



AMTRAK GRANT FLEXIBILITY ACT

BACKGROUND

The FRA's Federal-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail (Fed-State) program is the **primary dedicated source of federal funding** for advancing new or enhanced passenger rail routes. This program, along with the MEGA Grant Program and the CRISI Grant Program, provides significant investments to support the passenger rail network in the United States. While Amtrak is eligible to apply for grant funding, these programs require applicants to provide a partial funding match covering **at least twenty percent** of a given project's total cost (also called the "nonfederal share").

THE ISSUE

Currently, **Amtrak has limited ability** to generate these matching funds, in part because the company's annual subsidy dollars are **ineligible to be used for that purpose**. This restricts Amtrak's ability to fund or apply to receive grant program funding for projects where it is the primary or sole grant applicant and shoulders the primary responsibility to meet the non-federal match. This limits the types of projects Amtrak can pursue and **makes improving passenger rail infrastructure unnecessarily difficult**. This also creates an issue when Amtrak is partnering with localities or states in trying to promote routes through economically disadvantaged areas.

THE SOLUTION

By allowing Amtrak to use its annual Northeast Corridor and National Network funding to meet the non-federal share, **we can alleviate this problem**. The increased flexibility for Amtrak to provide additional support to localities looking to expand passenger rail would **expedite projects and shave years off of the completion timelines for many longstanding projects that are currently in progress**.

