

Develop a National Intercity Passenger Rail Policy

What's Best for Michigan

Develop a national policy for intercity passenger rail that:

- Promotes planned investment in passenger rail as a transportation alternative that will help reduce highway congestion, improve air quality, and enhance rail safety and homeland security.
- Is created in consultation with states and local agencies.
- Encourages partnerships between freight, commuter, and intercity rail railroads.
- Addresses equity issues for all service providers seeking access to the railroad infrastructure.
- Provides dedicated funding for passenger rail investment.

Why

Michigan is poised to make significant gains through a long-term commitment by the federal government to the development and operation of a national intercity passenger rail system. Michigan's rail corridors have long been part of the Midwest Regional Rail Initiative and feature the only rail segments outside the East Coast that provide service traveling at better than 90 miles per hour. Implementing a national policy and national rail plan would help improve the connectivity of Michigan's rail corridors to the rest of the nation.

The issue of equitable access to railroad infrastructure needs to be addressed to encourage competition and reduce the cost of passenger rail. One place to start would be to expand the Alternate Passenger Rail Service Pilot Program, established in the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008, by allowing alternate passenger rail service providers other than the host railroad to provide service, and to extend the same railroad infrastructure access rights to Departments of Transportation (DOTs) and service providers with whom they contract.

A national rail transportation network that moves both passengers and freight effectively and efficiently across international borders, across state lines, and within regional and state boundaries is essential to the country's continued economic growth and vitality.