

HR 749

Passenger Rail Reform and Investment Act of 2015

Congress: 114 (2015–2017, Ended)

Chamber: House

Policy Area: Transportation and Public Works

Introduced: Feb 5, 2015

Current Status: Received in the Senate and Read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation. (Mar 9, 2015)

Latest Action: Received in the Senate and Read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation. (Mar 9, 2015)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/house-bill/749>

Sponsor

Name: Rep. Shuster, Bill [R-PA-9]

Party: Republican • **State:** PA • **Chamber:** House

Cosponsors (12 total)

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Rep. Capuano, Michael E. [D-MA-7]	D · MA		Feb 5, 2015
Rep. DeFazio, Peter A. [D-OR-4]	D · OR		Feb 5, 2015
Rep. Denham, Jeff [R-CA-10]	R · CA		Feb 5, 2015
Del. Norton, Eleanor Holmes [D-DC-At Large]	D · DC		Feb 26, 2015
Rep. Barletta, Lou [R-PA-11]	R · PA		Feb 26, 2015
Rep. Brown, Corrine [D-FL-5]	D · FL		Feb 26, 2015
Rep. Costello, Ryan A. [R-PA-6]	R · PA		Feb 26, 2015
Rep. Curbelo, Carlos [R-FL-26]	R · FL		Feb 26, 2015
Rep. Frankel, Lois [D-FL-22]	D · FL		Feb 26, 2015
Rep. Hanna, Richard L. [R-NY-22]	R · NY		Feb 26, 2015
Rep. Napolitano, Grace F. [D-CA-32]	D · CA		Feb 26, 2015
Rep. Walters, Mimi [R-CA-45]	R · CA		Feb 26, 2015

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee	Senate	Referred To	Mar 9, 2015
Transportation and Infrastructure Committee	House	Discharged from	Feb 12, 2015

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Transportation and Public Works

Related Bills

Bill	Relationship	Last Action
114 HRES 134	Procedurally related	Mar 3, 2015: Motion to reconsider laid on the table Agreed to without objection.

Passenger Rail Reform and Investment Act of 2015

TITLE I--AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS

(Sec. 101) Authorizes appropriations for FY2016-FY2019 to the Secretary of Transportation for the National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak) for:

- the Northeast Corridor Improvement Fund account,
- the National Network account,
- the Office of the Inspector General, and
- national infrastructure investment capital grants.

TITLE II--AMTRAK REFORM

(Sec. 201) Directs Amtrak to establish internal controls to ensure its costs and revenues are allocated to either the Northeast Corridor or the National Network.

Directs the Secretary to establish substantive and procedural requirements for Northeast Corridor and National Network investment capital grant requests.

Directs Amtrak to establish:

- a Northeast Corridor Improvement Fund account for Northeast Corridor capital improvement projects, and
- a National Network account for capital expenses and operating costs of the National Network.

Requires Amtrak, before entering into contracts exceeding \$100 million to purchase rolling stock, to submit to the Secretary and Congress a business case analysis on the utility of such a purchase.

Requires the Northeast Corridor Infrastructure and Operations Advisory Commission to:

- develop an annual capital investment plan for the Northeast Corridor main line between Boston, Massachusetts, and the District of Columbia, and the Northeast Corridor branch lines connecting to Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, Springfield, Massachusetts, and Spuyten Duyvil, New York; and
- update, once every 10 years, a Northeast Corridor service development plan.

Requires Amtrak, and states and public entities that own infrastructure supporting or providing intercity rail passenger transportation on the Northeast Corridor, to develop and update asset management plans for the Northeast Corridor main line and the Northeast Corridor branch lines.

(Sec. 202) Requires the Amtrak Board of Directors to prepare a five-year capital and operating plan for the Northeast Corridor and National Network.

(Sec. 203) Directs the Secretary to establish a State-Supported Route Advisory Committee.

Requires Amtrak to transmit to Congress and to each state that sponsors a state-supported route an annual cost, service, and ridership forecast for each route for the upcoming year, including quarterly updates to enable states to pace costs against state budgets, plan effectively, and address unexpected changes in costs in a timely manner.

(Sec. 204) Amends the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 to revise requirements with respect to methodologies for Amtrak route and service planning decisions. Requires Amtrak, as a condition of receiving a grant, to obtain the services of an independent entity to develop and recommend objective methodologies for Amtrak to use in the planning of intercity rail passenger transportation routes and services.

(Sec. 205) Revises alternate passenger rail service pilot program requirements.

Requires the Surface Transportation Board, within 120 days after submission of a dispute between Amtrak and a rail carrier (or carriers) awarded the right to provide rail service over a route in which Amtrak is to grant access to its reservation system, stations, and facilities, to issue an order requiring Amtrak to provide such facilities and services to those carriers if certain criteria are met.

(Sec. 206) Directs Amtrak to develop a plan to eliminate the operating loss for food and beverage service on board its trains.

Bars the use of federal funds, beginning five years after enactment of this Act, to cover any such loss on a route operated either by Amtrak or by an alternative passenger rail service provider in lieu of Amtrak.

(Sec. 207) Directs Amtrak to request proposals from private sector persons or entities to utilize Amtrak-owned rights-of-way for telecommunications systems, energy distribution systems, and other appropriate activities. Authorizes Amtrak to enter into an agreement to implement any such proposal or proposals.

(Sec. 208) Requires Amtrak to report to Congress on options to enhance development around Amtrak stations.

(Sec. 209) Amends the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 to extend indefinitely specified authority to restructure long-term Amtrak debt and capital leases.

(Sec. 210) Directs Amtrak to:

- develop a pilot program to allow passengers to transport domesticated cats or dogs on certain Amtrak trains, and
- collect fees for each cat or dog (except service animals) transported by a ticketed passenger.

Bars the use of federal funds to implement this program.

(Sec. 211) Directs the Amtrak Inspector General to:

- evaluate Amtrak's boarding procedures for passengers, including passengers using or transporting non-motorized transportation such as wheelchairs and bicycles at its 10 stations through which the most people pass; and
- make recommendations to improve such procedures.

TITLE III--INTERCITY PASSENGER RAIL POLICY

(Sec. 301) Requires the Northeast Corridor Infrastructure and Operations Advisory Commission to develop, and update, a Northeast Corridor Priority Project List of capital improvement projects along the Northeast Corridor.

Directs the Secretary to develop a program to issue competitive grants for listed projects included in the List.

Limits grants to up to 50% of net project costs.

(Sec. 302) Amends the Railroad Revitalization and Regulatory Reform Act of 1976 to revise Railroad Rehabilitation and

Improvement Financing program requirements. Modifies application procedures for direct loans and loan guarantees for railroad improvement projects.

Requires the Secretary, in granting applications for such loans and guarantees, to give priority to projects for the installation of a positive train control.

(Sec. 303) Directs the Secretary to make direct loans and loan guarantees for capital improvement projects in the Northeast Corridor (NEC Fast Forward Program).

Increases from 15 to 30 days the period for notice and opportunity for public comment before the Secretary waives Buy American requirements for the use of U.S. steel, iron, and manufactured goods in intercity passenger rail service corridor capital projects.

(Sec. 304) Prescribes requirements for the award of large capital project grants in excess of \$1 billion.

(Sec. 305) Directs the Secretary to study the availability and use of small businesses owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals and certain veteran-owned small businesses in Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)-funded intercity rail passenger transportation projects.

Requires the use for this study of \$3 million of the amounts made available for each of FY2016 and FY2017 to the Office of the Secretary and the FRA.

(Sec. 306) Directs the FRA to convene a working group to evaluate the restoration of intercity rail passenger service in the Gulf Coast region between New Orleans, Louisiana, and Orlando, Florida.

(Sec. 307) Revises the composition of the Next Generation Corridor Equipment Pool Committee to include nonprofit organizations representing employees who perform overhaul and maintenance of passenger railroad equipment.

Repeals the authority of Amtrak and states participating in the Committee to establish a corporation, which may be owned or jointly-owned by Amtrak, participating states, or other entities, to enter into agreements for the funding, procurement, remanufacture, ownership, and management of corridor equipment, including equipment currently owned or leased by Amtrak and next-generation corridor equipment acquired as a result of the Committee's actions.

(Sec. 308) Directs the Northeast Corridor Infrastructure and Operations Advisory Committee to report to Congress an analysis of the implementation of nonstop, high-speed express passenger rail service in the Northeast Corridor. Requires the Amtrak Board of Directors, within 90 days after submitting the report, to consider implementing such services.

TITLE IV--PROJECT DELIVERY

(Sec. 401) Directs the Secretary to begin a rulemaking to govern the federal review, permitting, and approval or disapproval of freight railroad and intercity and commuter rail passenger transportation infrastructure projects.

(Sec. 402) Directs the Secretary to: (1) pursue program alternatives to promote a consistent approach in the treatment of railroad and rail-related properties for historic preservation review, and (2) develop mechanisms for streamlining compliance with specified requirements.

TITLE V--MISCELLANEOUS

(Sec. 501) Defines the term "Secretary" to mean the Secretary of Transportation.

(Sec. 503) Directs the Secretary to require:

- each state (other than the 10 States with the most highway-rail grade crossing collisions over the past three years) to develop, within 18 months after enactment of this Act, a state highway-rail grade crossing action plan; and
- each of the 10 states with the most collisions to update its plan and report to the Secretary what it did to implement it.

(Sec. 504) Directs the Comptroller General to evaluate the effectiveness of the FRA's rule:

- on the use of locomotive horns at rail crossings, and
- in establishing quiet zones.

Actions Timeline

- **Mar 9, 2015:** Received in the Senate and Read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.
- **Mar 4, 2015:** Considered under the provisions of rule H. Res. 134. (consideration: CR H1578-1596, H1596-1603)
- **Mar 4, 2015:** Rule provides for consideration of H.R. 749 with 1 hour of general debate. Previous question shall be considered as ordered without intervening motions except motion to recommit with or without instructions. Measure will be considered read. A specified amendment is in order. Resolution also provides for proceedings of the House during the period from March 4, 2015 through March 13, 2015.
- **Mar 4, 2015:** House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union pursuant to H. Res. 134 and Rule XVIII.
- **Mar 4, 2015:** The Speaker designated the Honorable Andy Harris to act as Chairman of the Committee.
- **Mar 4, 2015:** GENERAL DEBATE - The Committee of the Whole proceeded with one hour of general debate on H.R. 749.
- **Mar 4, 2015:** DEBATE - Pursuant to the provisions of H.Res. 134, the Committee of the Whole proceeded with 10 minutes of debate on the McNerney amendment No. 1.
- **Mar 4, 2015:** DEBATE - Pursuant to the provisions of H. Res. 134, the Committee of the Whole proceeded with 10 minutes of debate on the Fitzpatrick amendment No. 2.
- **Mar 4, 2015:** DEBATE - Pursuant to the provisions of H. Res. 134, the Committee of the Whole proceeded with 10 minutes of debate on the Mica amendment No. 3.
- **Mar 4, 2015:** DEBATE - Pursuant to the provisions of H. Res. 134, the Committee of the Whole proceeded with 10 minutes of debate on the Brownley (CA) amendment No. 4.
- **Mar 4, 2015:** The Committee of the Whole rose informally to receive a message.
- **Mar 4, 2015:** The Committee resumed its sitting.
- **Mar 4, 2015:** DEBATE - Pursuant to the provisions of H. Res. 134, the Committee of the Whole proceeded with 10 minutes of debate on the Perlmutter amendment No. 5.
- **Mar 4, 2015:** DEBATE - Pursuant to the provisions of H. Res. 134, the Committee of the Whole proceeded with 10 minutes of debate on the McClintock amendment No. 6.
- **Mar 4, 2015:** POSTPONED PROCEEDINGS - At the conclusion of debate on the McClintock amendment, the Chair put the question on adoption of the amendment and by voice vote, announced that the noes had prevailed. Mr. McClintock demanded a recorded vote and the Chair postponed further proceedings on the question of adoption until a time to be announced.
- **Mar 4, 2015:** DEBATE - Pursuant to the provisions of H. Res. 134, the Committee of the Whole proceeded with 10 minutes of debate on the Lipinski amendment No. 7.
- **Mar 4, 2015:** UNFINISHED BUSINESS - The Chair announced that the unfinished business was on adoption of amendments which had been debated earlier and on which further proceedings had been postponed.
- **Mar 4, 2015:** The House rose from the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union to report H.R. 749.
- **Mar 4, 2015:** The House adopted the amendment in the nature of a substitute as agreed to by the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union. (text of amendment in the nature of a substitute: CR H1585-1593)
- **Mar 4, 2015:** Mr. Maloney, Sean moved to recommit with instructions to the Committee on Transportation. (consideration: CR H1600-1602; text: CR H1601)
- **Mar 4, 2015:** DEBATE - The House proceeded with 10 minutes of debate on the motion to recommit with instructions. The instructions contained in the motion seek to require the bill to be reported back to the House with an amendment to authorize \$150 million for each of the fiscal years 2016 through 2019 for the use of the Amtrak Police Department to acquire canines, explosive detection, surveillance and communication equipment, baggage screening, counter-terrorism, and other security needs. The amendment also implements a veterans hiring initiative in the Amtrak Police Department.
- **Mar 4, 2015:** On motion to recommit with instructions Failed by recorded vote: 184 - 232 (Roll no. 111).
- **Mar 4, 2015:** Passed/agreed to in House: On passage Passed by the Yeas and Nays: 316 - 101 (Roll no. 112).
- **Mar 4, 2015:** Motion to reconsider laid on the table Agreed to without objection.
- **Mar 4, 2015:** On passage Passed by the Yeas and Nays: 316 - 101 (Roll no. 112).
- **Mar 3, 2015:** Rule H. Res. 134 passed House.
- **Mar 2, 2015:** Rules Committee Resolution H. Res. 134 Reported to House. Rule provides for consideration of H.R. 749 with 1 hour of general debate. Previous question shall be considered as ordered without intervening motions except

motion to recommit with or without instructions. Measure will be considered read. A specified amendment is in order. Resolution also provides for proceedings of the House during the period from March 4, 2015 through March 13, 2015.

- **Feb 26, 2015:** Reported by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. H. Rept. 114-30.
- **Feb 26, 2015:** Placed on the Union Calendar, Calendar No. 20.
- **Feb 12, 2015:** Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines, and Hazardous Materials Discharged.
- **Feb 12, 2015:** Committee Consideration and Mark-up Session Held.
- **Feb 12, 2015:** Ordered to be Reported by Voice Vote.
- **Feb 6, 2015:** Referred to the Subcommittee on Railroads, Pipelines, and Hazardous Materials.
- **Feb 5, 2015:** Introduced in House
- **Feb 5, 2015:** Referred to the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.