



## American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association

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### **Short Lines Will Find a Lot to Like in Senate EPW Surface Transportation Reauthorization Act of 2021**

**WASHINGTON, May 26, 2021** – ASLRRA welcomes the bipartisan, unanimous U.S. Senate Environmental and Public Works (EPW) Committee report out of their portion of the surface transportation reauthorization bill.

“ASLRRA members will find a lot to like in this bill, including addressing rail-highway grade crossing safety and improvements to funding and multimodal flexibility in both the INFRA and state freight formula programs,” said Chuck Baker, President, ASLRRA. “While there are areas where we would like to see modifications before final implementation, we want to applaud the efforts of Committee Chairman Tom Carper (D-DE), Ranking Member Shelley Moore-Capito (R-WV), sub-committee Chairman Ben Cardin (D-MD), Ranking Member Kevin Cramer (R-ND), and all Committee members for their work in writing and approving a solid, beneficial bill. Now it is up to the other Committees in the Senate and the House to move in a bipartisan fashion toward a final transportation bill that ensures that the U.S. transportation system continues to drive growth and competitiveness for businesses across the country, while addressing environmental concerns far into the future.”

For short line railroads, the bill will address three priorities:

- Provides stable funding for the Section 130 Rail-Highway Grade Crossing program at \$245 million annually, with a variety of improvements to the federal share and incentive payments for closing crossings.
- Raises the multimodal cap on the INFRA grant program to 30% (\$1.44 billion over five years), up from the old 11% cap, while increasing the small project set aside from 10% to 15%.

- Raises the multimodal cap on the state freight formula program from 10% to 30%, providing approximately \$430 million annually for State DOTs to use on non-highway projects if they so choose.

There are a few areas that ASLRRRA would like to see modified before the bill becomes final legislation, such as including some multimodal flexibility in the new Carbon Reduction Program (Sec. 1403), the Congestion Relief Program (Sec. 1404), and the Rural Surface Transportation Grant Program (Sec. 1133). There are many short line projects throughout the country, from rural disadvantaged areas to ports and urban centers, that would be able to help achieve the goals of these programs if such projects were made eligible for these grants.

Overall, the ASLRRRA strongly supports this legislation and applauds the Committee for their bipartisan efforts.

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**About ASLRRRA** - The American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association (ASLRRRA) is a non-profit trade association representing the interests of the nation's 600 short line and regional railroads and railroad supply company members in legislative and regulatory matters. Short lines operate 47,500 miles of track in 49 states, or approximately 29% of the national railroad network, touching in origination or termination one out of every five cars moving on the national railroad system, serving customers who otherwise would be cut off from the national railroad network. [www.aslrra.org](http://www.aslrra.org)