful and supportive of the system, while we also greatly improved the on-board experience of the national system.

Restructuring of Amtrak is appropriate at this time and a division into equipment infrastructure and operations can make sense and all reporting to the Board level. However, we should use this time to learn where such separation of functions has failed. Therefore, we would recommend that the functions of dispatch, equipment maintenance, scheduling, host railroads, and state services be held together under operations. A number of former Amtrak executives see the wisdom in such an approach, and I offer it to the Board as well.

I know that you're all familiar with the greatly successful Mardi Gras service along the gulf 12, doubling and tripling ridership projections and revenue and carrying 150,000 passengers its first year. And 5.3 million in revenue, but that growth is constrained by equipment availability and how we design and acquire equipment is critical to overcoming this short fall. Maintenance and standardization are the two real problems. Therefore, we recommend that an equipment advisory board be created that involves relevant manufacturers on board and service personnel at the very beginning of the process and to ensure that we are creating standardized replicable, scalable passenger oil equipment to build a passenger oil industry in this country. Thank you so much.

PUBLIC COMMENTER

Yeah, I just wanted to — yeah, I just wanted to speak and obviously, I thank you guys for having this outreach to riders like me, but I don't think that this transformation of the company structure into the three subentities I don't think that it is in the best interest of riders or in the best interest of the improvement of passenger rail service in the U.S. I think that it fundamentally breaks down the incentive structures that can align to create improvements in the service because it can produce a kind of adversarial relationship, and I think you could see that with peer examples and that's kind of what happened with the splitting of the responsibilities under the British rail system and when they privatized British rail rather. And it created a kind of adversarial system between the rolling stock owners and the people doing the capital on the infrastructure and the actual operations of service and I think it betrays the fact that fundamentally rail is an integrated system.

And so, the incentives should be aligned such that not only and obviously, we have a personal want for the passenger rail service to get better, but the incentives should align that improving infrastructure is directly reducing how much we're spending on fuel for example, if you feel expanded electrification things like that. They make sure the incentives push towards the approval of service. And I think that this restructuring would reverse that and would result in a lessening of improvement of service over time. So yeah, I would just like to speak out and say that I think this is not in the best interest of anybody who truly cares about making you know, making Amtrak into a world-class passenger rail provider. Yeah, and thank you for giving this opportunity to reach out today. Thank you.

NICHOLAS LAUER

Good afternoon, Amtrak Board. My name is Nicholas Lauer and I'm originally from southeastern New Hampshire. Currently I work for Deutsche Bahn, the German federal railway, and our infrastructure management company, InfraGO, as an infrastructure planner and my comments are given in an unofficial capacity as a U.S. citizen and do not reflect the views of my employer. Deutsche Bahn was originally part of the German government and operated until 1994 in an integrated capacity and many more, ownership falling under the umbrella of the same agency. During this time, the German system was the envy of the world. In 1994, the railway was transferred to a private holding company with the aforementioned roles being split into several separate subsidiaries. It was structured this way to prepare the system for private ownership.

Now while I love my job and am proud of the work which my colleagues and I accomplish every day, Deutsche Bahn has struggled in recent years. And part of this is severe underinvestment. However, in my personal experience, many of our struggles have been made worse by how we are structured. The company struggles with clear communications both internally and externally Internally, the subsidiaries have many duplicate structures and therefore duplicate costs. Each company, for example needs its own CEO and accountability for various failings is often traded between the various subsidiaries Having infrastructure being managed separately from the railway operating companies leads to many breakdowns in communications and operational inefficiencies. For example, timetabling of our network is managed by the infrastructure division, except the individual

timetables for each individual train originate with the operating companies and have to be approved by both Emergency changes become difficult and pass through at least two companies, leaving trains sitting for longer. Several of these changes have been walked back, but as a whole, the separation has led to many difficulties Running a railway becomes a blame game and accountability is lost. So please don't do this keep the company integrated. Thank you.

KEN BITTEN, RAILROAD PASSENGER CAR ALLIANCE

Thank you. My name is Ken Bitten. I'm a member of the Railroad Passenger Car Alliance and the American Association of Private Rail Car Owners. My question for the Board is how will private car operations be integrated under the new management? Obviously, it will be in operations, but private car operation has the opportunity to be a very positive private-public partnership. And in addition to generating significant positive cash flow, as we cover all of the fully allocated costs and even greater than that since we're not necessarily needing to cover things like ADA upgrades and the positive cash flow is much greater than that.

Under the Richard Anderson administration, the prices increased dramatically and the access deteriorated and it that's largely devastated private car operations, and recently, the operating department has not made reasonable efforts to accommodate private car. Movements for example, refusing to add and remove cars and route on at stations that would allow it, indicates that no one really wants to make any effort and, in fact, would rather just chase away the business. So, I would strongly encourage you to take a fresh page and look at the opportunities to increase this very positive and effective marketing tool, as well as a promoter of cash flow. Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak.

SUZANNE MANNIX

I hadn't prepared anything. My name is Suzanne Mannix. I recently took my first Amtrak trip. I live in Montana and we could really benefit from more public transportation, and I wish I knew more about the discussion. But I will say, it was really critical on portions of our trip to lose any bathroom facilities on a coach trip is pretty awful and I think that part of that has to do with older equipment. So, I'm very interested in this portion about equipment procurement. I would love to see these services continue and to improve, but you really need to look at the small things, too. Because sanitation for people on a trip for ten hours is very important to their health and welfare. I wish you all the luck and success in your venture. And I wish I had a little more to contribute. But that's all I have to say.

MODERATOR

And before we go on to our next commenter, Phillip did put in the comments just his notes. Not sure why he's not able to comment. We can't hear him, but I definitely wanted to provide his comments.

PHILLIP STREBY, RAIL USERS NETWORK (WRITTEN COMMENT, READ BY MODERATOR)

Less than wasted time on changing Amtrak's structure and more time in acquiring and fielding equipment, and I propose a 10,000-car and 500 locomotive order to allow for eventually six daily trains per route as equipment and agreements become available and also would allow for at least two additional routes one of which I suggest to be a Midwest direct Florida Auto Train route with the north end at either Detroit or Toledo as both would have capacity to do so. Thank you.

DAN MCFARLIN

Hi. Thank you for the opportunity. I appreciate that. I did not have prepared remarks. I would like to point out that the Amtrak's emphasis needs to be on frequency, reliability, and connectivity. I have no position on the reorganization. I find it somewhat suspect and Amtrak needs to work on identifying low hanging fruit. One of the areas in which Amtrak is missing the bus right now is found in Oregon. The state of Oregon recently instituted a bus service between Portland, Pasco, and Boise and the system needs to connect — your reservation. Amtrak needs to make it available so that people can connect with connecting bus services throughout the nation, so that they can access and increase ridership on the Amtrak system. Thank you.

MODERATOR

Thank you so much. We are just checking to see if there's anybody else that would like to make public comment. We do have plenty of time, so just raise your hand if you would like.

JOHN SHEA

Thank you. Well, everyone, we said that we wanted to give everyone an opportunity to speak and it looks like we may have done that. We'll just pause here for another moment. Last call for questions and comments. We're happy to extend the time if anyone else wants to speak. But if everyone who's wanted to speak has spoken, we will wrap it up. No. Anyone else? Going once. Okay, I hear no more comments. So, we are going to move to close.

Thank you, everyone. Thank you everyone. I appreciate everyone who joined us today and especially to those who took their time to share their comments with the Board. I really do appreciate you sharing your perspectives and your views on this. We're going to continue to provide regular updates on this Transformation initiative through our Future of Amtrak website so I would encourage you to visit the site and stay engaged as we move forward with this work.

I do want to make everyone aware that our next Public Board Meeting and our annual in-person Public Board Meeting is scheduled for December 2nd in Philadelphia and that meeting will provide members of the public with an opportunity to address the Board directly on any topic they would like to raise. We We'll share more details about that meeting very soon as we get closer. Again, thank you for joining and taking the time to make your voices heard that concludes today's special Board meeting. Thank you and have a good afternoon.

[End of meeting]