



April 14, 2021



Railroad Day on Capitol Hill Concludes

Armed with fact sheets and personal anecdotes, representatives from all facets of the railroad industry met with federal lawmakers and their staffers yesterday and today during Railroad Day on Capitol Hill. This was the first year that the event was held via Zoom.

"Railroad Day on the Hill is our industry's time to focus Congress on the benefits we provide and the issues that should be addressed to allow freight railroads to help keep moving our nation's economic recovery forward," said ASLRRRA President Chuck Baker.

"Holding the days via Zoom this year allowed us to continue with this beloved annual tradition, and it gave more than 260 Congressional offices the opportunity to interact with 475 constituent railroaders that are directly impacted by federal legislation and regulation made in Washington. The nation's freight rail industry - short lines, Class Is, labor, contractors, and suppliers all together - is positioned to help America meet many crucial objectives - safe, efficient, and environmentally friendly transportation that helps grow the economy, rebuild the middle class, and allows American businesses to compete and win on the global stage. We connect America's small towns and rural areas to the nation's largest cities and ports, and are looking forward to continuing to work with Congress on policies that allow us do that safely and efficiently."

Participants discussed the contributions of railroads to the overall strength and resilience of the U.S. supply chain, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic and highlighted three legislative asks.

The railroad industry thanks all those who participated in this year's meetings, and those who acted as meeting hosts and leaders. In addition, we are grateful to all the generous sponsors of this year's Railroad Day on Capitol Hill who helped make the day's events possible, and to industry organizations that provided critical support including AAR, GoRail, NRC, REMSA, RSI, RSSI, RTA, SMART, TCU and IBEW.

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April 14, 2021

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Registration Open for ASLRRRA's In-Person Regional Meetings

ASLRRRA Regional Meetings will take place in person this June. Our Regional Meetings offer dynamic agendas with top-notch speakers, compelling interactive sessions, and meaningful takeaways that will benefit professionals at every level of your organization.

These meetings provide an engaging range of content with insightful panel discussions, informative subject matter experts, interactive breakout sessions with peer-to-peer collaborative learning, solid takeaways related to business best practices, tools and resources, plus hours of networking with industry peers, customers, and supplier partners.

Participants can register for Short Line Safety Institute (SLSI) safety train tours, meet with SLSI staff and SLSI's experienced hazardous materials instructor team to learn more about the programs offered by SLSI. Also, this year's social events include golf, which will be available at both meetings.

Registration is now open for the meetings listed below. Be sure to register early to take advantage of reduced early bird pricing.

[Central & Pacific Region Meeting](#) - June 7 through June 9, 2021 - Kansas City, MO

[Eastern & Southern Region Meeting](#) - June 21 through June 23, 2021 - Louisville, KY

[General Counsel Symposium](#) - June 21 through June 22, 2021 - Louisville, KY

[Finance & Administration Seminar](#) - June 22 through June 23, 2021 - Louisville, KY

DOT Issues Notice of Funding Opportunity for RAISE Grant Program

The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) [issued](#) a [notice of funding opportunity](#) (NOFO) for the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant program. The RAISE program has previously been known as the BUILD and TIGER grants.

This year, \$1 billion in grant funding will be available through the RAISE program, which will be awarded to infrastructure investment projects with a significant local or regional impact. Funding will be split equally between projects in urban and rural areas.

To help with the application process, the DOT will host several webinars for interested parties. Registration can be completed [here](#), once the webinar dates and times have been finalized. Applications for RAISE grants are due July 12.

ASLRRA's [Member Discount Program](#) also features grant writing preferred providers who can help members create and submit grant applications for state and federal programs.



ASLRRA, AAR Submit Comments on Proposed Automation Rulemaking

ASLRRA and the Association of American Railroads (AAR) [filed comments](#) in response to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) [advance notice of proposed rulemaking](#) addressing Automated Driving Systems (ADS) safety for motor vehicles.

The NHTSA sought comment on its development of a framework to define, assess and manage the safety of ADS performance while making sure to allow flexibility for future innovation.

In their comments, ASLRRA and AAR requested that all U.S. Department of Transportation agencies, such as the NHTSA, take a consistent approach toward safety advancements and technological innovation related to the development of autonomous technology across the various modes of transportation, including for railroads.

The associations noted that the public will benefit from technology-driven safety gains in rail and other industries, and that a mode-neutral regulatory approach will ensure a level playing field among all transportation options. Additionally, ASLRRA and AAR commented that, to maximize the safety benefits of ADS technology, it must be designed to recognize highway-rail grade crossings and respond appropriately to active and passive grade crossing warning devices and approaching trains.

STB Final Rule Exempts Small Railroads from New Demurrage Invoice Requirements

The Surface Transportation Board (STB) [issued](#) a [final rule](#) requiring Class I carriers to include certain information on or with demurrage invoices and provide machine-readable access to that information.

The decision is positive news for short lines, as the STB declined to extend these demurrage requirements to Class II and III railroads. ASLRRRA commented on the initial proposed rule in 2019 arguing that the regulation should not apply to Class II and III railroads because the demurrage issues raised by stakeholders mostly pertained to Class I carriers and meeting the proposed requirements would place an undue burden on small railroads.

Still, the STB encourages Class II and III carriers to comply with the final rule to the extent they are able.

AAR RAN Security Note and CISA Cybersecurity Tool Available on ASLRRRA Website

Several new [security alerts](#) are now available to members on ASLRRRA's website. They include an Association of American Railroads (AAR) Railway Alert Network (RAN) Security Awareness Note and information about a new Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) resource to help detect compromised accounts.

The AAR security notes discuss track shunting incidents in 2020 and recent intentional interference with railroad infrastructure incidents.

The CISA document discusses "Aviary," a companion resource to CISA's Sparrow detection tool that provides a more user-friendly dashboard to show data collected by Sparrow concerning cyber attacks.

Older RAN and CISA alerts can also be found on ASLRRRA's website, at the link above. Members must log in to search for and view the information.



ASLRRRA Joins Rebuild Rural Coalition Comments on Biden's Proposed Infrastructure Plan

The Rebuild Rural Infrastructure Coalition released a [statement](#) on President Biden's infrastructure plan, saying that the proposal "offers a good starting point for discussions with Congress."

Rebuild Rural urges a bipartisan approach to infrastructure legislation that makes sure to take into account the needs of rural communities and rural infrastructure. It also encourages lawmakers to continue utilizing existing federal programs that have proven to

be successful.

ASLRRRA is a member of the Rebuild Rural Coalition, which includes 250 organizations across the U.S. dedicated to advocating for the unique infrastructure needs of rural America.

COMPLIANCE TEMPLATES

Click here for member-exclusive templates and additional resources.



ASLRRRA New Members

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

ASLRRRA Welcomes Three New Members

The Association is delighted to welcome back to its membership rolls this week two short line railroads and one supplier.



[Lamson Dugan & Murray LLP](#), based in Omaha, Neb., represents and defends railroads in Federal Employers Liability Act (FELA) claims, toxic tort litigation, crossing accidents, Federal Railroad Safety Act (FRSA) and strict liability claims under the Locomotive Inspection Act, Safety Appliance Act and federal safety regulations. The law firm is a member of railroad "go-to" teams and responds to scenes of crossing accidents and catastrophic employee injuries. Our primary contact is Partner [David J. Schmitt](#), who can be reached on (402) 397-7300.



[Massachusetts Coastal Railroad](#) (MC), based in Lakeville, Mass., operates about 97 miles of track in Southeastern Massachusetts. The MC also dispatches and maintains an additional 44 miles of track owned by MASSDOT and operated by its Class I partner, CSX. Commodities hauled include: chemicals, aggregates, road salt, feed ingredients, scrap steel, MSW/C&D, flour and frozen seafood. Mass Coastal has car repair/car storage facilities available. Its sister company - Cape Cod Central Railroad - offers seasonal dinner and excursion trains on Cape Cod. Our primary contact is President & CEO Christopher Podgurski, who can be reached on (508) 291-7116.



[Semo Port Railroad](#) (SE), based in Scott City, Mo., operates about 12 miles of track. Its parent, Southeast Missouri Regional Port Authority, located on the Mississippi River, also offers harbor services, public terminals, interstate highway access, and industrial sites. The SE connects with UP and BNSF and handles aggregates, cement, chemicals, food, steel and other commodities. Our primary contact is Executive Director Cary Harbison, who can be reached on (573) 264-4045. Many thanks to Motive Rail for suggesting that they rejoin ASLRRRA.

ASLRRA Announcements

ASLRRA's Newest Member Discount Program Preferred Provider Offers PPE, Other Services

[ORR Safety](#) is the [newest preferred provider](#) to join ASLRRA's [Member Discount Program](#). ORR Safety is an ISO 9001-registered distributor of personal protective equipment (PPE) and related services to the industrial market.

In addition to its PPE products, ORR Safety offers a variety of services including life safety system installation and maintenance; product rationalization and consolidation; and field audits and recommendations.

ASLRRA's Member Discount Program enables its members to save money on products and services many railroads already use. Offerings from the Association's other preferred providers pertain to topics like payment processing, track maintenance, employee health insurance, positive train control and grant writing.

For information on the benefits of joining ASLRRA's Member Discount Program, contact Senior Vice President of Education and Business Development [Sabrina Waiss](#).

The Association's Safety and Compliance Resources Include Compliance Program Templates

ASLRRA is dedicated to railroad safety and compliance and strives to assist members with industry best practices and compliance throughout their operations by offering a wealth of safety and compliance resources.

Among the most often accessed and downloaded tools are an assortment of compliance program templates, including ASLRRA's **Roadway Worker and Bridge Maintenance Programs**. Approved by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), the Roadway Worker Program not only contains the requirements for roadway workers, but also includes safety rules required for bridge workers and on-track equipment.

The program is based on GCOR operating rules that can be easily modified to conform to any railroad operating rules, and guidance is provided to assist non-GCOR railroads in modifying the program. By utilizing this program, a railroad is in compliance with all parts of Part 214.

With a simple login, ASLRRA members may download these and more than a dozen additional program templates designed specifically to assist short line railroads with compliance. While all templates are available at no cost to railroad members, select templates are available free to associate members and for a fee to non-member railroads. Visit www.aslrra.org/safety to access the complete collection of safety and compliance tools, resources and information available from the ASLRRA.

WEBINARS AVAILABLE ON DEMAND

With nearly 100 recordings available, there's a webinar to meet the needs of everyone on your team! Visit aslrra.org/webinars to view a complete list of available recordings.



April 14, 2021



ASLRRRA Webinars – Live or On-Demand

Upcoming Webinars

[Short Line Fire Prevention - Hazards, Risks & Resolutions - April 20, 2021](#)

Members of ASLRRRA’s Environmental Committee and representatives from sponsor Purify Fuel will offer comprehensive fire prevention education and an in-depth discussion on how to prevent fires involving train operations, locomotive mechanical issues and maintenance of way.

Sponsored by:



[Benefits of Freight Rail - Capacity, Safety & Clean Air! - April 22, 2021](#)

Smartway and ASLRRRA will host a special webinar to talk about America’s short line railroads and spark discussion on an alternative way to transport goods. Registration is free for both members and non-members.

[Rail Trends: Freight Railroads Helping America Recover - April 27, 2021](#)

Association of American Railroads Assistant Vice President of Policy & Economics Luisa Fernandez-Willey will discuss the current state of the railroad industry, the movement of key commodities, and leading economic indicators crucial in understanding the economic recovery. This webinar is scheduled to last 90 minutes to allow for more questions at the end of the presentation.

Industry-Specific Webinar Recordings Cover Important Rail Communications Systems

The Safety & Operations category in ASLRRRA’s On-Demand Webinar library features recordings of sessions discussing important railroad industry communications and reporting systems.

The following titles can be found in ASLRRRA’s [webinar library](#):

- What’s New Regarding Confidential Close Call Report Systems?
- Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) 101 - Railroad Communications
- Emergency Notification Systems (ENS) Review

In addition, ASLRRRA offers more than 100 recordings covering a variety of railroad topics. Recordings are free to members and available by subscription to non-members. Follow the link above to learn more.

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

Industry Events and Announcements

Friday's Hay Seminar Examines Wheel and Rail Maintenance

The University of Illinois Hay Railroad Engineering Seminar Series will feature another webinar this Friday looking at digital tools to help with wheel and rail maintenance planning.

Registration for the Hay Seminar is free, but required for all participants. Click [here](#) for more information or to register.

[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.