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## Iowa Interstate Chairman Posner Uses Russian Skills to Help Ukrainian Refugees on German Evacuation Train

The Russian invasion of Ukraine has prompted many U.S. companies to look for ways to help those affected by the conflict, particularly the millions of refugees who have fled the country in search of safety.

Henry Posner III, chairman of Railroad Development Corporation (RDC), ASLRRRA member Iowa Interstate Railroad and RDC-Deutschland (RDC-D), among other companies, [recently had a firsthand role](#) in efforts to transport Ukrainian refugees in Germany. Posner was in the country on a planned trip when the opportunity to help arose.

On March 12, Posner worked as a Russian translator on an RDC-D train carrying 480 Ukrainians from the city of Frankfurt/Oder on the Polish-German border to Hannover, where a reception center to welcome and process refugees was set up in a large exhibition hall. Posner was one of only two Russian speakers on the train that day.

"I was very proud to be associated with what our team is accomplishing," said Posner. "And I was also proud to have had a working role, actually being able to help and not just getting in the way."



*Left Photo: Henry Posner III (second from left), chairman of ASLRRRA member Iowa Interstate Railroad and Railroad Development Corporation, poses with members of the train crew that operated a train from the German town of Frankfurt/Oder on the Polish border to another German town, Hannover, carrying 480 Ukrainian refugees. Posner served on the train as a Russian translator.*

*Bottom Photo: Refugees exit the train after arriving in Hannover. They then went to a reception center at a nearby exhibition hall to in-process before continuing on to their final destinations.*

*Photos courtesy of Henry Posner III*

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After completing the arrival process, refugees were free to travel on to their final destinations, often the homes of friends, family or acquaintances. Germany and other European Union members are currently offering free rail transportation to anyone with a Ukrainian passport or official ID.

Private railroad company RDC-D is a subsidiary of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania-based RDC and operates passenger trains in Germany. The German government reached out to RDC-D in early March to set up an evacuation route for Ukrainian refugees in Poland, and on March 10 the first train completed a three-

hour journey with over 600 passengers, a five-member crew and employees of the Deutsches Rotes Kreuz, or German Red Cross.

Passenger operations in Germany are much more flexible than in the U.S., and availability of rolling stock, crewmembers and staff allowed RDC-D to set up operations quickly. RDC-D has had experience with these types of emergency routes in other situations, which further enabled the company to meet the government's request. The German government is covering all of RDC-D's operating costs as part of the country's Ukrainian relief efforts.

For now, RDC-D plans on running one train a day for the foreseeable future, although it is possible additional trains may be added if needed.

"We are taking this literally on a day-by-day basis," said Posner.

Though he is now back in the states, Posner is not done helping. Instead of working with crewmembers on the train, he provides assistance by making connections to help meet needs as they arise, relying more on his email skills than his Russian.

To that end, Posner, in conjunction with Ukrainian friends and colleagues, offers suggestions for those in America who want to help Ukrainian refugees. Follow [this link](#) for the full document.

Posner writes:

1. **Provide more direct financial support.** In the short term, we encourage people to reach out to any Ukrainian friends or colleagues to provide direct financial support to smaller, trusted organizations or individuals in Ukraine.
2. **Support remote work and employment of Ukrainians.** Stable employment can be one of the most helpful factors for those who have been displaced. Many Ukrainians have both English language skills and technical skills – including railway-related skills.
3. **Contribute to a trusted charity providing humanitarian response.** The following organizations are providing on-the-ground response:
  - a. [International Rescue Committee](#)
  - b. [Save the Children](#)

- c. [Americares](#)
4. Finally, **be kind to Russians**. This is not their war. This is [Russian President Vladimir] Putin's war.

## Registration Is Open for the 2022 ASLRRR Annual Conference and Exhibition in St. Louis

Interested participants can now [register](#) for the [2022 ASLRRR Conference and Exhibition](#), which will be held May 1 to 3 at the America's Center Convention Complex in St. Louis, Missouri.

The conference [will feature](#) the dynamic speakers, engaging education and productive networking experiences that are the standard at ASLRRR's annual event. Participants will be able to choose from over 40 hours of breakout sessions in 11 different tracks. This year, attendees can also sign up for a [round of golf](#) at the Courses at Forest Park or a "[Round the World Loop](#)" train excursion.

Space is also available for companies interested in [reserving a booth](#) in the Expo Hall, which will be the site of two evening receptions and several meal and refreshment breaks, offering many occasions to connect with other railroad industry professionals. Like with the 2021 conference, this year's Expo Hall will feature a Green Zone for companies to share their sustainable and environmentally friendly business practices, services and products with participants.

A range of [sponsorship opportunities](#) offer an additional way for companies to connect with conference attendees. Contact ASLRRR's Kathy Keeney at [kkeeney@aslrra.org](mailto:kkeeney@aslrra.org) for information about both expo booths and sponsorships.

## Registration Tips and Tricks

A transition to a new website makes registering for this year's annual conference a bit different than previous years. ASLRRR Membership and Marketing Manager Danialle Richards offers some advice to those attempting to register:

- Individuals **must** be logged in to their ASLRRR accounts prior to attempting to register.
- Members who are having problems or have never logged in to the new website may need to reset their password. To do so, please follow the instructions below.
  - Select "Login" from the dropdown of the "Member Portal" at the top of the home page near the search bar.
  - Click "Forgot your password?" and enter your email address in the username field to continue. A new email with instructions for logging in will be sent to the email address on file.
- Individuals without an ASLRRR user account should email [aslrra@aslrra.org](mailto:aslrra@aslrra.org) to create one.
- Organizations needing to register five or more employees at one time should send a list with employee names and email addresses to Richards at [drichards@aslrra.org](mailto:drichards@aslrra.org).

## ASLRRR Award Nomination Deadline Extended Until Friday, March 18

ASLRRR members now have until Friday to complete the short surveys linked below to nominate their company for ASLRRR's annual Business Development Award and Veterans Engagement Award. Winners will be honored at ASLRRR's 2022 Annual Conference and Exhibition May 1 to 3 in St. Louis, Missouri.

Submissions require a brief description of efforts by ASLRRR member railroads to boost business in 2021 or better recruit, support and engage veterans in the workplace. A brief search of articles on popular railroad-industry websites like those belonging to *Progressive Railroading* magazine and *Railway Age* magazine reveal a wealth of noteworthy short line and regional railroad accomplishments worthy of ASLRRR's recognition.

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The [Business Development Awards](#) honor railroads that have designed and enacted the most innovative and successful business-building initiatives in the small railroad industry. Award criteria can be found [here](#), and railroads can submit nominations or questions to ASLRRRA's [Amy Krouse](#).

The [Veterans Engagement Award](#) recognizes industry employers who demonstrate positive policies toward U.S. veterans and who implement unique programs and practices to hire, recognize, support, and engage with veterans in the workplace and the broader community. Review award criteria [here](#), and access the application form [here](#). Please send any questions to ASLRRRA's [Sabrina Waiss](#).

*For information about Safety Person and Safety Professional of the Year Awards, and to learn about the safety achievements of ASLRRRA member parent company Pioneer Lines, read our article in the [Members of Note](#) section below.*



**Register now!**  
ASLRRRA ANNUAL CONFERENCE & EXHIBITION  
MAY 1-3, 2022  
AMERICA'S CENTER | ST. LOUIS, MO

The banner features a red background on the right side with a white line-art illustration of the St. Louis skyline, including the Gateway Arch and the Old Courthouse. The text "ST. LOUIS" is written in large, white, outlined letters below the skyline.



### Comments on FRA Program Urge Thorough Impact Assessment

ASLRRRA submitted [comments](#) in response to the Federal Railroad Administration's [Request for Information](#) (RFI) regarding the Corridor Identification and Development Program.

The program "creates a new framework to facilitate the development of new, enhanced, and restored intercity passenger rail corridors throughout the country." In its comments, ASLRRRA emphasizes that some of the Association's short line members successfully host

passenger rail service now, while others would welcome collaborative conversations about hosting new or expanded passenger services.

ASLRRRA cautions, however, that any new proposals should address potential impacts, and the Association suggests certain principles be followed to best evaluate potential new or expanded passenger rail operations on host short line railroads. The principles focus on safety, access and capacity, full compensation and risk mitigation and a customized approach.

### Railroad Members Encouraged to Comment on State Rail Plans

Several states are currently updating their state rail plans for 2022 and are in the process of collecting input from rail stakeholders. ASLRRRA encourages its members to participate in their state's planning process to help ensure the needs of the short line freight rail industry are heard.

Missouri recently issued a draft of its state plan, with a [public comment period](#) open until March 31. South Dakota is also drafting its [2022 state plan](#). Stakeholders can navigate an online public meeting, submit comments online or view a schedule of in-person public meetings.

Other states working on rail plans for this year include [California](#), [Virginia](#), [New Jersey](#) and more. The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) does not require states or the District of Columbia to prepare and maintain a plan, but [encourages](#) states to do so. Many states developed their current plans in 2017, which puts them on track for this year's updates.



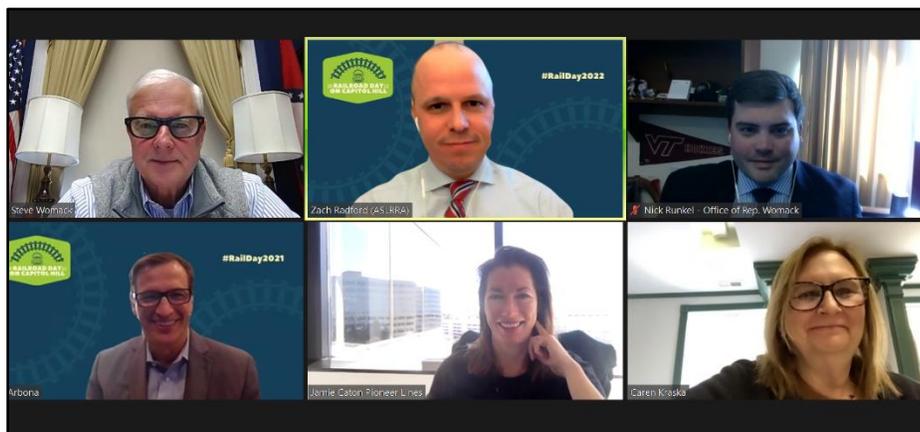
### **\$1.5T Omnibus Passes Senate, Signed into Law by President Biden**

Late last week, the U.S. Senate passed the \$1.5 trillion omnibus spending package by a 68-31 margin to keep the government funded through the end of fiscal year 2022. The bill already passed the House earlier in the week, and the Senate's passage of the measure cleared it for the President who signed it into law.

The bill is a big win for the short line freight rail industry, as it provides additional resources beyond the already robust funds that were provided in the infrastructure bill that passed Congress late last year.

Specifically, the measure provides significantly more funding for programs like CRISI for which Class II and Class III railroads can directly compete, or the Port Infrastructure Development Program and RAISE for which short line railroads can work with state and local partners to advance projects that could benefit short line freight rail. The bill also provides resources for programs like the Short Line Safety Institute and contains helpful language regarding truck size and weights.

### **Some Railroad Day Meetings Carry Over into This Week and Next**



Arkansas Representative Steve Womack (top row, left) and staffer Nick Runkel (top, right) joined ASLRRA's Zach Radford (top, center) and other freight rail industry representatives to discuss industry issues during a Railroad Day make-up meeting on March 15. Due to conflicts some congressional representatives were unable to attend last week's Railroad Day on Capitol Hill events and are participating in meetings in the coming days.

A number of Hill offices were unable to join in virtual meetings with railroad industry participants last week during Railroad Day on Capitol Hill, as many offices were tied up grappling with the major spending bill working its way through Congress. ASLRRA staff has been able to schedule several meetings this week and next with members and staff to hit the key, industry-critical messages shared with so many other offices on March 9 and 10.

The meetings include the following representatives and senators: Senators

Michael Bennet (D-Colo.), John Cornyn (R-Texas), Patty Murray (D-Wash.), Thom Tillis (R-N.C.) and

Representatives Brian Babin (R-Texas), Judy Chu (D-Calif.), Jim Costa (D-Calif.), Charlie Crist (D-Fla.), Lois Frankel (D-Fla.), Vicky Hartzler (R-Mo.), Mary Miller (R-Ill.), Grace Napolitano (D-Calif.), and Steve Womack (R-Ark.). ASLRRA thanks the number of freight rail industry personnel who have been able to jump on Zoom meetings with these members or their staff.

The graphic features a central background of railroad tracks curving into the distance. Overlaid on this are six colored boxes, each representing a seminar. The title '2022 ASLRRA TRAINING SEMINARS' is at the top in large white letters, with a 'click to learn more' link to its right. The seminars are: May 17-18 (blue box) for FRA Engineer/Conductor (240/242) and Railroad Operating Rules (217) Training; June 7-8 (light blue box) for FRA Drug & Alcohol (219) Training; July 26-28 (pink box) for General Code of Operating Rules (GCOR) Training; August 9-10 (red box) for Advanced Designated Supervisor of Locomotive Engineers (DSLE) Training; Coming soon (teal box) for ASLRRA Leadership Development Training, Regulatory Module; and Coming soon (green box) for FRA Roadway Worker/Bridge Worker Safety Training.

Date	Training Topic
May 17-18	FRA Engineer/Conductor (240/242) and Railroad Operating Rules (217) Training
June 7-8	FRA Drug & Alcohol (219) Training
July 26-28	General Code of Operating Rules (GCOR) Training
August 9-10	Advanced Designated Supervisor of Locomotive Engineers (DSLE) Training
Coming soon	ASLRRA Leadership Development Training, Regulatory Module
Coming soon	FRA Roadway Worker/Bridge Worker Safety Training

## ASLRRA Members of Note

### Safety Performance Turnaround Demonstrates Achievements Worth Recognizing

Some railroads might see a year with zero injuries as a common occurrence, but for ASLRRA member parent company Pioneer Lines, marking one year with zero injuries across all its 15 short line subsidiaries is a significant milestone.

In 2018 the injury rate at Pioneer Lines was 15.96 injuries per 200,000 employee on-duty hours, compared to the industry-average rate of 2.18 injuries per 200,000 hours. When a new leadership team took the helm at Pioneer Lines in 2019, improving company safety was one of its highest priorities.

Pioneer Lines adopted several initiatives to build a strong safety culture and introduced a company-wide effort focused on the ideas of "responsibility, accountability, and commitment to excellence," resulting in the drop to zero injuries in only a few years.

"To have all our railroads reach this goal in such a small amount of time is an indication of the incredible men and women at Pioneer. This was a collective effort, and I am extremely proud of our team's dedication to operating safely," said Pioneer Lines Chief Operating Officer Ross Grantham in a [press release](#).

The achievements of Pioneer Lines demonstrate the commitment to safety culture ASLRRA wants to recognize among its railroad members through its annual award program. In addition to the Association's Jake Awards and President's Awards, ASLRRA honors individuals who make significant contributions to their company's safety programs and safety culture.

The nomination period for ASLRRA's Safety Person of the Year and Safety Professional of the Year awards **has been extended** until March 18. ASLRRA encourages its members to nominate noteworthy employees through the simple online form linked below. Nomination forms take only a few minutes to complete, and winners will be honored at the 2022 ASLRRA Annual Conference and Exhibition.

The [Safety Person of the Year](#) award recognizes a non-management employee of a member railroad who works with management on effective safety programs, exhibits a high degree of safety awareness and contributes off-duty time to activities promoting safety awareness in the community. Find award criteria [here](#), and fill out a nomination form [here](#).

The [Safety Professional of the Year](#) recognizes a railroad management employee of an ASLRRA member railroad who is responsible for safety programs, training and the overall management of safe behavior and actions on their railroad(s) and demonstrates these [criteria](#). Find a nomination form [here](#). Contact ASLRRA's [Crystal Gitchell](#) with any questions regarding either safety award.

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## ASLRRA Announcements

### Thank You to All Who Helped Make Railroad Day 2022 a Success

ASLRRA thanks all those who participated in last week's Railroad Day on Capitol Hill virtual meetings. More than 350 participants spoke via Zoom with over 220 congressional offices, urging their representatives to support full funding and streamlined implementation of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL); preserve balanced economic regulation; and oppose all efforts to increase truck length or weight limits.

Aside from the contacts made directly through Zoom meetings, the rail industry connected with a wide audience on its social media profiles and through coordination with the social media efforts of partner organizations like the Association of American Railroads and GoRail.

The RailDay2022 hashtag was used more than 500 times, generating 734,000 impressions. ASLRRA's Railroad Day posts on Twitter generated 46,896 organic impressions, or views, and over 1,000 engagements, which includes likes, retweets and comments.

These counts do not include posts in which ASLRRA was tagged, which generated even more impressions and engagement across multiple Twitter accounts. Several of the congressional representatives who participated in Railroad Day meetings saw the posts tagging them on Twitter and engaged with them, primarily through likes. Others, such as [Sen. Patrick Leahy](#), [Rep. Chuy Garcia](#) and [Rep. Dutch Ruppersberger](#), retweeted posts with comments or wrote their own comments about Railroad Day and tagged ASLRRA and others.

### Members Save Money on PPE with Preferred Provider ORR Safety

As a Preferred Provider in ASLRRA's Member Discount Program, ORR Safety offers exceptional, personalized service and discounted pricing on a huge assortment of products and equipment needed to implement an effective and efficient safety program. These products include foot and leg protection, signs, ergonomic products, hearing protection, clothing protection, eye protection, lighting and electrical products, hand protection, respiratory protection, storage containment and environmental spill cleanup, traffic control, head protection, and much more.

ORR Safety is an ISO 9001-registered distributor of personal protective equipment (PPE) and related services to the industrial market. For over 70 years, ORR Safety has provided products and services to over 20,000 companies, helping to protect hundreds of thousands of workers. With more than 40 years of railroad experience, ORR Safety has worked with customers and suppliers to provide innovative solutions to many of the unique challenges inherent in this complex and demanding industry.

Visit [www.aslrra.org/discounts](http://www.aslrra.org/discounts) to view ORR Safety's online e-catalog and start saving today!

## Save the Date for ASLRRRA's Summer Training Seminars

Summer school is not just for kids anymore. ASLRRRA has finalized its [summer training seminar schedule](#), allowing railroad industry professionals to improve their knowledge of various Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) regulations, the General Code of Operating Rules and more. Follow the link above to view the whole training schedule, or individual links below to learn about each course.

[FRA Engineer/Conductor \(Part 240-242\) and Railroad Operating Rules \(Part 217\)](#) will be held May 17 to 18 in Nashville, Tennessee. Participants will hear from FRA representatives about what these programs require and learn about a 2021 final rule that harmonizes Part 240 and 242.

[FRA Drug and Alcohol Training \(Part 219\)](#) will be held June 7 to 8, also in Nashville. FRA Drug and Alcohol Program Specialist Sam Noe will cover Part 219 drug and alcohol training, including the recent inclusions of certain mechanical employees to federal testing.

The [Comprehensive General Code of Operating Rules \(GCOR\) Training Seminar](#) takes place July 26 to 28 in Cedar Falls, Iowa. ASLRRRA has partnered with Iowa Northern Railway to help railroads meet operating rules training required by 49 CFR Part 240, 242 and 214 Subpart C.

The [Advanced Designated Supervisor of Locomotive Engineers \(DSLE\) Training Seminar](#) is scheduled for August 9 and 10 in Cedar Falls. ASLRRRA's JR Gelnar and Iowa Northern Railway's Mark Vaughn will provide railroad managers with training on DSLE responsibilities, including application and administration of 49 CFR Part 240 and Part 242 similarities and differences.

Two other seminars, ASLRRRA's Leadership Development Training, Regulatory Module and FRA Roadway Worker/Bridge Worker Safety (214) Training are being scheduled for June and September, respectively. More information on these seminars is coming soon.



As an ASLRRRA Preferred Provider, ORR Safety offers Discounts on Personal Protective Equipment and Related Services to ASLRRRA Members.

[Click to learn more!](#)



## ASLRRRA Webinars – Live or On-Demand

### Upcoming Webinars

[Part 243 Railroad Obligations with Contractors](#) – June 1, 2022 (NOTE NEW DATE)

Join FRA Staff Director Rob Castiglione to understand what your obligations are as a railroad when engaging with contractors under Part 243, including Roadway Worker Protection (RWP). Attendees will have an opportunity to participate in

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Q&A at the end of the presentation. Presenters include Castiglione and ASLRRA's Jo Strang and JR Gelnar.

This webinar is free for both ASLRRA members and non-members.

Click [here](#) to learn more about ASLRRA's education offerings, including webinars, on-demand webinars and training seminars.

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## **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.