



November 3, 2021



ASLRRRA Conference Offers Industry Expert Speakers During General Session

Join over 1,100 railroad professionals at this year's ASLRRRA Annual Conference and Exhibition, who will hear from [three dynamic featured speakers](#) during our Thursday general session.



Bose

Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) Deputy Administrator Amit Bose will provide an overview of current and future initiatives facing the FRA, focusing specifically on their impact on short lines.

After Bose, ASLRRRA President Chuck Baker will moderate a discussion with BNSF Vice President-Environment John Lovenburg, Iowa Interstate Railroad President and CEO Joe Parsons, and a shipping representative. The group will discuss the growing importance of environmental sustainability when companies make business and transportation decisions.



Lovenburg

Following the general session will be a networking lunch in the exhibit hall, the first round of education breakout sessions and an evening exhibit hall reception. The [exhibit hall](#) features over 160 companies in over 200 booths, giving conference attendees the chance to connect with railroad suppliers offering products and services in all areas of railroad operations. The exhibit hall also includes a first-ever Green Zone, highlighting companies that support the environment and sustainability.

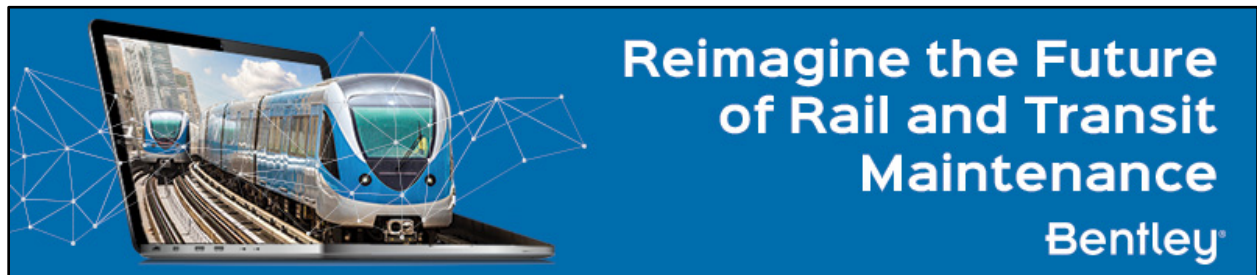


Parsons

Friday will feature a networking breakfast, followed by more education breakout sessions. The day wraps up by noon, giving attendees ample time to travel home by the start of the weekend.

Other conference events include individual ASLRRRA [committee meetings](#) on Tuesday and Wednesday and a [golf tournament](#), also on Wednesday. Less than twenty spots are still available in the golf tournament, which is open only to registered conference attendees. Golf registration will close on Nov. 9.

View a [full schedule](#) to plan your personal itinerary. Some [hotel rooms](#) are still available at special conference rates, but they are expected to sell out in the next few days. [Register](#) today to secure your spot at the short line industry's premier education and networking event, Nov. 17-19 in Phoenix, Arizona.



Discussions on BBB Intensify, President Extends Highway Trust Fund

With a flurry of legislative activity last week, including a visit from President Joe Biden to Capitol Hill, discussions on the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and the Democrats' social spending package, the Build Back Better bill (BBB), have continued at a breakneck pace.

Democrats are zeroing in on what additional changes should be included in the \$1.75 trillion proposed measure. Major policy issues, however, are still being ironed out as votes are promised – or

threatened. Key provisions include measures to lower the cost of prescription drugs, repeal a cap on the state and local tax deduction (SALT), fund universal preschool and expand Medicare coverage.

Late last week, President Biden signed an extension of the Highway Trust Fund (HTF) and the programs that it funds until Dec. 3, the same day that funding for most other federal programs expires.

It is expected that during this time the IIJA and BBB will be resolved and passed out of both house of Congress, obviating the need for additional extensions. Key House and Senate appropriators will also continue discussions over this time on a spending bill for the remainder of fiscal year 2022.

ASLRRA Government Affairs Staff Looks for Feedback on DBE Contracting

Next week, the rail subcommittee of the House Transportation and Infrastructure (T&I) committee plans a hearing on disadvantaged business enterprises (DBEs) and their role as recipients of federal dollars in passenger rail programs.

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) does not currently have a DBE contracting program, as federal law limits the U.S. Department of Transportation's DBE efforts to programs carried out by U.S. highway, transit and aviation agencies. The T&I's Democratic majority has some interest in creating a DBE program for the FRA, especially passenger-related projects. Next week's hearing appears to be the first formal step in exploring that process.

It is unclear what a DBE program run out of the FRA would look like and how or even if one could be implemented, but it might impact freight rail programs too. ASLRRA staff invites any feedback on how it might impact your railroad if you were required to ensure, for example, that 10 percent of funds from FRA went to DBE firms, what alternatives to a DBE program you might suggest, and what other concerns Congress should know. Please contact ASLRRA's Zach Radford at zradford@aslrta.org with any ideas.

House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee to Hold Cybersecurity Hearing

The U.S. House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee is holding a hearing on [the Evolving Cybersecurity Landscape: Industry Perspectives on Securing the Nation's Infrastructure](#), where committee members will hear transportation stakeholder perspectives about the gaps in the nation's ability to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from cyberattacks against critical infrastructure. The Association of American Railroads' Tom Farmer will provide a perspective on the rail industry's cybersecurity posture, as the industry awaits the release of a [TSA security directive mandating compliance with new cybersecurity reporting requirements](#) later this year. The hearing can be viewed on the committee website [here](#).

CONNECT REMOTELY AND CONTINUE LEARNING WITH ASLRRRA WEBINARS

With more than 150 recordings available, there's a webinar to meet the needs of everyone on your team. Visit aslrta.org/webinars to view a complete list of available recordings.



ASLRRRA Members of Note

ASLRRRA is pleased to highlight the accomplishments of its members and the strides being made in [freight rail sustainability](#), [business development](#), [veterans engagement](#) and more.

In the next few weeks, ASLRRRA will focus on those member companies working to hire and support veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces. These profiles will lead up to a Veterans Day feature focused on the winner of this year's ASLRRRA Veterans Engagement Award.

Siemens Mobility Supports Veterans Through Employee Awareness Events, Community Engagement and More



Photo Courtesy of Siemens Mobility

Siemens Mobility for North America CEO Marc Buncher runs in the Wounded Warrior Project Veterans Day 5K.

Siemens Mobility works with several veterans organizations to support service members among its ranks and in the wider veterans community.

In addition to ongoing recruiting partnerships with Orion Talent and Helping Heroes, Siemens Mobility has awarded a \$10,000 annual grant to the Wounded Warrior Project to help fund programs for veterans' mental and physical wellness, counseling and more.

This past year, the company invited a veteran to address its employees and discuss his experiences transitioning from the military into corporate life. Siemens Mobility continues to sponsor the Wounded Warrior Project's Carry Forward 5k race, an event which sees more and more employees and their families participating from across all of the company's locations.

The company works to regularly spotlight its own veteran employees within the company and has developed an employee resource group which works to build a strong network of veterans within the company and offer support and guidance where necessary.

According to Marc Buncher, CEO of Siemens Mobility for North America, "Veterans have proven skillsets and are a very valued employee base for our company, which is why we are committed to continuing our support."

ASLRRRA Announcements

Discount Program Offers Products and Services at Preferred Pricing

The money saved using [ASLRRRA's Member Discount Program](#) Preferred Providers could pay your annual dues and then some! ASLRRRA's Member Discount Program leverages the buying power of all association members to secure discounted pricing on essential business products, plus members are assured to receive exceptional customer service from all our vetted providers.

From personal protective equipment and railroad tie inspections to grant writing and PTC products and services, ASLRRA's Discount Program Partners have you covered. Visit aslrta.org/discounts for details and start saving today!

ASLRRA Out and About

Baker Speaks at Railway Tie Association Conference in St. Louis

ASLRRA President Chuck Baker spoke today at the Railway Tie Association's Annual Conference in St. Louis, Missouri. Baker joined Anthony Hatch of ABH Consulting, providing an update on legislative happenings at the federal level.

Click to learn more about our Member Discount Program!



ASLRRA Webinars – Live or On-Demand

Recorded Webinars Help Railroads Strengthen Their Communications

Waiting until after an accident or incident occurs to figure out how to handle government and community entities seeking your railroad's comment is not an ideal strategy. ASLRRA's three-part crisis communications series offers information to help when dealing with these situations, and includes basic media tips. Look [online](#) for the

following titles:

- Government and Community Relations Fundamentals
- Media Training Basics
- Crisis Communications Fundamentals for Railroaders

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Other recorded communications webinars can help your company build strong relationships in the community and leverage social media to build business. Consider these titles:

- Not In My Backyard: Responding/Reacting to NIMBYism in the Community
- Using Social Media as a Business Development Tool

ASLRRA's online resource library offers more than 150 webinar recordings on a variety of topics. Visit aslrta.org/webinars and select the On-Demand Webinars button to view a complete list of all available recordings. Access is free to ASLRRA members, and available by subscription for non-members.

[Click here](#) for more ASLRRA events.

Industry Events and Announcements

[Click here](#) for more industry events.

Views & News is published by American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association. Please contact [Amy Krouse](#), editor, with questions or comments.