



## URGENT MESSAGE..... ACTION REQUESTED



Railroad Passenger Car Alliance is working directly with other organizations in regards to Amtrak's most recent policy, released on March 28, 2018. [That policy](#) (linked here) will have drastic effects on many private car owners, excursion operators, private companies and tourism in the many communities that utilize Amtrak's service.

This policy will eliminate most special trains and severely limit the locations where private cars can be added or removed from trains.

As we move forward, we hope to have an open dialogue with Amtrak in regards to this policy. We look forward to returning not only the revenue stream to Amtrak that we produce with our clientele, but the goodwill that we generate on behalf of Amtrak with every trip.

Below is information on what you can do to get the word out. During this process remember to represent your organizations with professionalism and respect. This is no time to get down in the mud as we often see in comments on social media and news sites.

This is truly a turning point on what our future will look like as operators. All organizations that are affected are united and working on the common goal of restoring excursions and private car operations. Please help us with the suggestions below.

(If you're attending the American Short Line and Regional Railroad 2018 Connections Convention this year, stop by and see me on April 9<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 AM as I will be leading the 701 mechanical session on movement of passenger cars in freight trains.)

Be Safe

Roger

**This is the time to engage your elected representatives and business community.**

**You should send an e-mail such as the one below to your Congresspersons, Mayor and Governor.**

**If you bring a service or financial benefit to your community, contact your Chamber of Commerce and encourage them to become involved.**

**The media can be a powerful tool. Contact your local newspaper and television stations letting them know what this policy will do to impact your community.**

**Facts are important in this endeavor. Be sure to state clearly and unemotionally what is being done by Amtrak and its impact. How many passengers do you serve annually? How much money does your activity bring to your community? What other services do you render to local citizens?**

An email similar to this can be sent to your elected officials:

The Honorable (place name here)

Privately owned railroad cars and charter trains travel hundreds of thousands of miles annually, paying Amtrak by the mile and thus contributing what Amtrak estimates to be at least 4 million dollars straight to its bottom line.

Amtrak has told us they no longer want our money.

(add specific info about your group or business impact here)

Amtrak has notified its employees it will no longer approve most special trains, such as excursion trains and Santa Trains that bring revenue and entertainment into communities nationwide.

Amtrak has also advised private car owners that at end of April the common carrier will no longer allow their cars to be placed on or removed from Amtrak trains at historically available intermediate points.

This will shut down many of our businesses, deprive riders of a choice and mean that these vintage cars, some dating back a hundred years, will no longer be seen by the public. Most owners are not rich hobbyists but rather run their cars as a business.

While we understand the importance of On Time Performance, private cars and special trains are an insignificant contributor to Amtrak delays. This new policy, which is likely an overreaction to Congressional desires for Amtrak profitability, will deprive the railroad of a source of income, promotion and the good will of many influential customers.

Please request that Amtrak rescind this policy .

A possible news release :

Contact: your name and phone number email

NEW AMTRAK POLICY WILL IMPACT (your community name here)

Amtrak has notified its employees that the railroad will no longer approve most special trains, such as excursion trains and Santa Trains, that bring revenue and entertainment into communities nationwide.

(if your organization has a special train or event that would be impacted add it here)

Amtrak has also advised private car owners that at end of April the common carrier will no longer allow their cars to be placed on or removed from Amtrak trains at historically available intermediate points. This could shut down many small businesses, deprive riders of a choice and mean that these vintage cars, some dating back a hundred years, will no longer be seen by the public. Most owners are not rich hobbyists but rather run their cars as a business.

Privately owned railroad cars and charter trains travel hundreds of thousands of miles annually, paying Amtrak by the mile and thus contributing what Amtrak estimates to be at least 4 million dollars straight to its bottom line.

The joy in a child's eyes when experiencing their first Santa Train, and the nostalgic memory of a senior citizen as a vintage car passes through town could be a thing of the past if these new restrictions prevail.

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## **RPCA NEWS**

**Membership renewals** are due next month. Don't wait until the last minute. If your dues of \$45.00 (\$10.00 more for CUPS) are not paid by the end of June, you will lose out on all the benefits of RPCA. These include: this e-newsletter, a twice annual full color magazine, the informative annual conference, our resource library, access to single car tester and coupler gauges, insurance, reporting marks and best of all networking and friends. You can renew on line or mail your check to PO Box 404, Huntington, WV 25708

You will soon be getting your first copy of the full color news magazine. **Passenger Car News** edited by Joe Rosenthal. If you do not receive your copy by May, please make sure RPCA has your correct mailing address. In order for this to be successful we need your long form articles. They can be on any topic from railroad history to the success of a renovation. email your story to [media@rpca.com](mailto:media@rpca.com).

It's not too early to start thinking about the **2019 RPCA conference**. Ray Kammer has set up a website where you can easily keep up with the news. Just [click here](#) to get the latest.

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### **THE EYES HAVE IT**

According to Oregon State University, about 2,000 eye injuries occur every day at job sites around this country. Of these, approximately 200 require missed days of work in the days following. Many of these injuries are preventable with the appropriate safety equipment. Approved safety glasses are a must on the job site. Making it a habit to either arrive at the site wearing the protection or putting them on as you exit your vehicle is a great safety practice. Even if you are walking through a work site, eye protection could be useful. Because of the dust in the Pueblo yard, I try to have my safety glasses on whether working on my car or volunteering for the museum.

There are different types of eye protection based on the work environment. Safety glasses with side shields or full face shields are good where solid particles are involved. Metal particles and dust particles are a couple of examples. When it comes to liquids and chemicals, tight fitting goggles or the full face shield should work. Sometimes we forget about eye protection measures when using cutting torches or welders. Full face shields with appropriate ratings should be used with cutting torches and plasma cutters. Welding helmets are an absolute necessity and carry the same type of ratings. Grainger has a safety page devoted to eye protection lens at:

<https://safety.grainger.com/people/full-guide-safety-glasses-and-face-shields>

Please make it your safety practice to wear eye protection. Let's not be one of those numbers listed above. Stay safe and I hope to SEE all of you in Cincinnati.



Gary Carter



## UMLER CORNER

**WARNING!** In the old west, cattle rustlers were shot or hung. Rustling still happens, but now it is passenger cars. If your equipment is not properly stenciled with AEI tags that match the Umler registration, you may go to where the car WAS and find it gone and no one can do anything about it because it can't be easily tracked. If the owner is incapacitated or deceased, next of kin need to notify the person performing their Umler work immediately. That way the Umler entry status can be modified so that the bad people can't just order the car moved. This has already happened 5 times in RPCNB, that is why we ask for alternate contacts.

RPCNB CATs: make sure you send us copies of your certifications as you renew them. We are required to have them on file.

PTC is not coming, it is HERE NOW! FRA reports 56% of the mileage on the 41 freight railroads required to have PTC are now active. Commuter and passenger (Amtrak) are lagging.

There is a new Umler Data Specification Manual issued as of mid-March. New fields and fields promoted from optional to mandatory are in it.

Brake Ratio empty and loaded are now active and mandatory. The computer is automatically calculating these for freight cars, but there is also a manual owner input field for both when the computer generated numbers are wrong. Railinc is taking the last half of March to preload all the freight car data fields, and this includes all MoW. That means vans/cabeese, and canteens for the steam operators!

Passenger cars will be coming soon. More changes to come.

My car is in Umler, but the railroad won't take it! What gives? Here's how it works. If an entry, car or loco, does not have acceptable/correct data in all the mandatory fields, that entry goes into a status called "in Conflict". No railroad will accept for movement rolling stock in conflict. If not corrected, after about 30 days, that records goes into "Restricted In Interchange". No railroad will accept for movement rolling stock that is restricted. After about another 30 days, that records goes "Subject to Deletion". No railroad will accept for movement rolling stock subject to deletion. If not corrected, the record will be deleted from the active Umler system automatically by the computer.

Conflicts can include things like out of date air tests, or fields that were optional and are now mandatory. Some data may be correct, but because the computer compares some data field entries between 2 or more data fields, an error in only one can cause errors in many others. And incorrect data in optional fields can cause errors in mandatory fields and vice-versa because of this cross checking. RPCNB has identified 35 steam locomotives we call "main line capable". That means the loco has the power and steaming capacity to pull reasonably long passenger trains with sufficient seating to make a profit and can outrun the freight trains. Of these 35, only 15 are registered in Umler, and of those 15, only 7 do NOT have conflicts. Those members with steam that want to keep them in Umler need to keep the Umler data compliant. Steam locos don't have blue cards, but the Umler data fields under the blue card section are mandatory, and steam locos must have appropriate entries in those fields even if it is just "not equipped".

Bottom line: equipment owners need to keep their Umler records compliant. This means as Umler changes, owners need to make appropriate record changes.

**Pamm Monaghan**

[FRA PTC Progress Report](#)

[AAR PTC Report](#)

## RAILROAD NEWS

This is a synopsis of Railroad related news culled from various sources including Trains, Progressive Railroading, Railway Age, and various web sites.

### Museum and excursion trains



The Friends of the 261 will operate a steam excursion from Minneapolis to Duluth over BNSF Railway June 9-10, 2018, to raise funds for the installation of the positive train control system on Milwaukee Road steam locomotive No. 261. The 4-8-4 was built by Alco in 1944 and, if funds can be raised, would be the first mainline steam locomotive to be PTC-equipped. The Friends estimates it will cost between \$100,000 and \$150,000 to equip the historic locomotive for PTC. Amtrak has also increased the amount it charges the Friends to operate excursions. This decreases the amount of revenue the group can earn from trips, which causes PTC installation to be an even larger financial burden. The steam excursion will depart Minneapolis at 9 a.m. June 9 traveling via BNSF's Railway's Hinckley Subdivision at speeds up to 60 mph. The train will arrive that afternoon at the Lake Superior Railroad Museum in Duluth. After an overnight stop the excursion train will return depart Duluth at noon for the trip back to Minneapolis on June 10.

The Friends of the Stewartstown Railroad Inc., a support organization reviving tourist operations on the namesake short line in south-central Pennsylvania, has arranged the donation of former Maryland & Pennsylvania SW9 No. 84 locomotive by York Railway Co.. The unit will go into storage for evaluation and repairs before transfer to the Stewartstown Railroad, which connects to the former Pennsylvania Railroad line at New Freedom, Pa., now used by Steam Into History.

The Boothbay Railway Village is raising funds to complete the restoration of S.D. Warren 0-4-0T No. 2.. If everything goes according to plan, the locomotive could run sometime this year on the museum's three-quarter-mile loop of track near Boothbay Harbor.

The Lake Superior Railroad Museum's Duluth & Northeastern 2-8-0 No. 28 will require wheel work before returning to service for the 2018 season. An inspection in the winter revealed that both tires on the number three axle driving wheels are not in proper position on the wheel, although the tires are in good shape. The museum wants to move the tires back in position prior to this year's steam operating season. No. 28 is scheduled to operate beginning in August and into the fall. The locomotive was returned to service in 2017 following a seven-year overhaul.

Pikes Peak Cog Railway's operator says there is a chance that the famed rack railroad of the Rockies will close for good. During the winter maintenance, railroaders reviewed the condition of the equipment and track and determined that it had reached the end of its useful life. Jack Damioli, president and CEO of The Broadmoor hotel, which owns the 8.9-mile rail line, says the railroad could remain closed for up to another three years while the hotel studies its future.

The New England Steam Corp., a nonprofit group restoring the last operating Maine Central steam locomotive, is trying to raise \$100,000 to rebuild the tender. The group is spearheading the restoration of MEC 4-6-2 No. 470 at a newly-built shop at Washington Junction, located near Ellsworth. The group has focused on building a shelter for No. 470 where it can be protected and restored.

The Fort Wayne Railroad Historical Society's Joliet Rocket featuring Nickel Plate Road 2-8-4 No. 765 will return to downtown Chicago on Sept. 15 and 16, 2018. The first class, 1940s vintage-themed train trips will transport passengers between Joliet, Ill., and a layover at Chicago's LaSalle Street Station. Each of the twice-daily departures features food, cocktails, and live music. Passengers are encouraged to dress in vintage-style clothes. The trips are also a rare chance to see the 765 run at speeds close to 70 mph.

### Amtrak/Federal Agencies



President Trump has signed the \$1.3-trillion omnibus spending bill, keeping the government running through September and freeing up federal funding for Amtrak and the Gateway project he had opposed.

Included in the measure are:

- \$1.9 billion for Amtrak, up from \$1.5 billion in FY2017.
- \$250 million for positive train control implementation
- \$2.6 billion for Capital Investment Grants (CIG), up from \$2.4 billion in FY2017;
- \$3 billion for the State of Good Repair

program, up from \$2.6 billion in FY2017;

- \$1.5 billion for the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant program, up from \$500 million in FY2017;

As much as \$541 million is available for Gateway, which would construct a new tunnel underneath the Hudson River linking New Jersey and New York.

Amtrak President Richard Anderson recently told a Senate committee that Ronald L Batory, the new head of the Federal Railroad Administration, is the “spearhead” for positive train control compliance in the railroad industry. Batory estimated that among Class I railroads and Amtrak, the task is 80 percent to 90 percent complete. Among commuter railroads, some are nearly finished, others haven't begun. Some congressional critics are saying that some of the weakest lines won't make it.

Amtrak's “Host Railroad Report Card & FAQ” gives failing grades to Norfolk Southern and Canadian National, a “C” grade to CSX Transportation, a “B-” to Union Pacific, a “B+” to BNSF Railway and the highest marks to Canadian Pacific. The report notes that the host railroads are “highly profitable” and that Amtrak pays them \$142 million annually for use of their tracks and other resources needed to operate passenger trains. An ‘F’ host forces Amtrak trains on a particular route to wait one hour and 40 minutes, on average, for freight trains, and forces many Amtrak trains on this route to wait as long as 3 hours and 12 minutes.

Railroads increased the number of route miles controlled by positive train control by 22 percent in the fourth quarter of 2017, the Federal Railroad Administration announced. Freight and passenger railroads had a combined total of 31,184 route miles with PTC in operation. Railroads are required to install PTC on 57,976 route miles altogether.

The National Park Service “Trails and Rails” volunteer lecture program has been cancelled on five Amtrak trains and shortened on three others this year. The changes are the result of the result Amtrak's decision to withdraw what had been complimentary food and overnight lodging expense payments to the volunteers. Trains where the program has been cancelled are:

- *City of New Orleans*, New Orleans-Greenwood, Miss.
- *Sunset Limited*, New Orleans-Beaumont, Tex.
- *California Zephyr*, Denver-Grand Junction, Colo.
- *Texas Eagle*, Fort Worth-San Antonio, Tex.
- *Maple Leaf*, Albany/Rensselaer-Utica, N.Y.

Fatalities caused by railroad trespassing soared 22.3 percent and deaths at grade crossings climbed 7.4 percent in 2017 over the previous year, [Operation Lifesaver Inc.](#) has announced. Citing recently released [Federal Railroad Administration](#) statistics, OLI said that 575 people died and another 505 were injured in railroad trespassing incidents in 2017. Another 274 people died in collisions at grade crossings, while another 807 were injured last year. States with the most crossing collisions in 2017 were Texas, California, Illinois, Florida and Georgia. States with the most trespasser casualties — deaths and injuries combined — in 2017 were California, Texas, Florida, Pennsylvania and Illinois.

Amtrak and the [Transportation Security Administration](#) (TSA) have partnered to test new devices that can help detect explosives, including suicide vests. Known as a stand-off explosive detection unit, the system triggers an alarm if someone carrying or wearing an improvised explosive device passes by. The screening technology identifies objects that block naturally occurring emissions from a person's body. TSA and Amtrak are testing the equipment at New York Penn Station.

[RPA](#) (formerly NARP) Spring 2018 Advocacy Summit, Day on The Hill & Meeting begins Sunday, April 15, 2018 3:00 PM and ends Wednesday, April 18, 2018 02:00 PM in Washington, DC Hilton Alexandria Old Town

[contacts for board and officers](#)

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