

**Western Governors' Association  
Policy Resolution 09-13**

***Intercity Passenger Rail Development and Amtrak***

**A. BACKGROUND**

1. States have taken, and will continue to take a lead role in the planning and development of new, expanded and enhanced regional passenger rail corridor services. However, the states cannot fully program and implement these systems without a federal-state funding partnership similar to existing highway, transit and aviation programs.
2. Amtrak is the nation's operator of intercity passenger rail service. During FY 2008 (Oct. 2007-Sept. 2008), Amtrak carried more than 28.7 million passengers, representing the sixth straight fiscal year of record ridership when comparing the same routes. An average of more than 78,000 passengers ride on up to 300 Amtrak trains per day. Amtrak operates a nationwide rail network, serving more than 500 destinations in 46 states on 21,000 miles of routes, with nearly 18,000 employees.
3. Amtrak, a federal corporation, has had losses since its creation when it took over intercity from passenger operations previously run by freight railroads. In FY 2008, Amtrak earned approximately \$2.45 billion in revenue and incurred approximately \$3.38 billion in expense. No country in the world operates a passenger rail system without some form of public support for capital costs and/or operating expenses.
4. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 includes an appropriation of \$1.3 billion to enable the Secretary of Transportation to provide grants to Amtrak for investments in capital security including life safety improvements, repair, rehabilitation, or upgrade of railroad assets or infrastructure, and for capital projects that expand passenger rail capacity, including the rehabilitation of rolling stock. In addition, President Obama has requested \$1 billion a year for the next five years for passenger rail.

**B. GOVERNORS' POLICY STATEMENT**

1. Long-distance train service provides interconnectivity among regional corridors and essential services to communities along the way. Long distance routes should continue to be a federal responsibility.
2. The Governors strongly urge the federal government to provide funding and leadership to ensure the future of national intercity passenger rail. We recommend additional focus on the future support of High Speed Rail (HSR) corridors both fiscally and as an integral part of the national, state, and local transportation infrastructure.
4. The Western Governors believe that, in conjunction with any continued investment in Amtrak, it is incumbent upon Amtrak to seek needed reforms to generate substantially

improved performance, including, but not limited to, streamlining and operating efficiencies. Amtrak should continue to evaluate whether public-private partnerships contribute to long-term viability.

**C. GOVERNORS' MANAGEMENT DIRECTIVES**

1. The Western Governors direct staff to post this resolution to its web site.