



In This Issue:

- **Welcome to Hoppecke Batteries** – Learn about our newest member in our [ASLRRRA New Members](#) section below.
- **Coordinating with Class I Railroads** – Short lines looking to apply for a CRISI grant might need permission from any Class I railroads that could be affected by the proposed project. Learn more about navigating this situation in our [Preparing for CRISI](#) section below.

Headlines

R.J. Corman Seeks Help for Employees Affected by Kentucky Floods

Recent catastrophic flooding in eastern Kentucky has impacted nearly 25 R.J. Corman employees, including some who have lost their homes and all their possessions. In order to help these employees and their communities, R.J. Corman has set up an [online portal for donations](#).

Some of the affected employees have worked with the ASLRRRA-member parent company for over 20 years, and many have participated in disaster relief projects to help other businesses recover from adverse events.

R.J. Corman issued a statement concerning its affected employees, "We are deeply saddened by the devastating loss caused by the Eastern Kentucky floods. Some of our team members and their families were affected by this terrible disaster. We have received numerous inquiries about how to help our colleagues and their communities; therefore, we have set up a page where people can make donations. The company has ensured that our colleagues' basic needs are met, and further efforts are currently taking place to assist them and their communities."

[Click here](#) or use the link above to access R.J. Corman's donation page. ASLRRRA and R.J. Corman appreciate all those who have expressed concern for those affected and who have contributed to this relief effort.

Representative Tim Burchett Tours Gulf & Ohio Railways and Knoxville Locomotive Works

On Monday, Representative Tim Burchett (R-Tenn.) toured Gulf & Ohio Railways and Knoxville Locomotive Works in Knoxville, Tennessee. Gulf & Ohio Vice President Doc Claussen gave Burchett a tour of the facilities, which included observations of switching operations and discussion of railroad issues while sharing refreshments on one of G&O's railcars, the Tennessee.

During the tour Claussen and Burchett discussed the Federal Railroad Administration's (FRA) notice of proposed rulemaking concerning mandatory two-person train crews, which ASLRRRA opposes.

Burchett was able to see how one engineer and two crew members on the ground conducted a switching. Burchett also viewed two locomotives, paid for in part by grant funding, that illustrated the importance of federal grant opportunities for short lines, in particular the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) program.

Burchett, a member of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, expressed interest in having other committee members learn more about short line operations. ASLRRRA encourages its members to reach out to their federal representatives and invite them to tour the facilities in their districts.

Such visits are an important way to make connections with lawmakers and help them understand more about the short line industry and the effects of federal legislation on railroad operations. Contact ASLRRRA's [Zach Radford](#) or [Crystal Gitchell](#) for help reaching out to legislators or scheduling visits.

Former ASLRRRA Board Chair Doc Claussen (blue shirt), who is also vice president of Gulf & Ohio Railways (G&O) gave a tour of the railroad's facilities to Representative Tim Burchett of Tennessee (gray suit). Claussen talked with Burchett about railroad operations (top) and discussed industry issues while enjoying refreshments on a G&O railcar (bottom).



IRWIN CAR AND EQUIPMENT
Ph: 724-200-7556
www.irwincar.com
ATLAS CAR PRODUCTS
TRACTION MOTOR SERVICE
New Products • Repairs, Rebuilds & Replacements • UTEX Programs

One-Stop Shop for Trucks, Wheel Sets & Traction Motors/Generators & Services

An advertisement for Irwin Car and Equipment. It features a green border and contains text on the left and right sides. The right side includes a collage of images: a black and red motor, a yellow cylindrical component, a blue and silver motor, a blue and silver wheel set, and a blue and yellow locomotive pulling a train.

Regulatory Update

FRA Offers Office Hours to Discuss Railroad Crossing Elimination Grant Applications

Starting Aug. 11, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) will present a five-part series of Office Hours webinars to help interested parties navigate the application process for the [Railroad Crossing Elimination \(RCE\) Grant Program](#).

The FRA is offering the series in response to high levels of interest in the [RCE notice of funding opportunity \(NOFO\)](#). Each of the weekly sessions will focus on sections of the NOFO and FRA representatives will talk about best practices for grant applications. View the schedule of Office Hours sessions below, with links to register for each. Participants must register for each webinar separately.

- [Aug. 11 – Project narrative](#)
- [Aug. 18 – Project and applicant eligibility, project type, and life cycle](#)
- [Aug. 25 – Statement of work](#)
- [Sept. 1 – National Environmental Policy Act \(NEPA\) and environmental considerations](#)
- [Sept. 8 – NOFO “nuts and bolts,” e.g., grants.gov, SAM registration, and other required elements](#)

Also available from the FRA is a recording of the agency's original RCE Grant Program NOFO webinar, along with presentation materials. Find both resources at the FRA's [Training and Guidance Webinars page](#) under the Grants and Loans tab.

Biden Nominates Brown to Fill Empty NTSB Position

President Joe Biden [has nominated](#) Alvin Brown to fill an open seat on the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB). Brown, the [former mayor of Jacksonville](#), Florida, would replace Robert Sumwalt, who was on the board for 15 years before leaving in June 2021.

If confirmed by the Senate, Brown's term would expire at the end of 2026. Prior to his role as mayor, Brown worked in the White House under President Bill Clinton and Vice President Al Gore.

Legislative Update

Senate Democrats Pass Inflation Reduction Act, ASLRRRA Staff Reviewing Bill for Freight Rail Opportunities

Earlier this week, Senate Democrats passed the Inflation Reduction Act. The overall price tag is about \$750 billion with major provisions focused on incentives and tax credits for activities that lower greenhouse gas emissions. There are also significant provisions regarding health care, prescription drugs and tax law governing large corporations.

ASLRRRA staff members are going through the bill closely looking for opportunities for freight rail to take advantage of incentives for environmental and greenhouse gas-reducing projects and investments. The bill as passed by the Senate is [here](#), and emissions-focused provisions are discussed in this Senate Environment and Public Works Committee summary [here](#). The legislation is now expected to pass the House on Friday, also on a party-line vote, after which President Biden is expected to sign the measure into law.

House Members Introduce Rail-Focused Bills Concerning Retirees and Employee Training

As recess began, some Republican House Transportation and Infrastructure (T&I) Committee members introduced several rail-focused bills: The Retirees to Rail Act (H.R. 8608) by Representative Rick Crawford (R-Ark.), who is also Ranking Member of the House T&I rail subcommittee, would allow retired rail workers to be re-hired without sacrificing their benefits earned from the Railroad Retirement Board. More information from Crawford can be found [here](#).

Meanwhile, the Rail Employee Training Modernization Act (H.R. 8598), introduced by Representative Troy Balderson (R-Ohio), would allow some engineer and conductor trainees to complete certain training activities via online simulators in lieu of in-classroom instruction. ASLRRA is closely monitoring both bills and their potential to help short line freight rail address supply chain issues.



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 Four – Coordinating With Partners, Especially Class I Railroads

Some short line projects seeking federal CRISI funds will involve getting the permission of outside parties, so identifying and working on these tasks early in the grant application writing process is important.

A common scenario for short lines is when a major Class I freight railroad must approve the proposed grant-funded project. Short lines should review their lease agreements closely because leases can include clauses specific to pursuit and use of public grant funding. The remaining duration of the lease can also matter, as can the terms and conditions governing the disposition of improvements and investments made during the term of the lease.

Short lines should also presume that Class I permission will be required if the proposed project could affect the Class I's property or operations. Such "partnership projects" can require varying levels of coordination between the Class II/III and the Class I, up to field inspections and detailed review and approval of engineering project scopes and drawings and operating plans. New or modified legal agreements for interchange and rail service or track access might be required.

The fact that a Class I won't contribute any monetary resources to the proposed CRISI grant-funded project does not eliminate the need to meet all their legal and operational coordination requirements. The FRA considers agreements with or permissions from Class I partners to be an area of potentially significant risk when they evaluate CRISI grant applications and therefore will look closely at applications for projects that could require such agreements or coordination.

Identifying and communicating the status of agreements will affect the competitiveness of an application. Start working as early as possible with any Class I partners. Review and approval processes, even at the lowest concept level, can take months.

The CRISI application should describe all the approvals and documentation that are known to be required from a Class I to carry out the project. These items do not have to be complete but should be identified, along with their status. A letter of support from a Class I for the CRISI application can be helpful, but Class Is usually will want to review the draft grant application to consider a letter of support request. Be sure to build adequate time for their review into the grant writing schedule if hoping to secure such a letter by the time the application is due.

CRISI Tip Sheet

- **Review any lease agreement closely** if the project would improve infrastructure the short line does not own. Leases can have clauses specifically discussing pursuit and use of public grant funding.
- **Presume, unless certain otherwise,** that proposed projects affecting a Class I railroad's property or operations will require permission from the Class I.
- **Expressing intent to coordinate** with a Class I is not the same as having started or even completed the process – affecting the competitiveness of an application.

Important Links

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

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

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

ASLRRRA New Members

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

ASLRRRA Welcomes New Member Hoppecke Batteries



[Hoppecke Batteries, Inc.](#), based in Hainesport, New Jersey, has been an expert and partner for energy solutions for decades. In the rail sector it provides on-board auxiliary and traction power systems as well as trackside signaling and crossroads UPS. Its portfolio contains suitable products across all common battery

technologies (Lead-acid, Ni-Cd and LiOn), tailored to individual customer requirements. Principal Rail Consultant [Moritz Christl](#) is our primary contact and can be reached on (856) 616-0032.

Announcements

Members Receive Preferred Pricing on Drug and Alcohol Testing Services with Spark Training Solutions

Spark Training Solutions is the exclusive Preferred Provider of drug and alcohol testing services in the Association's Member Discount Program. Spark is passionate about helping railroads and contractors meet Federal Railroad Administration drug and alcohol testing requirements, delivering key differentiators for drug and alcohol testing services including railroad-industry-specific expertise, online tools and key national partnerships.

Spark's expert team has built a program to offer drug and alcohol testing services and programs to help railroads and contractors find the most effective strategies to manage their company, Part 219, and other DOT-regulated programs. Drug and alcohol program services include clinic and mobile or onsite testing services, laboratory and medical review officer (MRO) services, electronic chain of custody forms and third-party administrator (TPA) random testing and consortium. Visit ASLRRA's [Member Discount Program page](#) and click on the Spark Training Solutions logo to start saving today.

Learn from Peers, Customers at Regional Meeting, Reminder All Meeting Rates to Increase After August 15

The Eastern and Southern Region Meeting will allow participants to learn from their peers and their customers through a Short Line Leaders Panel moderated by ASLRRA President Chuck Baker and a Shipper Panel with KBX Rail Director of Transportation and Logistics Becca Aldridge.

These are just two of the many diverse educational opportunities offered at this year's regional meeting taking place Sept. 26-28 in Atlanta, Georgia. Participants can also learn about Part 228 hours of service requirements and the ASLRRA waiver, federal motor carriers clearinghouse requirements and more.

All meeting rates, including those for golf, will increase after Aug. 15. [Register now](#) to take advantage of early bird discounts. A [hotel block is also open](#) at the Hyatt Regency Atlanta, and discounted room rates end Aug. 26. 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 also accepting sponsors for the meeting. [Click here](#) to view a current list of sponsors and enquire about sponsorship opportunities.

Register Today for Fall Training Seminars in Phoenix

ASLRRA will offer two training seminars in the fall, the ASLRRA [Leadership Development Training - Regulatory Module](#) Sept. 13-14 and the [FRA Roadway Worker/Bridge Worker Safety \(214\) Training](#) Oct. 4-6. Both events will take place in Phoenix, Arizona.

The leadership development training covers 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. Part 214 training discusses the Federal Railroad Administration'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. A hotel room block is available at the Embassy Suites where the events will take place. Click [this link](#) to reserve a room for leadership training, or [this link](#) to reserve a room for Part 214 training.

Fund Training with ASLRRRA Scholarships

Scholarships awarded through the Doug Golden-Mary Cullen Charitable Fund can now be used on a wider variety of training opportunities, including certain seminars offered by ASLRRRA. [Click here](#) to learn more about the program and [apply](#) for a scholarship that awards up to \$1,200 for training-related expenses, including registration fees and travel and lodging costs.

ASLRRRA also offers a [scholarship](#), made possible by the family of the late Jake Jacobson, to eligible railroad member employees to help them pay for training registration fees. Up to \$425 will be awarded to qualified individuals attending ASLRRRA-hosted training such as the seminars described above. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis until all funds are distributed. Click [this link](#) to apply.

Reserve a Room Now for ASLRRRA's Central and Pacific Region Meeting, F&A Seminar and GC Symposium

Interested participants can already reserve a room in the ASLRRRA [hotel block](#) for the [Central and Pacific Region Meeting](#) and the [Finance and Administration Seminar and General Counsel Symposium](#), both of which will take place Oct. 25-27 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

ASLRRRA will honor the Central and Pacific Region President's Award winners at this year's meeting, and the General Session featured speakers include Thomas Jayne and Robert Perbohner of the Railroad Retirement Board and Kathleen Martz of the Environmental Protection Agency's SmartWay program. Registration for the regional meeting will open soon.

ASLRRRA 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.

Remember to Complete ASLRRRA's Crew Size Survey

ASLRRRA reminds its railroad members to complete a short survey, sent to all railroad member primary contacts, about 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 better enables ASLRRRA'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.



As an ASLRRRA Preferred Provider, Spark offers Discounts on Drug & Alcohol Testing Services to ASLRRRA Members.

Click to learn more!



ASLRRRA Webinars

Webinars On-Demand

Review the Basics of Part 225 with On-Demand Webinars

ASLRRRA works with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) to produce resources for Association members, including webinars discussing regulatory compliance. One popular webinar series covers 49 CFR Part 225, Railroad Accidents and Incidents, and recordings of those webinars can be found in ASLRRRA's On-Demand Webinar Library. Look for the following titles:

- Part 225 Back to Basics, Part 1: Injuries
- Part 225 Back to Basics, Part 2: Rail Equipment
- Part 225 Back to Basics, Part 3: Highway-Rail Grade Crossing

Industry Events and Announcements

These webinars are only a few of the over 170 recordings available on a wide variety of topics including finance, human resources and technology. ASLRRRA 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 ASLRRRA's education offerings.

Patriot Rail Announces Acquisition of Pioneer Lines

Patriot Rail Company, operator of several ASLRRRA-member railroads, [announced it will acquire](#) Pioneer Lines, another ASLRRRA-member parent company.

Once approved, the sale will bring the number of Patriot Rail's railroads from 16 to 31 and expand the company's service into 12 new states.

"Rail shippers will now have increased service options across a broader national footprint, and the integration of Patriot and Pioneer will further enhance our combined capability as a rail solutions partner dedicated to safety and customer growth," said Patriot Rail Board Chair Deb Butler in a press release.

August 10, 2022

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.