



## In This Issue:

- **Welcome to ISB Global Services** – Learn about our newest member in our [ASLRRRA New Members](#) section below.
- **Registration Opens for Second ASLRRRA Regional Meeting** – Individuals can now register to attend ASLRRRA's Central and Pacific Region Meeting. Learn more in [the article](#) in our Announcements section below.

## Headlines

### Nearly \$30,000 Available for Scholarships for ASLRRRA Training, Other Programs

[New and expanded scholarship programs](#), administered by the ASLRRRA Short Line Education Fund, offer nearly \$30,000 to employees of small railroads to attend ASLRRRA seminars and other industry-specific training programs.

To apply, complete a brief online form. Qualified applicants are eligible for up to \$1,200 for training-related expenses, including registration fees and travel and lodging costs through the Doug Golden Scholarship, or up to \$425 through the Jake Jacobson Memorial Scholarship to cover registration costs for ASLRRRA-hosted training.

[Click here](#) to apply for a Golden Scholarship or [here](#) to apply for a Jake Jacobson Memorial Scholarship. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis until all funds are distributed.

### Hotel Room Blocks Expire Soon for ASLRRRA's Fall Training Seminars

Less than a week remains to book a room in ASLRRRA's [hotel room block](#) for the [Leadership Development Training, Regulatory Module](#).

The leadership training course will take place Sept. 13-14 in Phoenix, Arizona. ASLRRRA's JR Gelnar and Rio Grande Pacific Corporation's Mitch Harris will cover critical regulatory information and leadership qualities for short line and regional railroad managers to strengthen the understanding and application of certain regulations and to enhance the railroads' overall safety practices and culture.

[Hotel room block registration](#) for ASLRRRA's [FRA Roadway Worker/Bridge Worker Safety \(214\) Training](#) will close Sept. 12. The Part 214 training will take place Oct. 4-6, also in Phoenix. The Federal Railroad Administration's (FRA) Lance Hawks will join Gelnar to discuss the FRA's revised program approval process and findings from field audits conducted on short lines' Part 214 programs.

Space in both training seminars is limited, so interested participants are encouraged to register early.

## Presidential Emergency Board Issues Recommendations in Report on Railroad Labor Negotiations

The Presidential Emergency Board (PEB) tasked with mediating a stalemate between Class I railroads and labor unions [issued its recommendations](#) yesterday, [calling for](#) immediate pay raises, wage increases through 2024, removal of a monthly employee healthcare contribution cap and more.

The PEB's recommendations largely split the difference between proposals from the railroads and labor unions. Railroads offered a 16 percent wage increase from 2020 to 2024, while unions proposed 28 percent. The PEB's report suggested 22 percent over the five-year period.

In a [statement](#), Association of American Railroads (AAR) President and CEO Ian Jefferies wrote, "While the Biden PEB's recommendations markedly exceed the rail carriers' proposal, they provide a useful basis to reach a resolution. In the interests of all rail stakeholders, now is the time for railroads and their unions to reach a contract. The industry is prepared to propose agreements based on the PEB's recommendations to provide our employees with long overdue pay increases and avert rail service interruptions."

Following release of the report, both parties will enter a 30-day cooling-off period during which work stoppages are prohibited and the groups attempt to reach a voluntary agreement. If no agreement is reached by the end of 30 days, Sept. 16, the rail unions could authorize a strike or Congress could intervene and force both sides into binding arbitration.

ASLRRA hopes the board's recommendations help bring an end to this ongoing dispute. As the U.S. freight rail network is completely interconnected, ASLRRA's members and customers will be impacted by the resolution of this matter.

## ASLRRA Member Featured in Local News for Winning Jake Award



*This screenshot shows an image from a recent news segment highlighting ASLRRA member Port Bienville Railroad and the ASLRRA Jake Safety Award it won this year.*

A Biloxi, Mississippi news station [recently featured](#) ASLRRA member Port Bienville Railroad for winning the Association's Jake Safety Award this year.

The news segment noted Port Bienville's achievement, showing clips of railroad employees at work and interviewing Port Bienville Director Shane LaFontaine and Safety Coordinator Norman Givens.

Port Bienville has won 18 Jake Awards, all of which have been a Jake Award with Distinction, indicating a year with zero reportable injuries. This year, ASLRRA [awarded](#) a record number of Jake Awards, 364, with 332 of those designated Jake with Distinction – another record.



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The advertisement features several images: a black and red engine, a yellow cylindrical component, a blue traction motor, a wheel set, and a blue and white freight locomotive pulling a train.

## Regulatory Update

### Rail Projects Benefit from RAISE Grant Awards

The U.S. Department of Transportation [announced](#) it will award over \$2.2 billion in grants through the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) program. Of that, \$332 million will go to 23 freight and passenger rail-related projects in 17 states.

A few ASLRRA members will benefit from these grant awards, including the Florida East Coast Railway and Brightline, which will use \$25 million to design and construct supplemental safety measures along a 195-mile shared-use corridor. In addition, the city of Springfield, Illinois will use nearly \$20 million to construct a railroad grade separation underpass at North Grand Avenue over Norfolk Southern and ASLRRA member Illinois and Midland Railroad rail lines.

### ASLRRA Responds to DOT Request for Information on Buy America, Build America Act

ASLRRA has [filed comments](#) in response to the Department of Transportation's (DOT) [request for information](#) (RFI) regarding "Construction Materials Used in Federal Financial Assistance Projects for Transportation Infrastructure in the United States under the Build America, Buy America Act."

The Build America, Buy America Act (BABA) requires iron, steel, manufactured products and construction materials used in infrastructure projects funded by federal financial assistance to be produced in the United States. The DOT's RFI seeks input on how the requirement should be interpreted and implemented, potential impact on DOT-funded projects and other information.

ASLRRA expressed support for many of the instructions outlined and encouraged the DOT to work closely with the Small Business Administration to consider exceptions. Further, ASLRRA provided seven examples of areas, common to rail operations, that should be considered for waivers, urging that waivers be judiciously granted, including general applicability waivers where appropriate, to railroads relying on federal funding for purchasing under programs such as CRISI.

## Legislative Update

### President Biden Signs Inflation Reduction Act

President Joe Biden signed the Inflation Reduction Act into law yesterday after the House passed the bill last Friday in a 220-207 vote.

The bill has not changed since it was passed in the Senate last week. The bill's major provisions focus on incentives and tax credits for activities that lower greenhouse gas emissions. ASLRRRA staff continues to examine the bill for opportunities for freight rail to take advantage of incentives for environmental and greenhouse gas-reducing projects and investments.

### ASLRRRA Staffers Join Senators' Representatives in Member Tour

On Aug. 11, ASLRRRA member Tradepoint Rail in Baltimore, Maryland hosted staff from ASLRRRA and the offices of Maryland Senators Chris Van Hollen and Ben Cardin.

The group received a briefing on railroad operations and took a tour of the facility, which included a look at customers serviced and the locomotive shop.

Visits like this are very important for congressional staff and other policy makers. It gives them an opportunity to ask questions and observe a short line in action.

With both the House and Senate in recess, now is an ideal time to schedule a visit with congressional representatives. Contact ASLRRRA's [Zach Radford](#) or [Crystal Gitchell](#) for help reaching out to legislators or planning a meeting.



*A group of representatives from ASLRRRA and the offices of Maryland Senators Chris Van Hollen and Ben Cardin take a picture in front of a Tradepoint Rail locomotive. The group, (L to R) ASLRRRA's Michael Nemirovsky, Van Hollen staffer Deb Haynie, Tradepoint Rail representative Silvio Restivo, Cardin staffer Katie Coor and Van Hollen staffers Griffin Wong and Ashima Talwar visited the ASLRRRA-member railroad on Aug. 11.*

## SCHOLARSHIPS PAY FOR INDUSTRY TRAINING!

**Golden Scholarships • Jake Jacobson Memorial Scholarships**

Employees of small railroads may apply for awards to pay for ASLRRRA-hosted training seminars and other industry-specific education.

**[Click Here to Apply Today!](#)**



# Preparing for CRISI

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) has signaled it will be opening the 2022 [Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements \(CRISI\) grant program](#) in August. With a historic \$1.6 billion available for projects this year – over four times the resources in 2021 – ASLRRA is eager to help its members prepare for the funding opportunity release.

The Association, with Blank Rome Government Relations Senior Advisor Richard Sherman, is providing guidance through a series of articles focused on steps members can take to position themselves to take advantage of this program.

## CRISI Step Five – Using FRA's Templates for Required Attachments

FRA guidance directs grant applicants to templates for three required attachments for their capital grant programs: the [Statement of work \(SOW\)](#), [Schedule](#), and [Budget](#).

These templates have sometimes been confusing to CRISI applicants because they are provided in the form of drafts of what will become the starting point for attachments to a formal federal grant agreement if the application is successful. Nevertheless, applicants should use these templates as requested by FRA, ideally without modifying the language and structure of the documents as provided. Rather, applicants should seek to insert the requested data where indicated, and as indicated.

These templates can be supplemented with more detailed technical documentation. Providing a more complete and thorough SOW, schedule and budget documentation demonstrates a higher level of readiness and a lower level of risk to the FRA, which improve the competitiveness of an application.

[In a slide from a recent webinar](#), webinar presenters described how to synchronize these three key attachments using a work-breakdown structure approach to organizing the proposed project. If the data across these three attachments and the narrative is not consistent, it can also negatively impact the application's competitiveness.

Keep an eye out for any updates to these templates, and guidance on how to complete them, when the CRISI program opens. The FRA is working to try to make the attachment templates more user friendly and to provide improved guidance to applicants on how to prepare them.

Remember, on Aug. 25 the FRA will host an ["Office Hours" webinar focusing only on project statements of work](#). While this is oriented around the currently

## CRISI Tip Sheet

- Supplement FRA application **templates** with more detailed documentation if necessary. For example:
  - **With the SOW template**, attach relevant engineering drawings and reports.
  - **With the budget template**, include a detailed engineer's cost estimate or vendor quotes.
  - **With the schedule template**, provide a more detailed schedule if technical reviewers would find such additional information relevant.

## Important Links

ASLRRA's [On-Demand Webinar Library](#) features grant webinar recordings.

ASLRRA's [Member Discount Program Preferred Providers](#) offer grant writing services.

The most recent FRA CRISI webinar is [here](#).

open Railroad Crossing Elimination Program, the guidance should be applicable to the soon to open CRISI program.

## ASLRRA New Members

Know a company that would benefit from joining and participating in ASLRRA? Please contact ASLRRA's Senior Vice President of Membership and Business Development [Kathy Keeney](#) via email or on (202) 585-3439.



### ASLRRA Welcomes New Member ISB Global Services

[ISB Global Services](#), with U.S. operations based in Atlanta, Georgia, is a leading employment background check company offering innovative, accurate and timely background screening services to manage your company's most important assets - employees, subcontractors, and vendors. It has also developed a safety management system specifically for railroads and compliance with FRA Part 219 regulations. Director of Sales [Courtney Young](#) is our primary contact and can be reached on (770) 375-7127.

## Announcements

### Complete ASLRRA's Crew Size Survey by Friday

All responses to ASLRRA's crew size survey are due on Aug. 19. The Association sent the survey to all railroad member primary contacts, asking how their railroad staffs trains. This information will be crucial for our industry's response to the upcoming Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) proposed rulemaking on crew size.

Completing the survey will provide critical information to ASLRRA's team to advocate on behalf of its members concerning this important issue. To avoid confusion or conflicting responses the survey was only sent to primary contacts at each railroad. Individuals who did not receive this survey and believe they are the best person at your railroad to answer questions on crew size, should reach out to [Fred Oelsner](#) to receive the survey link.

### Include a Round of Golf When Registering for the Eastern and Southern Region Meeting

This year's Eastern and Southern Region Meeting features a golf tournament at the [Stone Mountain Golf Club](#) in addition to the diverse education sessions and networking opportunities that are hallmarks of an ASLRRA event.

Featured speakers during the meeting's general session include Federal Railroad Administration Executive Director Michael Lestingi, RSI Logistics' Kelley Minnehan and Matthew Frey and Kennesaw State University Professor Roger Tutterow.

ASLRRA President Chuck Baker will moderate a Short Line Leaders Panel with Grupo Mexico Transportes U.S.A and Florida East Coast Railway CEO Bernardo Ayala, Buckingham Branch Railroad Company President Steve Powell and R.J. Corman President and CEO Ed Quinn.

The Eastern and Southern Region Meeting takes place Sept. 26-28 in Atlanta, Georgia. [Register now](#) for the meeting and remember to add golf when signing up. A [hotel block is also open](#) at the Hyatt Regency Atlanta. ASLRRA encourages participants to book a hotel room within the block as the Association incurs financial penalties if the block is not filled.

ASLRRA is still accepting sponsors for the meeting. [Click here](#) to view a current list of sponsors and enquire about sponsorship opportunities.

### **ASLRRA Members Benefit from Coalition Health Plan with HUB International**

The Coalition Health Plan is specifically designed for ASLRRA members looking for a solution to reduce their medical premiums and simplify the healthcare experience for their employees. As the fifth largest broker in the world with over 500 locations in North America, HUB International is well equipped to provide ASLRRA members with a vast network of benefits experts and best-in-class resources no matter where the member company is located in the US.

Partnering with HUB puts ASLRRA members at the center of a vast network of experts who provide risk services, claims management, and compliance support. Visit ASLRRA's [Member Discount Program page](#) and select [Employee Health Insurance](#) to start saving today.

### **Registration is Open for ASLRRA's Central and Pacific Region Meeting**

Individuals can now register for ASLRRA's [Central and Pacific Region Meeting](#), which will be held Oct. 25-27 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

The regional meeting will include presentations from SmartWay's Kathleen Martz and the Railroad Retirement Board's Thomas Jayne and Robert Perbohner and the Short Line Safety Institute's Tom Murta, among others.

ASLRRA's Finance and Administration Seminar and General Counsel Symposium, which take place in conjunction with the regional meeting, offer invaluable information and networking opportunities for finance, human resources and legal professionals in the short line freight railroad industry. Registration for the [Finance and Administration Seminar and General Counsel Symposium](#) will open soon.

Interested participants can already reserve a room in the ASLRRA [hotel block](#) for the seminar, symposium and regional meeting. Early bird room rates for this meeting end Sept. 26.

ASLRRA is also accepting sponsors for the regional meeting, finance seminar, and symposium. Click [here](#) to learn more about sponsorship opportunities for the regional meeting, or [here](#) for the seminar and symposium.



## **Employee Health Insurance**

**The Coalition Health Plan is available exclusively to ASLRRA members, designed to reduce medical premiums and simplify the healthcare experience for employees. [Click to learn more...](#)**

## ASLRRR Webinars

### Upcoming Live Webinars

#### [A Case Study in Joining EPA's SmartWay Program](#) – Sept. 21, 2022

Patriot Rail's Harrison Roughton will share his experience with the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) SmartWay program. This webinar will also explain how railroads can apply the SmartWay tool, including which locomotives are included and which are not.

### Webinars On-Demand

#### **Find Recorded Webinars by ASLRRR's Experts Online, On Demand**

ASLRRR's in-house subject-matter experts have presented several webinars on important railroad regulatory issues, and recordings of these webinars can be found in ASLRRR's [On-Demand Webinar library](#). Some such webinars available in the library's Regulatory category include

- Emergency Docket Waivers
- FRA Penalties and Violations
- FRA Regulatory and Program Requirements for Short Lines, Parts 1 and 2

These webinars are only a few of the over 170 recordings available on a wide variety of topics including finance, human resources and technology. ASLRRR members can access the On-Demand Webinar for free while non-members can purchase a subscription. [Click here](#) to access the webinar library today.

Click [here](#) to learn more about ASLRRR's education offerings.

## Industry Events and Announcements

Click [here](#) for a calendar of industry events.

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